

Distr.: Restricted
29 November 2017

English only

Working Party on Rail Transport

Seventy-first session

Geneva, 27-29 November 2017

Item 25 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of decisions

Draft decisions for the seventy-first session

1. Adoption of the agenda

Decision: The working Party adopted the revised agenda.

2. Workshop on “Railway Reform across the ECE region”

Decision: The Working Party thanked the speakers for their intervention and welcomed the outcome of the workshop on railway reform across the ECE region. The Working Party asked the secretariat to continue gathering information on this subject and invite presentations at future sessions on this.

3. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines

Decision: The Administrative Committee of the AGC recalled that it took note of the amendments set out in Informal document SC.2 No. 6 (2016) at the seventieth session of SC.2. The AC noted that their representation, unchanged, has been included within formal document ECE/TRANS/2017/6 and ECE/TRANS/2017/6 Corr.1. The Administrative Committee adopted the amendments set out in ECE/TRANS/2017/6 and ECE/TRANS/2017/6 Corr.1 and asked the secretariat to proceed with the relevant depository notification.

4. Rail Security

Decision: The Working Party took note of the progress on rail security and welcomed the presentations from the secretariat, UIC and the Czech Republic. The Working Party asked those member States that had not yet notified contact points to the secretariat for the rail security observatory to do so. It also encouraged delegates to make full use of the Observatory by uploading relevant documents to the portal. The Working Party also welcomed the decision to hold a workshop jointly with ITF and UIC at the ITF annual summit in Leipzig to continue discussion on the observatory and wider security issues.

5. Euro-Asian rail transport

Decision: The Working Party reiterated its support for the EATL project and encouraged the rail sector to get increasingly involved in related discussions.

6. Trans-European Railway (TER) project

Decision: The Working Party welcomed the work carried out within the TER project and welcomed the finalisation of Phase 1 of the TER HS Masterplan and the initial activities related to Phase 2 of the project.

7. Railway infrastructure financing and Public-Private Partnerships

Decision: The Working Party welcomed the information provided in relation to railway infrastructure financing and asked the secretariat to continue providing information on this at future sessions.

8. Master Plan on High-Speed Trains

Decision: No decision as included in agenda item 6.

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

Decision: The Working Party decided that the mandate of the Group of Experts should be extended for another two years. However, the Working Party did not reach an agreement on the terms of reference of the new mandate of the Group since three options were proposed:

- Consider what has been already prepared as the new convention therefore the new terms of reference should focus on preparing the new convention (administrative clauses as well as necessary documents) including the elaboration of real pilot tests;
- Consider what has been already prepared as an annex of a framework convention therefore the new terms of reference should focus on the elaboration of the framework convention including four additional annexes such as: (a) provisions on dangerous goods, (b) provisions on the use of freight trains, (c) provisions on rail infrastructure, (d) provisions on rolling stock;
- Extend the current mandate of the Group (same terms of reference) for one more year in order to perform the pilot tests and prepare the necessary documents;

The Working Party decided that a formal document should be prepared and submitted to the next inland transport committee that will include all these three options as terms of reference for the extension of the Group otherwise there will be no possibility to discuss and decide an extension of the mandate of the Group. However, the Working Party requested the secretariat to organize a friend of chairs meeting well before the meeting of ITC in February in order for the experts to have another opportunity to discuss and eventually prepare a common proposal on the terms of reference of the Group since ITC is not a forum for discussing and negotiating such documents.

10. New convention on the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail

Decision: The Working party considered the draft Convention on the facilitation of border crossing procedures for passengers, luggage (informal document no. 2). The Working party took note of the advanced stage of the text of the draft Convention which reflects the achievements of the discussion on the issue that took place in WP.30 during 2017.

The Working party also took note of the fact that the purpose of the Convention corresponds to the Sustainable Development Goals regarding to development of transport infrastructure and improvement of the mobility of population between countries.

The delegation of the EU, while expressing general support for efforts to facilitate rail transport throughout the Eurasian landmass, stated it reserved its position on the draft in the absence of a mandate by its member States.

At the same time, the Working Party took note of the fact that quite a number of the interested States of the Eurasian environment expressed the necessity of the new Convention which would serve as a legal basis for future development of innovative rail connections between the countries of Europe and Asia and expressed their support for the text of the Convention.

Taking account of the above stated and of the prescriptions of the road map adopted at the 70th session of SC.2 and approved by the decision of the 79th session of UNECE ITC, the Working party asked WP.30 to take further steps towards finalizing the adoption of the draft Convention for the purpose of submitting it for approval to UNECE ITC.

11. Intelligent Transport Systems and other technological applications for Rail Transport

Decision: The Working Party took note of developments in relation to ITS of relevance to the sector and, given the emphasis given to this subject within the Ministerial Resolution at the ITC, asked that the 2018 workshop be focused on ITS in the railways.

12. Productivity in Rail Transport

Decision: The Working Party took note of the responses that had been received from a number of member States on the productivity indicators and encouraged others to provide this information with an extension of the deadline to the end of January 2018.

13. Climate Change and Rail Transport

Decision: The Working Party took note of developments in relation to the consequences of climate change to the sector, asked that the secretariat continue providing information on this at the next session and agreed to remove sub point (c) on Diesel engine exhausts from the agenda for future sessions.

14. Railway Reform

N/A

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

Decision: The Working Party took note of the developments in relation to facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region and in the harmonization of technical specifications as provided by OSJD and the secretariat. The Working Party asked member States to share their best practice examples in implementing Annex 9 to the Harmonization Convention. The Working Party asked the secretariat to continue reporting on this at its next session in 2018.

16. Rail Review

Decision: The Working Party took note of developments in this area and asked the secretariat to send out the questionnaire on the remaining elements of the rail review to feed into a publication on this.

17. Rail Statistics

Decision: The Working Party took note of developments in rail statistics and welcomed the renewed close cooperation with WP.6 and asked that the secretariat to continue providing information on this at the next session. The Working Party also asked WP.6 and OSJD to consider how best to cooperate on rail statistics going forward.

18. Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings

Decision: The Working Party noted that the final report of the Group of Experts had been completed, and asked that the Chair of the Group present the findings of this report at the 72nd session of SC.2 in November 2018.

19. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

Decision: The Working Party welcomed the summary of the ITC session provided by the secretariat and asked that the secretariat to provide a similar update at the next session of SC.2.

20. Activities of the European Commission in rail transport

Decision: The Working Party took note of the information provided by the European Commission.

21. Activities of international organizations in rail transport

Decision: The Working Party took note of the information provided by OTIF and OSJD under this agenda item.

22. Draft programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2018-2019

Decision: The Working Party adopted the draft programme of work and biennial evaluation and asked that the secretariat to submit it to ITC for approval.

23. Other business

N/A

24. Date and venue of next session

Decision: The Working Party noted the dates for the 72nd session of SC.2 as 21-23 November 2018.

25. Adoption of decisions

Decision: The Working Party agreed to the adoption of the decisions as discussed during the session and set out in Informal Document No.7 (2017).
