

AGENDA OF THE FIRST SESSION^{1, 2}

to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
starting at 10 a.m. on Friday 26 March 2010

| Item | Documentation |
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| 1. Introduction | Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of UNECE expert groups |
| 2. Election of the Chair | |
| 3. Adoption of the agenda | |
| 4. Discussion of issues | Informal document No. 1 (2010); Expert presentations |
| 5. Programme of work | |
| 6. Workshop on Euro-Asian rail transport | |
| 7. Conclusions and follow up | |
| 8. Date and place of next meeting | |

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ANNOTATIONS

Item 1. Introduction

1. At its sixty-third session (Geneva, 18-20 November 2009), the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) expressed its full support for all initiatives that aim to unify railway law in the pan-European region and decided to set up an informal group of experts that would prepare a position paper on this issue for its sixty-fourth session in November 2010. The group would also be tasked to prepare a workshop on Euro-Asian rail transport that should take place during the sixty-fourth session of the SC.2. The Working Party asked the secretariat to invite representatives of UNECE member states, OTIF, OSJD, European Community and railway organizations to participate in the work of the informal group. The secretariat will inform participants about the responses received from the invitees.

¹ Delegates are requested to bring copies of all relevant documents to the session. There will be no documentation available in the conference room. Before the session, documents may be downloaded from the website of the Working Party on Rail Transport (<http://unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html>).

² Delegates are requested to complete the registration form available for download at the UNECE Transport Division's website (<http://www.unece.org/trans/regisfr.html>). It should be transmitted to the UNECE secretariat 2 weeks prior to the session by email (carole.marilley@unece.org) or by fax (+41-22-917-0039). Delegates should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on our website <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>).

Item 2. Election of the Chair

2. Following a brief introduction to UNECE guidelines for the establishment and functioning of team of specialists,³ members of the informal group of experts will elect its Chair.

Item 3. Adoption of the agenda

3. Members of the expert group will adopt the agenda of the first session.

Item 4. Discussion of issues

Documentation: Informal document No. 1 (2010); Expert presentations

4. All participants are invited to contribute short presentations or papers pertaining to the interoperability of Euro-Asian rail transport and intervene in a moderated discussion of issues that could be considered by the expert group, including :

- administrative, legal and technical interoperability for efficient and sustainable international rail transport in the Euro-Asian region;
- costs, benefits and experience with bilateral and multilateral approaches to administrative, legal and technical harmonization of diverse rail systems;
- best practice in cooperation between the railway sector and government agencies;
- key factors for effective international cooperation: infrastructure (border stations, rolling stock, terminals, etc), procedures (border crossing, transit, security) and contractual obligations (civil liability, consignment notes);
- main elements of a unified railway law and a strategy to develop such system;
- development and administration of harmonized legal instruments for Euro-Asian rail transport.

Item 5. Programme of work

5. The Chair will outline how the conclusions reached during the preceding discussion should be reflected in the expert group activities and outputs. Subsequently, participants are expected to discuss and approve a programme of work of the group, including scheduled objectives, actions and results.

Item 6. Workshop on Euro-Asian rail transport

6. The group will discuss the topics, speakers and expected outcomes of the Workshop on Euro-Asian rail transport that is scheduled to take place during the sixty-fourth session of the SC.2 that is to be hosted by the Austrian government and OSCE in Vienna on 18-19 November 2010.

³ See www.unece.org/hlm/docs/guidelines%20teams%20specialists%202003%20e.pdf.

Item 7. Conclusions and follow up

7. The Chair will summarize conclusions of the first session of the expert group and assign the responsibility for the work related to follow-up activities. Subsequently, participants can present their comments that would be reflected in the session report.

Item 8. Date and place of next meeting

8. Members of the expert group will decide on the date and venue of its next meeting.
