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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
Working Party on Combined Transport
(14-15 April 2003)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10.00 hours on Monday 14 April 2003 ^{*/}**

Monday 14 April 2003

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Election of officers

^{*/} For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of the documents mentioned in this provisional agenda to the meeting. There will be no documentation available in the meeting room.

Before the meeting, missing documents may be obtained directly from the UNECE Transport Division (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; e-mail: WP.24@unece.org). Documents may also be downloaded from the Internet web site of the UNECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans). During the meeting, documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.111, 1st floor, Palais des Nations).

In accordance with the accreditation procedures applicable for all meetings held at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to fill-in the attached registration form (also available from the web site of the UNECE (www.unece.org)) and to transmit the duly filled-in form at the latest one week before the session to the UNECE Transport Division, either by fax (+41-22-917-0039) or by e-mail (WP.24@unece.org). In Geneva, prior to the session, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at Villa Les Feuillantines, 13 Avenue de la Paix (see attached map), for issuance of an identification badge. In case of difficulties, please phone the UNECE secretariat (Int. 72453).

3. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)
 - (a) Status of the AGTC Agreement
 - (b) Amendments proposed to the AGTC Agreement
 - (c) Inventory of existing AGTC standards and parameters
4. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)
5. Role of railways in the promotion of combined transport
6. Possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing combined transport

Tuesday 15 April 2003

7. Activities and developments in UNECE member countries, of UNECE bodies and other organizations of interest to the Working Party
 - (a) New developments in the field of combined transport in UNECE member countries
 - (b) Activities of subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and other UN bodies
 - (c) Activities of the European Commission (EC) and European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)
 - (d) Activities of other organizations
8. Monitoring of weights and dimensions of loading units used in combined transport
9. Security and multimodal transport operations
10. Review of the scope of work of the Working Party
11. Follow-up to the 1997 Vienna Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment: Establishment of "THE PEP"
12. Terminology in combined transport
13. Other business
14. Adoption of decisions

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/98.

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda (TRANS/WP.24/98).

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure and established practice, the Working Party will elect a Chairperson and a Vice-chairperson for its sessions in 2003.

3. EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT LINES AND RELATED INSTALLATIONS (AGTC)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev. 1; C.N.1078.2002.TREATIES-3; TRANS/WP.24/2003/1; UNECE Publication; "Yellow Book" and Corrs. 1 and 2; (www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/wp24/pub/html).

(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement

As of 1 February 2003, the following 26 countries are Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Kazakhstan; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey. The Working Party may wish to take note that the Republic of Moldova has acceded to the Agreement with effect from 8 January 2003 (Depositary Notification C.N.1078-002.TREATIES-3). Finland has signed the AGTC Agreement, but has not yet become a Contracting Party. The Working Party may wish to invite in particular, Finland, Ukraine and Yugoslavia to undertake all necessary steps to become Contracting Parties to the Agreement as soon as possible. The Working Party will be informed about an initiative to invite countries in the Caucasus and Central Asian region to accede to the Agreement.

The Working Party will also be informed about the publication, both in hard copy and electronic format, of a revised map covering the AGTC network.

Up-to-date information on the status of the AGTC Agreement as well as of other United Nations treaties developed and/or administered by the UNECE may be obtained from the web site of the UNECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans - Legal instruments).

(b) Amendments proposed to the AGTC Agreement

The Working Party may wish to consider a proposal submitted by the Russian Federation on the development of a Euro-Asian Agreement on main routes of international combined transport based on the existing AGTC Agreement (TRANS/WP.24/2003/1).

(c) Inventory of existing AGTC standards and parameters

The Working Party may wish to recall the publication, in 2000, of the so-called “Yellow Book”, an inventory of existing AGTC and AGC standards and parameters covering the year 1997. The short analysis on the implementation of the AGTC and AGC standards and parameters contained in the “Yellow Book” had been translated into French and Russian by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.24/2000/5). In 2001, the secretariat has issued corr. 1 and 2 to the “Yellow Book” concerning Austria, Poland and Romania. The Working Party may wish to be informed by Contracting Parties on possible further modifications to be made in the “Yellow Book”.

The Working Party may also wish to be informed about plans to up-date the information contained in the “Yellow-Book”, based on data covering 2002. Collection of relevant data could start in 2003 and results could be published in a new “Yellow Book” in 2004/2005.

4. PROTOCOL ON COMBINED TRANSPORT ON INLAND WATERWAYS TO THE EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT LINES AND RELATED INSTALLATIONS (AGTC)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs. 1 and 2; TRANS/WP.24/79.

The Working Party may wish to recall that, on the occasion of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12-14 November 1997), the Protocol to the AGTC Agreement has been signed by the following 12 UNECE member countries: Austria; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Netherlands; Portugal; Romania and Switzerland. Subsequently, the Protocol has been signed by Luxembourg on 29 April 1998, Slovakia on 29 June 1998 and Bulgaria on 28 October 1998.

As of 1 July 2002, the Protocol has the following seven Contracting Parties: Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Romania and Switzerland. It will come into force following ratification by at least five States, of which three States are linked, in a continuous manner, by the waterways identified in the Protocol.

Amendment proposals submitted to the Working Party at its twenty-ninth session by France, Hungary and Romania (Informal document No. 1 (1998); TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 20) as well as amendment proposals transmitted by the Government of Bulgaria to the secretariat may be considered by the Working Party as soon as the Protocol enters into force.

The final text of the Protocol to the AGTC Agreement (in English, French and Russian) is contained in document ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1 (F) and Corr.2 (R). Up-to-date information on the status and the text of the Protocol may be obtained from the web site of the UNECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans - Legal instruments).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the process of ratification by those Contracting Parties that have not yet ratified it.

In this context, the Working Party may wish be informed about the scheduled up-dating of the so-called "Blue Book" on parameters of inland waterways and the possible inclusion of data of combined transport lines and terminals listed in the AGTC Agreement connected to inland waterway transport infrastructure. Governments are invited to inform the secretariat in advance of the session of their contributions in this respect.

5. ROLE OF RAILWAYS IN THE PROMOTION OF COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/2003/7; TRANS/SC.2/2002/9; TRANS/WP.24/2002/9; TRANS/WP.24/2002/4; TRANS/WP.24/2002/3; TRANS/WP.24/2002/2; TRANS/WP.24/2002/1; TRANS/WP.24/2001/8; TRANS/WP.24/2001/7; TRANS/WP.24/2001/6; TRANS/WP.24/2001/5; TRANS/WP.24/2001/4; TRANS/WP.24/2001/3; TRANS/WP.24/2001/2; TRANS/WP.24/2001/1; Informal document No. 1 (2001); Informal document No. 3 (2001); Informal document No. 4 (2001); Informal document No. 5 (2001); Informal document No. 6 (2001).

The Working Party recalled the results of the Joint Meeting of the Working Party and the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) on 19 April 2001 as contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2001/8.

The Working Party had preliminarily considered that follow-up action should focus on the following issues:

- Partnership models, including agreements, best practices and key performance indicators taking into consideration the question of free competition and anti-trust regulations;

- Costing, pricing and subsidies focusing on the specific elements which make up each of these economic parameters, what factors influence each of the elements and how can an optimization of the elements assist in promoting combined transport;
- Facilitation of border crossing procedures, harmonization of frontier controls and interoperability in international transport;
- Harmonization of civil liability regimes in multimodal transports.

At its thirty-sixth session, the Working Party, on the basis of Informal document No. 8 (2001) (reproduced as official document TRANS/WP.24/2002/1) presented by its Vice-Chairman, agreed to establish two informal ad hoc expert groups addressing: (a) Partnership models and best practices in Combined Transport; (b) Combined Transport Terminal efficiency (TRANS/WP.24/93, paras. 39-41). The Terms of Reference of the two ad hoc expert groups are contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2002/2.

The Working Party also agreed that, in order to make progress on these issues, it was essential to develop practical measures that could possibly be linked to the existing legal instruments administered by the Working Party, i.e. the AGTC Agreement and its Protocol on inland water transport.

At its thirty-eighth session, the Working Party considered in detail the proposals of the informal ad hoc expert group on combined transport terminal efficiency (TRANS/WP.24/2002/4) and the findings of the informal ad hoc expert group on partnership models and best practices (Informal document No. 10 (2002)). The Working Party requested the two ad hoc expert groups to prepare concrete proposals for amendments to the AGTC Agreement for consideration at the present session (TRANS/WP.24/97, paras. 32-35).

The Working Party may wish to consider document TRANS/WP.24/2003/7, prepared by the secretariat, containing specific proposals for amendments to the AGTC Agreement.

The Working Party may recall that, at its thirty-sixth session, it had also requested the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) to take up the issue of interoperability and to revert with its findings on this issue to the Working Party in due course. In this context, the Working Party may wish to be informed by SC.2 about the considerations of this issue at its last session, in particular in relation on document TRANS/SC.2/2002/9 transmitted by the European Community on the status and implementation of the European Community Directive on interoperability.

The Working Party may also wish to recall that, at its thirty-eighth session, it had held initial discussions on costing, pricing and subsidies in combined transport with the aim of defining the future scope of work of the Working Party in this field. It had decided that, in order to define clearly the issues to be addressed, the involved parties should identify relevant issues to be considered without entering into commercial matters (TRANS/WP.24/97, para. 37). The Working Party may wish to be informed about progress in this field.

6. POSSIBILITIES FOR RECONCILIATION AND HARMONIZATION OF CIVIL LIABILITY REGIMES GOVERNING COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/2000/3; UNCTAD STDE/TLB/2003/1.

The Working Party may wish to recall that its programme of work contains as a priority item, the "... analysis of possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing combined transport operations." Following a request by the Inland Transport Committee to investigate existing difficulties for combined transport operations (ECE/TRANS/128, para. 86), the Working Party decided to further consider possible difficulties arising from differences in modal liability regimes and/or gaps in full coverage during combined transport operations (TRANS/WP.24/1999/1).

The secretariat had organized two hearings in 1999 and 2000 with the participation of government representatives and representatives of the interested intergovernmental organizations as well as international organizations representing the interests of trade and industry. The results of these hearings are contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2000/3.

At its thirty-fifth session, the Working Party requested the secretariat to explore the possibilities of aligning the liability clauses of the legal instruments governing European overland transport, in particular road and rail transport (TRANS/WP.24/91, para. 47).

At its thirty-seventh session, the Working Party considered a discussion paper prepared by the ad hoc expert group containing an overview of the various possibilities for harmonization of the liability rules and outlining proposals for further action in this field (TRANS/WP.24/2002/6). The Working Party felt that, taking account of the developments in the various international fora and the requirements of the users of combined and multimodal transport in the UNECE region, further work in this field should focus, at this stage, on developing a civil liability regime for multimodal transport based on an overland transport approach, possibly including short-sea shipping. The Working Party requested the secretariat to initiate a process to draft a legal instrument for this purpose.

At its thirty-eighth session, the Working Party was informed by the secretariat that the ad hoc expert group had considered a first draft for a convention relating to multimodal overland transport. The draft will be elaborated further before being submitted to the Working Party, taking account of the activities of other intergovernmental organizations, in particular the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The Working Party welcomed the work undertaken by the ad hoc expert group. It requested the group to pursue the preparation of a draft convention relating to multimodal overland transport covering the UNECE region and to present the draft to the Working Party as soon as possible. The ad hoc expert group should, however, make due consideration of initiatives taken at a global level in this field in order to avoid duplication of work.

Against this background, the ad hoc expert group recommended to await the outcome of the discussions in UNCITRAL on this issue before continuing its work. In this context, the Working Party may wish to be informed about the outcome of the eleventh session of the UNCITRAL Working Group III (Transport Law) (New York, 24 March to 4 April 2003). UNECE Governments may wish to participate in this session.

The Working Party may also wish to take account of possible guidance provided by the Inland Transport Committee, at its session in February 2003.

The Working Party may also wish to be informed by UNCTAD about the conclusions of a feasibility study on a new international legal instrument in the field of multimodal transport (UNCTAD STDE/TLB/2003/1). The Working Party may wish to recall that the UNECE and UNCTAD secretariats have agreed that responses to the study from Governments in the UNECE region should be used by the Working Party to assess the needs in this field. The Working Party may wish to consider the responses received and decide on possible further action in this regard.

7. ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN UNECE MEMBER COUNTRIES, OF UNECE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/2003/5; Informal document No. 1(2003).

(a) New developments in the field of combined transport in UNECE member countries

The Working Party may wish to continue its exchange of information on this subject. Delegations are expected to report orally on recent operating experiences, on new and planned administrative procedures and on new technologies with regard to combined transport in their

countries or organizations. Audio-visual aids, as well as written material, would be welcomed and could be distributed by the secretariat if received in time before the session.

The Russian Federation has prepared a document on developments in combined transport (TRANS/WP.24/2003/5).

The Working Party may also wish to be informed of a new concept for accompanied and unaccompanied combined transport that has been developed by a French company (Informal document No. 1 (2003)).

(b) Activities of subsidiary bodies of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC)

The Working Party will be informed of the activities of subsidiary bodies of the ITC, such as the Working Parties on Road Transport (SC.1), on Rail Transport (SC.2) and on Inland Water Transport (SC.3), the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30), as well as the UNECE Trans-European Railway Project (TER) as far as they relate to combined transport matters.

Detailed information on the activities of the UNECE and its subsidiary bodies, including the Working Party on Combined Transport (WP.24) is available on the UNECE Transport Division web site (www.unece.org/trans).

(c) Activities of the European Commission (EC) and European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)

The Working Party may wish to be informed of the latest activities of the EC and the ECMT in the field of combined transport.

(d) Activities of other organizations

The Working Party may wish to be informed of current and planned activities in combined transport of other international organizations.

8. MONITORING OF WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF LOADING UNITS IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/2003/2; TRANS/WP.24/2003/3; TRANS/WP.24/2003/4.

The Working Party may wish to recall that its programme of work contains as a priority item “Monitoring of weights and dimensions of loading units used in combined transport in accordance with resolution No. 241 adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on 5 February 1993.”

The Working Party may wish to be informed about new developments in this area, in particular the outcome of the initiative by the European Commission on harmonization and standardization of intermodal loading units (TRANS/WP.24/2003/2). The positions of UIC/GTC and UIRR are contained in TRANS/WP.24/2003/3 and TRANS/WP.24/2003/4 respectively.

9. SECURITY AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/2003/6; TRANS/WP.24/2002/13.

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its thirty-eighth session, it had an in-depth discussion of the question of transport and security based on document TRANS/WP.24/2002/13 prepared by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.24/97, para 58).

The Working Party may also wish to take note of document TRANS/WP.24/2003/6, prepared by the secretariat, providing an overview of important international initiatives in this field and be informed about possible guidance provided by the Inland Transport Committee during its session in February 2003. Delegations may wish to inform the Working Party about further details on national and international initiatives taken in this area.

10. REVIEW OF THE SCOPE OF WORK OF THE WORKING PARTY

Documentation: TRANS/2003/13; TRANS/WP.24/96, annex 3; TRANS/WP.24/2002/11; TRANS/WP.24/2002/12.

At its thirty-eighth session, the Working Party considered document TRANS/WP.24/2002/12, prepared by the Chair, containing proposals for a new strategy of work of the Working Party. It also considered document TRANS/WP.24/2002/11, prepared by the secretariat, containing a first overview of issues to be reviewed in this context (TRANS/WP.24/97, paras. 71 and 72).

The Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare a document on this issue for consideration by the Inland Transport Committee (TRANS/2003/13). The Working Party may wish to be informed by the secretariat about the conclusions of the Inland Transport Committee at its session in February 2003. In case the Inland Transport Committee responds positively to the proposed new scope and activities of the Working Party, it may wish to consider how to implement these new concepts. One possibility could be to establish an ad hoc expert group to prepare a first draft for a revised work programme for 2004-2008 to be circulated to Governments and international organizations for comments prior to the next session of the Working Party in autumn 2003.

11. FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 VIENNA REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT: ESTABLISHMENT OF "THE PEP"

Documentation: ECE/AC.21/2002/3; ECE/AC.21/2002/5 and Corr.1; ECE/AC.21/2002/6; ECE/AC.21/2002/8.

The Working Party may wish to recall the outcome and follow-up activities to the second High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health (Geneva, 5 July 2002) (ECE/AC.21/2002/6) as well as to the Declaration adopted at this meeting (ECE/AC.21/2002/8). The meeting decided to establish a Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) (ECE/AC.21/2002/5 and Corr.1). THE PEP will be administered under the auspices of UNECE and WHO/Euro and will consolidate and take forward the previous London and Vienna processes. A newly created Steering Committee on Transport, Environment and Health will consolidate and replace in particular the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment (JMTE) of UNECE as well as the London Charter Steering Group of WHO/Euro. The first session of the Committee will be held on 10 and 11 April 2003. The Working Party will be informed of decisions of the Steering Committee affecting its activities.

The Committee may wish to note in this context, that, as requested, the secretariat has prepared the necessary documentation for the mid-term review of the Vienna Programme of Joint Action (POJA), undertaken by the High-level Meeting, assessing progress achieved and difficulties met in the implementation of POJA from 1997-2002 (ECE/AC.21/2002/3).

12. TERMINOLOGY IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: UNECE Publication (www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/wp24/pub/html).

The Working Party may wish to recall the glossary of terms used in combined transport that has been prepared and published jointly by the European Commission (EC), the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and the UNECE secretariat. The glossary contains a

detailed, though not exhaustive list of definitions applied in the framework of combined transport in Europe. The definitions are available in four languages: English, French, Russian and German. The glossary is available on the UNECE Transport Division web site (www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/wp24/-Publications).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the status of the glossary and, in particular, about its translation into the other official United Nations languages.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

Date of next session

The Working Party may wish to decide on the date for its next session. The secretariat has tentatively made arrangements to convene the fortieth session of the Working Party on 29 September and 1 October 2003.

14. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS

The Working Party is not expected to adopt a report on its present session, but only a short list of decisions taken (TRANS/WP.24/63, para. 54). Following the session, the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair, will establish a short report of the session which could then be formally adopted at the autumn session of the Working Party in October 2003.



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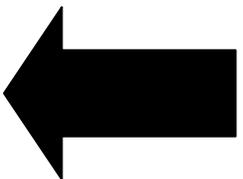
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