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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Sixty-ninth session
Geneva, 6 - 8 February 2007
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

RESULTS OF THE COMMITTEE'S BUREAU MEETINGS

Note by the Secretariat

1. The Bureau of the UNECE Committee on Inland Transport met on 10 February 2006, 6 and 7 June 2006, and 30 November and 1 December 2006.
2. The decisions of the first two meetings are reproduced in Annexes 1 and 2 respectively for consideration by the Committee. The decisions of the third meeting will be circulated in document ECE/TRANS/2007/Add.1. The Committee may wish to discuss the questions in greater detail under the respective items of the agenda.
3. At its sixtieth session, held in Geneva on February 1998, the Committee agreed, inter alia, that it shall elect its Bureau for a period of two years and that the Bureau should comprise not more than 10 members, including the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, who will be elected in a personal capacity. It also agreed that the other members of the Bureau will also be elected in a personal capacity but the members who are unable to attend should appoint a replacement.
4. At its sixty-eighth session, held in Geneva on February 2006, the Committee noted the important impact of the UNECE reform on its future functioning, and in this context, adopted the proposal by its Bureau to appoint a second Vice-Chairperson. Following this decision, the Committee elected Mr. E. Mokeev (Russian Federation) as Chairperson, as well as Mr. J-C. Schneuwly (Switzerland) and Mr. X. Guerin (France) as Vice-Chairpersons for its sessions in 2007 and 2008. The Committee also elected Mr. P. Päßgen (Germany), Mrs. K. Kosmidou (Greece), Mr. J. A. Franco (Portugal), Mrs. U. Armangil (Turkey), Mr. G. Rak (Ukraine) as members of its Bureau for a two-year period. Standing invitation will be extended to the European Commission to attend the meetings of the Bureau as observer.

Annex 1

LIST OF DECISIONS OF
THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2006

I. ATTENDANCE

5. The meeting of the Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee was chaired by Mr. Evgeny Mokeev (Russian Federation) and was attended by the following members: Mr. Peter Päßgen (Germany); Mr. José Alberto Franco (Portugal), Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly (Switzerland), Mrs. Ümit Armangil (Turkey) and Mr. Sergii Yampolskyi (Ukraine). The representatives of France, Greece and the EC were unable to attend.

II. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 68TH SESSION OF THE INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

6. After discussing the outcome of the 68th session of the Committee, the Bureau:

- considered its involvement in the work of Committee's subsidiary bodies and its relationship with their respective Chairpersons;
- discussed sharing the overview of Committee's subsidiary bodies among Bureau's members in order to provide qualified support and follow up to their activities, and agreed to discuss this question at the June meeting;
- agreed to, for the time being, maintain two main annual meetings, in June and in November: the former for discussion on policy, organisational, administrative, resources and other managerial issues; the latter for substantive preparation of the annual session of the ITC;
- noting the declining number and level of participants in the ITC sessions, agreed that sessions should be more policy relevant, effective and appealing, and decided to revert to the question of the length, organization and agenda of the ITC session, at its November 2006 meeting;
- asked the secretariat to further rationalize the drafting of the ITC report, avoiding repetitions and background information, and ensuring that it reflects only decisions and highlights of discussions;
- took note of the Secretariat's intention to launch a pilot project on the implementation of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls, 1982, in collaboration with the OSCE;
- agreed to decide by the end of March 2006 whether its June meeting will last one or two days;

- noting the decision of the ITC to entrust the Bureau to prepare a review of the ITC intergovernmental structure, invited the secretariat to send a letter to Chairpersons asking for their views on ways to increase efficiency of their Working Parties, strengthen relevance of activities, ensure consistency with allocated resources, and, if necessary, reorganize and/or streamline the institutional setup;
- asked Mr. Päßgen, on the basis of replies received, to prepare a summary of these preliminary views, and inform the Bureau at its June session;
- the views, accompanied with the guidelines for the overall review of the intergovernmental structures of the UNECE expected to be provided by the UNECE Executive Committee, will be used in Bureau's substantive review of the ITC intergovernmental structure;
- agreed to include an additional question in the letter asking for Chairpersons' views on possible approaches to security in each Working Party and how, within their competencies, this question could be further strengthened;
- agreed to send the above mentioned letter to Chairpersons after the forthcoming Session of the Commission, and ask for replies by 1 April 2006;
- asked both the Chairperson and the Vice Chairpersons of the Committee to attend the forthcoming Session of the Commission and brief it on how the ITC intends to implement the UNECE reform, cooperation with partner international organizations and ITC's achievements and challenges.

III. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

7. The Bureau:

- agreed to hold its next meeting on Monday, 6 June 2006.

Annex 2

LIST OF DECISIONS OF
THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU HELD ON 6 AND 7 JUNE 2006

I. ATTENDANCE

8. The meeting of the Bureau of the Committee on Inland Transport was chaired by Mr. Evgeny Mokeev (Russian Federation) and was attended by the following members: Mr. Xavier Guérin (France), Mr. Peter Päßgen (Germany), Mr. José Alberto Franco (Portugal), Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly (Switzerland) and Mrs. Ümit Armangil (Turkey). The representatives of Greece, Ukraine and the EC were unable to attend.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

9. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda as prepared by the secretariat (TRANS/BUR.2006/6).

III. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

A. Implementation of the reform of the UNECE

10. The Bureau:

- expressed its appreciation for the presentation made by Mr. Schneuwly during the annual session of the Commission, in which he outlined the way in which the Committee on Inland Transport will address the priorities identified in the UNECE Reform for the transport sector;
- took note of the new UNECE Strategic framework for 2008-2009, incorporating the comments made by the former Group of Experts on the Programme of Work (GEPW), which the Commission supported, and of the request made by the Commission to the Executive Secretary to take these comments into account in finalizing his submission to the UN Headquarters;
- took note of the redeployment, as requested in the UNECE reform, of two professional posts and one general service staff post to the Transport Division, as well as of the assignments of the redeployed staff;
- requested the secretariat to include on a regular basis in the agenda of future Bureau meetings an item on important personnel and staffing issues in the Transport Division, as expressed through documents.

B. Biennial evaluation by PSB's

11. The Bureau:

- invited the secretariat to clarify the relationship between the biennial evaluation as stipulated by para. 28 of the Annual Report of the Commission (E/2004/37-E/ECE/1416) and the evaluation to be carried out in accordance with the para. 26 of the subsequent Work Plan on ECE Reform (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1);
- took note of the summary prepared by Mr. Päßgen of the replies received from chairpersons of the Working Parties on their views regarding the increased efficiency, strengthened relevancy, and consistency with allocated resources;
- asked the secretariat to request urgently replies from those chairpersons who had not yet replied to the initial secretariat letter and to transmit them to the Chairman of the Bureau for preparation of the summary and subsequent discussion at the next Bureau session in November;
- undertook, on the basis of Mr. Päßgen's note, a preliminary discussion for the purpose of the review of the intergovernmental structure under the Committee, the preliminary conclusions of which are described below;
- agreed that the working methods and programme of work of the following: the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) and its six specialized Working Parties; the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15); the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1); the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30); and THE PEP should not be changed;
- agreed that the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) should cooperate more closely with the modal groups of the ITC as the needs arise;
- deferred its discussion about the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economic (WP.5) pending the reply from its chairpersons, and agreed to invite the chairpersons of the Working Party to participate in its deliberations on this issue at its next session in November 2006;
- deferred also its discussion on the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) after reading the reply from its Chairperson;
- deferred further its discussion on the following: Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1); Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2); Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3); Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3); and Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11); pending the replies of their respective Chairpersons;
- suggested that SC.3/WP.3 could report directly to the Committee, in the same way as SC.1 and SC.2;

- felt that, if feasible, the acronyms SC.1, SC.2 and SC.3 should be replaced with WP acronyms in order for them to be placed on an equal footing with other Working Parties;
- felt also that the “Proposed Guidelines for the Establishment and Functioning of Working Parties within the UNECE” (ECE/EX/2006/L.2) do not serve the purpose of a harmonized evaluation approach as intended by para. 26 of the Work Plan on ECE Reform.

IV. TRANSPORT AND SECURITY

12. The Bureau:

- requested the secretariat to prepare a synthesis of all replies from Chairpersons regarding this issue for its next session;
- noting that a follow up to the Tokyo conference on transport security will take place in Paris on 16 June, asked the secretariat to attend it, if possible.

V. OVERVIEW OF THE ITC’S SUBSIDIARY BODIES

13. The Bureau agreed, for the time being, not to pursue the intended sharing of tasks to overview the work of Committee’s subsidiary bodies among Bureau members.

VI. UNECE CONTRIBUTION TO THE 14TH OSCE ECONOMIC FORUM

14. The Bureau:

- took note of the information by the Director of the Transport Division on the participation and contribution of the UNECE Transport Division to the 14th session of the OSCE Economic Forum;
- supported the secretariat proposals aimed at obtaining financial support from OSCE and expressed the wish that such financial support would materialize, since this would be a determining factor for the extent of the UNECE inputs;
- noted the progress in the secretariat’s survey of the implementation of the 1982 International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods and asked the secretariat to transmit the results of the survey also to the Bureau and the Committee.

VII. ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION

A. Progress in the UN Development Account Project on developing Euro-Asian Transport Links and proposal for Phase II

15. The Bureau:

- took note of the proposal for a second phase of the joint UNECE-ESCAP project on developing Euro-Asian transport links and supported its continuation under the UN Development Account project;
- recommended that awareness about the proposal for a second phase of the project should be raised among potential donors and contributors to the project's budget.

B. Facilitation of implementation of the TEM and TER Master Plan

16. The Bureau noted the secretariat's proposal for a Project aimed at facilitation of the implementation of the TEM and TER Master Plan. The Bureau supported the Project, which should facilitate participation of one expert per country from nine Eastern, South Eastern European and Caucasus countries to eight TEM and TER Projects' meetings during the period 2007-2008, provided that extra-budgetary resources are made available for its financing.

VIII. AUDITS OF THE UNECE – IRU AGREEMENT

17. The Bureau noted that two audits of the UNECE-IRU Agreement on the funding of the TIRExB and TIR Secretariat were under way: one by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and another by the UN Board of Auditors as a follow-up to that carried out in 2005; it also noted that the reports were still pending and that the UNECE ExCom will be briefed on this issue at its session on 23 June.

IX. GLOBAL ROAD SAFETY

18. The Bureau took note of the outcome of the fourth meeting of the UN Road Safety Collaboration held in May in Bangkok and about preparations for the First UN Global Road Safety Week to be held in April 2007; in this context, supported the preparatory activities for the Global Road Safety Week and in particular, the intention to circulate a joint UNECE/WHO letter to Permanent Missions of all UN Member States inviting them to designate focal points and prepare for their active participation in the Week.

X. EUROPEAN AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE WORK OF CREWS OF VEHICLES ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT

19. The Bureau:

- noted the information about the Seminar on the introduction of the digital tachograph held in Moscow in March 2006 and about the results of the Ad hoc Meeting on the Revision of AETR in May 2006;

- expressed its concern about the possible implications of future changes in the EU provisions regarding driving and rest periods of professional drivers and their introduction into the AETR, and asked the secretariat to keep the Bureau informed about future developments.

XI. FACILITATION OF BORDER CROSSING IN INTERNATIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT

20. The Bureau:

- noted the information about the further progress made in the preparation of the new Annex 9 to the 1982 International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (“Harmonization Convention”) and of a draft new International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers in International Railway Passenger Traffic;
- urged the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) and the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) to complete their consideration of the two drafts at their forthcoming sessions in 2006.

XII. ECMT MINISTERIAL SESSION

21. The Bureau took note of the information by the Director of Transport Division on the outcome of the 90th session of the Council of Ministers of the ECMT, in particular the transformation of the ECMT into an International Transport Forum. The Bureau also advised that the Director of Transport Division considers implications of these developments for the UNECE transport activities. These would be discussed at the next meeting of the Bureau.

XIII. OTHER BUSINESS

22. The Bureau expressed its discontent with the delayed selection of the candidate for the post of Chief of the Transport and Infrastructure Development Section and asked the secretariat to speed up efforts to conclude the appointment process.

XIV. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

23. The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting on Thursday, 30 November and Friday, 1 December 2006.

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