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EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS

Organization of demonstration trains¹

Transmitted by the Government of Turkey

Under the coordination of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and with the active support of the member countries, the first trial operation of container train with about 20 container wagons, was started on 20 January 2002 on Istanbul-Tehran-Tashkent-Almaty main Trans-Asia Railway Line Section.

During the first meeting of the Steering Committee, which is in charge of monitoring the Almaty-Istanbul Container Trains in the Trans-Asian main corridor, a number of pertinent questions were considered (September 7-8, 2003, Istanbul). The meeting has focused on settling of questions concerning the timetable, border crossing procedures and tariffs as well as measures to be taken in respect of the regular train traffic.

The 2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee (Coordinating Unit) for Container Trains on Istanbul-Almaty route was held on 11-12 May 2004, in Tehran. The following pending issues were considered during the meeting :

- Scheduling of the Container Train

¹ Late submitted document.

- Tariff determination for 20 and 40 TEU containers
- Views on establishment of a Common Containers Pool (CCP)
- Means of payment for entire route

Work on clarifying and finalizing these issues is still going on. In spite of these difficulties, the Istanbul-Almaty train is still running once a week in one direction and up to now 102 trains and 777 containers (in 746 wagons) have been dispatched from Istanbul to Central Asia.

The 8th Meeting of the ECO Railway Authorities was held on 6-7 July 2004, in Istanbul in order to improve regional cooperation in the field of railway transportation. Following issues were considered during the meeting :

- Pending issues concerning runs of container trains in the Trans-Asian main corridor
 - Revitalizing and operating of the China-Middle East-Europe corridor (Silk Road) and establishing a Working Group
 - Endorsing of the finalized Memoranda of Understanding on ECO Railway Tariff Policy in International Freight Traffic
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