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The TER Project Central Office moves to Bratislava

After being based in Budapest for more than 15 years, the TER Project Central Office has moved to Bratislava (Slovakia).

The new TER Project Central Office was inaugurated on 15 May 2007 in a special ceremony held at the Mirbach Palace in Bratislava in the presence of the Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications of the Slovak Republic, Mr. L'ubomír Vázny, and the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Mr. Marek Belka.

"We are inaugurating this Office here today thanks to the strong commitment of the Slovak Government to the TER Project and I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Minister Vázny and to the Slovak Government for its generous contribution", said Mr. Belka, who also expressed gratitude to the Government of Hungary for having hosted the TER PCO until the end of 2006.

The inauguration of the new TER PCO, which will be located in the premises of the Slovak Ministry of Transport in Bratislava, also counted with the participation of Ambassadors, TER National Coordinators and other high level Officials from the Ministries of Transport of the participating countries.

"I am confident that this new Office will encourage the TER participating countries to cooperate more closely with a view to the coordinated development of their rail and combined transport links and to the necessary integration of those links into the pan-European transport system", added Mr. Belka.

The TER Project, which works under the auspices of the UNECE, brings together 17 Central, Eastern and South-eastern European as well as Caucasus countries, namely: Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Other countries in the region participate in the Project activities as observers.

The main objective of the TER Project is to promote cooperation among the participating countries with a view to the coordinated development of their railway and combined transport infrastructure and to the facilitation of rail traffic in the region.

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A TER Master Plan has recently been elaborated, which has identified the priority rail links in 21 Central, Eastern and South Eastern European countries – the TER Master Plan Backbone network - and has evaluated and assigned priorities to 172 railway projects of an aggregate estimated cost of EUR 52.5 billion, thus providing a realistic investment strategy for the development of rail and combined transport infrastructure in the participating countries.

The inauguration of the TER Office was further celebrated with a reception in the Austrian Embassy in Bratislava on the invitation of the Austrian Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Helmut Wessely. The Government of Austria supports the TER Project and has made available the Project Manager for the last six years as an in-kind contribution.

For additional information please contact:

Mr. José Capel Ferrer, Director, or
Mr. Michalis Adamantiadis, Chief, Transport and
Infrastructure Development Section
UNECE Transport Division
Palais des Nations
CH - 1211 Geneva 10

Phone: +41(0) 22 917 24 00 / 917 11 28

Fax: +41(0) 22 917 00 39

E-mail: infotransport@unece.org

Website: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/ter/ter.html>