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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Rail Transport

Sixty-fourth session

Vienna, 18–19 November 2010

Item I of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the sixty-fourth session^{1, 2}

Hosted by the Government of Austria in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

To be held at the Hofburg Congress Center, Vienna
starting at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday, 18 November 2010

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC Agreement):
 - (a) Status of the AGC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals;
 - (b) Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGC network);

¹ Delegates are requested to complete the registration form available for download at the UNECE Transport Division's website <<http://www.unece.org/trans/registfr.html>>. It should be transmitted to the UNECE secretariat no later than one week prior to the session by e-mail (sc.2@unece.org) or by fax (+41 22-917 0039). Upon arrival at the Hofburg Congress Centre, delegates will obtain a conference badge upon presentation of an ID at the registration area, to which the OSCE security staff will guide them to.

² For reasons of economy, 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 UNECE Transport Division's website <<http://www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html>>. On an exceptional basis, documents may also be obtained by e-mail (sc.2@unece.org) or by fax (+41 22-917 0039). During the session, official documents may be obtained from the Document Distribution Desk in front of the conference hall "Ratsaal", Hofburg, 5th floor.

- (c) Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards).
- 3. Task Force on Rail Security.
- 4. Trans-European Railway (TER) project.
- 5. Euro-Asian rail transport.
- 6. Passenger accessibility of heavy rail systems.
- 7. Productivity in rail transport.
- 8. Towards unified railway law in the pan-European region and along Euro-Asian transport corridors.
- 9. Facilitation of international rail transport:
 - (a) Facilitation of rail border crossings;
 - (b) Harmonization of technical specifications of different railway systems;
 - (c) Harmonization of administrative and legal requirements of different railway systems.
- 10. European Commission.
- 11. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
- 12. Other international organizations.
- 13. Other business.
- 14. Date of next session.
- 15. Summary of decisions.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda

The first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/213

2. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC Agreement)

(a) Status of the AGC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals

At present, the AGC Agreement has 27 Contracting Parties.³ The Working Party may wish to discuss how to increase the number of Contracting Parties to the AGC Agreement.

Detailed information on the AGC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/63/Rev.1), a map on the AGC network, an inventory of minimum standards stipulated in the Agreement as well as all relevant Depository

³ Albania; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Republic of Moldova; Montenegro; Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Turkey and Ukraine.

Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party at <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2_AGC_text.html>.

Amendment proposals to annex I to the AGTC Agreement, adopted at the sixty-third session of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/212, para. 4), which update and extend the geographical scope of the AGC network, have been submitted by the secretariat to the UN Treaty Section in New York for depositary action.

Further information will be provided at the session.

(b) Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGC network)

The Working Party will be informed of the status of amendment proposals already considered at its sixty-third session as contained in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2009/1 relating to Denmark, Germany and Sweden (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/212, para. 4).

Following conclusion of the required consultations among concerned Contracting Parties, the Working Party may wish adopt these amendment proposals in accordance with article 11 of the AGC Agreement.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2009/1

(c) Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)

As requested by the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24), the secretariat has solicited the views of rail infrastructure managers on the validity of the technical characteristics of railway lines as stipulated in the annexes to the AGC and AGTC Agreements. The secretariat has also reviewed mandatory and proposed technical interoperability standards applicable in the European Union and in other UNECE member countries, including those contained in the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network (TAR) developed under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

In order to allow the Working Party to compare the minimum infrastructure and performance standards of the AGC Agreement with those applicable and proposed in the European Union and other UNECE member countries, the secretariat has prepared document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/1. This document refers also to the infrastructure and performance standards contained in annex III to the AGTC Agreement.

The Working Party may wish to review these minimum infrastructure and performance standards with a view to their possible modification or amendment. Amendment proposals to the AGC Agreement, if any, could then be prepared by the secretariat for decision by the Working Party at its next session.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/1

3. Task Force on Rail Security

The Chair of the Task Force on Rail Security will inform delegates about the follow-up activities related to the recommendations specified in the report on rail security (Informal document SC.2 No. 1 (2009)) that was submitted at the sixty-third session of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/212, para. 6).

The Working Party may wish to consider comments on the Task Force report submitted by Turkish State Railways (Informal document SC.2 No. 1 (2010)) as well as new developments in this field.

Documentation: Informal document SC.2 No. 1 (2010)

4. Trans-European Railway (TER) project

The Working Party will be informed by the project manager of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project about the activities undertaken in 2010, concrete results achieved and plans for subsequent years, including the updating of the TEM and TER Master Plan (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/2).

The Working Party may wish to review the results achieved and consider how to further support and contribute to the TER project.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/2

5. Euro-Asian rail transport

In accordance with the decision at its sixty-third session, the Working Party may wish to be informed and discuss new developments on Euro-Asian rail transport corridors, including the Trans-Siberian railway line (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/212, para. 8).

Documentation: Informal documentation

6. Passenger accessibility of heavy rail systems

The Working Party may wish to consider follow-up activities to the policy statement on passenger accessibility of heavy rail systems that was adopted at its sixty-third session on the conclusion of the SC.2 workshop on this subject (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/212, paras. 22–24 and Annex III). This policy statement was subsequently endorsed by the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) (ECE/TRANS/208, para. 99).

The Working Party may wish to consider presentations on passenger accessibility prepared by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology, the city of Vienna, the French National Institute for Transport and Safety (INRETS) and the European Railway Agency (ERA).

Documentation: Informal documentation

7. Productivity in rail transport

In accordance with the decision at its sixty-second session (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/210, para. 24), the Working Party may wish to consider a secretariat report on productivity in rail transport on the basis of data provided by the International Union of Railways (UIC).

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/3

8. Towards unified railway law in the pan-European region and along Euro-Asian transport corridors

The Chair of the informal Group of Experts on Unified Railway Law, established by the Working Party at its sixty-third session, will present its report with recommendations to the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/212, para. 13).

The informal Group of Experts held three sessions (Geneva, 26 March 2010; St. Petersburg, 8 July 2010; Geneva, 16 September 2010). Following in-depth considerations, it agreed to focus work on harmonized rules for contracts on the international carriage of goods by rail in the pan-European region and along important Euro-Asian transport corridors.

As mandated, the Group of Experts has also prepared a position paper on the possibilities of harmonizing or unifying, in the short and long term, railway law in the pan-European region and along Euro-Asian transport corridors, based on lessons learned and regulations applicable to other modes of transport.

The report of the second session of the Group of Experts is available in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/4. The reports of the first and third sessions as well as the position paper are available as informal documents only. All documents, reports and presentations made at the sessions of the Group of Experts are available at <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html>.

The Working Party may wish consider the reports and the position paper prepared by the Group of Experts with a view to possibly recommending to the ITC the continuation of work on these issues in 2011.

Documentation : ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2010/4 and informal documentation

9. Facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region

(a) Facilitation of rail border crossings

The Working Party may recall that the ITC in early 2006 had supported three strategic elements to improve border crossing procedures in pan-European rail transport (ECE/TRANS/166, para. 96). In addition to a unified railway law (see item 8 above), these included a unified rail Customs transit system, similar to the TIR regime for road transport, as well as internationally coordinated and mutually recognized border control procedures in rail transport.

Progress has been made towards a unified rail Customs transit system through the preparation, in 2006, of a Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for Carriage by Rail under Cover of SMGS Consignment Notes. Progress has also been made in the field of harmonized rail border controls through the adoption, on 27 May 2010, of a new Annex 9 to the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)⁴ (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/18; ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/2010/1).

The Working Party will be informed of follow-up activities undertaken by the UNECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) administering both conventions and may wish to consider support in promoting the implementation of these conventions.

Documentation: Informal documentation

(b) Harmonization of technical specifications of different railway systems

The Working Party may wish to take note of a report on joint activities to harmonize conditions of different rail transport systems prepared by the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) and the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD). The OSJD will also inform the Working Party on cooperation with the European Railway Agency (ERA) to improve technical interoperability between the 1,435 mm standard and 1,520 mm broad gauge railway systems. Reports of Governments and other organizations dealing with these questions are also welcome.

⁴ <http://www.unece.org/trans/bcf/ac3/documents/ECE-TRANS-WP30-AC3-18e.pdf>.

The Working Party may wish to consider these reports and exchange views on the results and impact of these cooperative activities at the pan-European level.

Documentation: Informal documentation

(c) Harmonization of administrative and legal requirements of different railway systems

The Working Party may wish to be informed of progress made in the application of the common CIM/SMGS consignment note and its further development by the International Rail Transport Committee (CIT) and OSJD. The Working Party may also wish to take note of the results of the first session of the OTIF Rail Transport Facilitation Committee that is scheduled to be held in October 2010.

The Working Party may wish to consider these reports and exchange views on the results and impact of these cooperative activities at the pan-European level.

Documentation: Informal documentation

10. European Commission

In line with standard practice, the Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for the future work of the European Commission (DG Move) relating to rail transport.

11. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities, decisions and plans for future work of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24), the UNECE Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links operating under the auspices of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5), as well as about the other rail related activities of UNECE.

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/208, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127 and informal documentation

12. Other international organizations

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for the future work of other international organizations and stakeholders in the field of rail transport.

13. Other business

At present, there are no proposals under this item.

14. Date of next session

The next session of the Working Party is tentatively scheduled to be held on 3 and 4 November 2011 in Geneva. This session could be held back-to-back or partly together with the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) to consider issues of common interest, such as “the role of terminals”, which is the theme for substantive discussions of WP.24 in 2011.

The 2011 sessions of the UNECE Group of Experts on Unified Railway Law will be scheduled following a decision of the ITC (1–3 March 2011).

15. Summary of decisions

In accordance with the decision of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/190, para. 6) and established practice, the Chair will make a brief summary of the decisions taken at the end of the session. Following the session, the UNECE secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, will establish a report on the outcome of the session for transmission to the ITC.

III. Tentative timetable

Thursday, 18 November	10.00 – 13.00	Items 1–4
	15.00 – 18.00	Items 5–8
Friday, 19 November	10.00 – 13.00	Items 8–15
