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Strategic questions of a modal and thematic nature: Project related activities -

Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) and Trans-European Railway (TER) projects

Recent developments in the Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) and Trans-European Railway (TER) projects

Submitted by the TEM acting Project Manager and TER Project Manager

I. Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) Project

1. The aim of the Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) project is to provide assistance to the TEM participating Governments in developing and managing the TEM network in order to facilitate road traffic in Europe, in improving the quality and efficiency of transport infrastructure and operations and in assisting the integration process of transport infrastructure systems in Europe.

2. According to the TEM Strategic Plan 2017-2021 adopted by TEM Steering Committee (67th session, Prague, 19-20 October 2016) TEM Project 2020 vision and mission are defined as:

Vision: The TEM Project aims at obtaining the role of a substantive partner for the UNECE and the Inland Transport Committee on road infrastructure management, thus supporting the UN and TEM member States in achieving the sustainable development goals by implementing the Project strategic initiatives.

Mission: The TEM Project constitutes a forum for cooperation between the governments of TEM member States, which creates standards, good practices and guidelines for systemic and strategic issues related to road infrastructure management. In its activities the TEM Project takes the perspective of national government administrations, and focuses on the issue of sustainable development.

A. TEM activities and achievements in 2016

2. During the sixty-seventh session of the TEM Steering Committee, TEM Programme of Work 2017 was presented by Mr. Andrzej Maciejewski, TEM acting Project Manager and adopted by the Steering Committee.

3. The following tasks were included in TEM Programme of Work 2017:

(a) Strengthening capacities of TEM Participating Governments by attending the workshops and exchanging of knowledge and best practices in the following areas: System of roads and highways – organization and financing, Management and information systems of roads and highways and Safety standards in work zones;

(b) Increase attractiveness of TEM project, both for TEM participating and other countries, through an active cooperation with European partners and American institutions based on experience and best practice sharing and mutual cooperation;

(c) Prepare high quality deliverables/reports based on organized workshops with topics closely related to the development of TEM network, and with active involvement of representatives of TEM Participating Governments;

(d) Efficient administrative backstopping of TEM project through improved Work Plan and Budget for 2017 and engagement of TEM Project Manager and Strategy Coordinator;

(e) Identification of strategic initiatives presented in the TEM Strategic Plan 2017-2021. These were classified into the following strategic areas:

Area A – Environmental protection

Area B – Organization and financing of the roads and motorways

Area C – Information systems for the management of the road infrastructure

Area D – Innovations in road infrastructure management

Area E – Road safety.

4. Since the seventy-eighth session of the Inland Transport Committee, main TEM project achievements were:

(a) During the sixty-seventh session of the TEM Steering Committee which was held on 19-20 October 2016 in Prague two reports prepared by TEM consultants - Report on RSA/RSI on TEM Network and TEM Strategic Plan 2017-2021 – were adopted by the Steering Committee. The reports presented state-of-the-art of road infrastructure safety on TEM Network, analysed project perspectives and strong points and gave mid-term strategic framework for TEM Project development;

(b) Strengthening of capacities and cooperation of TEM Participating Governments - action based on the adopted work plan was realized by *Building Information Modeling* Seminar which took place on 8 April 2016 in Warsaw and *Solutions for winter and summer routine maintenance of motorways* workshop held on 20 October 2016 in Prague. In Warsaw, more than 20 experts from TEM member countries and European Union shared their experiences and debated the best practices and strategies to increase the use of Building Information Modeling in project life cycle. In Prague, representatives of eight TEM participating Government shared the best practice in motorways maintenance, with special emphasize on organization of services and its costs for road administration;

(c) The International Highways Engineers Exchange Programme (iHEEP) Area V is a forum for annual exchange of knowledge and know-how between Highway Engineers of North America and Europe. iHEEP is a US initiative and TEM Project is their

European counterpart. Cooperation with iHEEP started in 1993, and this year the twenty-third TEM iHEEP Area V 2015 Annual Meeting was held in Istanbul, Turkey on 30 May - 2 June. This year capacity-building workshop was dedicated to one of the TEM priority topics – financing of the road infrastructure projects. Representatives of TEM participating Governments and Department of Transport of four United States of America states shared their experiences and best practices on financing of road construction, rehabilitation and maintenance;

(d) Dynamic cooperation between TEM Participating Governments and its active involvement in the Project resulted with adoption of: (i) the most relevant topics for TEM development which will be presented in the dedicated workshops; (ii) report related to RSA/RSI implementation on TEM Network; (iii) new TEM Project strategy 2017-2021; (iv) agreement on modalities of the early planning of the meetings with dedicated themes and with thematic scope planned for the year ahead; (v) inputs for the TEM Programme of Work 2017 and the list of TEM project priority activities; (vi) TEM Work Plan and Budget for 2017. Decisions were adopted during two Steering Committee meetings held on 7 of April 2016 in Warsaw (Poland) and 19-20 October 2016 in Prague, (Czech Republic).

B. Challenges in 2017

5. On the basis of the results and experiences from 2016, several challenges for TEM cooperation for 2017 were identified:

(a) Effectively implement TEM Project activities defined in the TEM Strategic Plan 2017-2021, make changes in the project management and rules of procedures and start with implementation of strategic initiatives;

(b) Ensure active participation of TEM Participating Governments representatives: by implementing realistic work plan for 2017 based on actual countries' needs and transport trends as well as maintain regular communication with TEM participating Governments; motivate and engage non-TEM countries to participate in TEM workshops/meetings and attract new TEM participating Governments;

(c) Deliver tangible project results: TEM project deliverables agreed in 2016 should be finalized with required quality; topics for the reports and necessary consultancy were proposed by PCO and adopted by the Steering Committee;

(d) Increase TEM project visibility: Since the TEM project is not sufficiently known in wide fora activities on promotion of TEM cooperation are strongly needed and should be one of the TEM PCO priorities;

(e) Synergies with UNECE bodies related to road transport and road safety: Cooperation with UNECE Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) and Working Party on Road Safety (WP.1) should be enhanced. TEM Project experience on road infrastructure could bring added value to the Working Parties;

(f) Real change of functioning of TEM PCO to be more active and responding to project development needs.

C. Conclusions

6. The TEM Project addresses priority topics for participating Governments which lead to a more rapid integration of the transport infrastructure networks between Eastern and Western European countries. At the same time, TEM stipulates better harmonization of

legislation and enhances cooperation among the countries and creates common standards in order to ensure a higher quality of service along major motorway corridors.

7. The TEM project activities carried out during the reporting period were in line with the Programme of Work approved by TEM Steering Committee in 2015.

8. TEM Work Plan for 2017, adopted by Steering Committee (October 2016), focuses on implementation of activities proposed by the new TEM Project strategy and should produce tangible results and deliverables to meet needs and requirements of the participating Governments. Closer cooperation with TEM participating Governments, UNECE working parties, EATL and TER Project are one of the priorities for project management in 2017.

II. Trans-European Railway (TER) Project

9. The UNECE Trans-European Railway (TER) Project represents a specific platform for cooperation of participating countries in the field of rail transport infrastructure, dealing with the topics of common interest for rail transport and assisting in achieving higher standards of rail networks in the participating Governments.

10. Sixteen countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and the Caucasus (Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey) participate in the Project, with the UNECE as its Executing Agency. The TER Cooperation Trust Fund Agreement, established in 1991 by the UNECE, made the Project self-sustained, financed by direct contributions of the member countries and ensuring the implementation of its main objectives, namely:

- To ensure the coordinated upgrading of infrastructure of the TER network to the AGC and AGTC standards;
- To coordinate the improvement of operational parameters and improve the situation at border crossings with a view to eliminate bottlenecks in international rail transport;
- To develop cooperation among member countries in the preparation of technical studies;
- To promote cooperation among member countries in the field of combined transport;
- To promote training activities for experts of member countries.

11. To achieve these objectives, the Project organizes technical meetings and training activities with TER National Coordinators including decision-makers, railway operators and experts with the aim to facilitate the exchange of experience and good practices. The TER Project also works closely with the OSCE, UIC, and BSEC organizations. The TER Project Central Office (PCO) will be hosted for two years (2017-2018) in Belgrade by the Serbian Government.

A. TER Master Plan Revision Follow-up Activities

12. During the reporting period, the work of the Project focused on following-up activities and monitoring of the TER Master Plan Revision implementation. The original Master Plan of 2006 outlined an investment plan which set out the priority road and railway infrastructure needs for 21 Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European countries. It was evident that the Master Plan process was successful but further work in some areas was

necessary also because since its elaboration, a number of new developments have taken place.

13. Therefore, the UNECE Inland Transport Committee invited the TER Steering Committee, in close cooperation with concerned Governments, to start the Master Plan Revision, in which the following 25 countries were involved: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine.

14. With the elaboration of the Master Plan Revision and launching of its Final Report, the TER Project offered a substantial contribution to the extension of TEN-T and to the practical implementation of the Pan-European Transport Corridors. The implementation of this Master Plan Revision required further close co-operation between the TER member countries and their immediate neighbours.

15. For this purpose, the TER Master Plan Revision monitoring mechanism was set up, which forms an inseparable part of the TER Master Plan Revision Follow-up Action Plan. The monitoring activities included the progress reached in the implementation of the Master Plan Revision infrastructure projects, the update of the traffic data and traffic forecasts, the development and the status of the backbone network. For the collection and update of this data templates were prepared and distributed to member States once per year. The TER PCO, based on data received, prepared the annual report on the monitoring of Master Plan Revision monitoring requesting TER Steering Committee's approval.

B. Project activities carried out during the reporting period

16. The Project Manager attended the 70th session of the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2), on 21 to 24 November 2016, where he presented TER Project achievements in 2016 including the successful termination of the TER Master Plan Revision and its follow-up and monitoring activities.

17. The 40th session of the TER Steering Committee was held on 17th May 2016 in Vienna, Austria. The Committee discussed the status of the TER Trust Fund contributions for 2016 and the status of the Project Central Office staff for 2016/17. In addition, it approved the start of the first study on the TER High Speed Rail Master Plan.

18. The draft report of the TER High Speed Rail Master Plan was submitted by project's consultant Mr. Helmut Adelsberger to member States for their consideration. Governments have provided substantive comments in order to further improve the draft report and ensure that the main objectives of the project would be met and achieved. In order for the first phase to be accomplished and finalized the consultant should submit an updated and consolidated version of the report to the Steering Committee for its final approval.

19. Furthermore, the project manager had the opportunity to deliver a presentation during the 14th session of EATL Group of Experts that took place in Yerevan, Armenia (26-27 October 2016). He also had an opportunity to participate in the first session of the Group of Experts on Benchmarking Transport Infrastructure Construction Costs (31 October - 1 November, Geneva). This topic is included in the TER work plan and TER member States will contribute to the work of the Group.

20. One main task of the Project Manager is to revitalize old members States' interest in the project as well as to attract new member States. These efforts are being orchestrated by the TER Steering Committee which sets the priorities and strategically decides which States should be approached. The Project Manager re-established communication with two old

member States, Romania and Bulgaria hoping that both countries will become again active members of the project in the near future. He has also started discussions with the Governments of Belarus and Kazakhstan in order for them to become new members of the Project.

21. On 18 – 19 October 2016, the TER Workshop on “High Speed Lines – from planning to commissioning” was held in Vienna, Austria. More than 20 international experts presented their case studies and good practices on construction planning processes and on latest technologies regarding High Speed Rail.

22. On 21 November 2016, the 41st session of the TER Steering Committee took place in Geneva. During this session the TER Programme of Work 2017 was discussed and approved. The TER Programme of Work 2017 includes among others, activities to promote the TER project (brochure, update of the web site), the continuation of the High speed master plan (second phase), the active participation in the Group of Experts on Benchmarking Transport Infrastructure Work, improvement of cooperation with organizations such as the European Commission and the OSJD, and further monitoring of the Master Plan revision.

C. Conclusions

23. The TER Project represents a useful tool for enhancing cooperation among railway stakeholders in the region on topical rail transport issues, exchanging information on good practices and innovative solutions, implementing the AGC and AGTC standards in the region. Realization of the agreed programme of work with concrete outputs would further increase visibility of the project and cooperation among the stakeholders.

24. At the Governmental level, TER represents a unique forum in the region addressing the key rail transport issues pertaining to a more rapid integration of the rail transport infrastructure network of the member States into the Western European network. It also stimulates better harmonization of the legislation of Central and Eastern European countries with Western European standards in order to ensure a higher quality of service along major rail transport corridors in the member States.

25. The Project offers a platform that brings together representatives from the Ministries of Transport and from railway undertakings of the member States.

26. In November 2017 a TER Workshop will take place in Czech Republic on a cordial invitation of the Czech Government. This workshop will focus on the main issues of international rail cargo Transportation such as interoperability, cross-border processes and many others.