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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**Working Party on Combined Transport**

**(7-9 September 1998)**

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRTIETH SESSION <sup>\*/</sup>**

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
starting at 10.30 a.m. on Monday, 7 September 1998**

1. Adoption of the agenda

TRANS/WP.24/80

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<sup>\*/</sup> In accordance with paragraph 2 of articles 14, 15 and 16 of the **European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)**, any amendment proposed by a Contracting Party to the Agreement shall be considered by the ECE Working Party on Combined Transport. Therefore, agenda item 5 (b) will be considered and amendment proposals adopted in accordance with paragraph 3 of articles 14, 15 and 16 of the AGTC.

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 ECE Transport Division in Geneva (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; E-mail: martin.magold@unece.org). Documents can also be downloaded (English only) from the ECE Transport Division web site ([www.unece.org/trans](http://www.unece.org/trans)). During the meeting, missing documents may be obtained from the Documents Distribution Section (room C.111, 1st floor, Palais des Nations, Geneva).

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2. Adoption of the decisions taken at the twenty-ninth session      TRANS/WP.24/1998/4  
TRANS/WP.24/79
  
3. Activities of ECE bodies and other organizations  
of interest to the Working Party
  - (a) Economic Commission for Europe      E/1998/18-E/ECE/1365  
(www.unece.org)
  - (b) European Commission (EC)
  - (c) European Conference of Ministers of  
Transport (ECMT)
  - (d) Other organizations      Informal paper No. 7 (1998) EIA)
  
4. Follow-up to the 1997 Regional Conference  
on Transport and the Environment      ECE/RCTE/CONF./2/FINAL  
ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL  
TRANS/WP.24/1998/1  
TRANS/WP.24/R.85/Rev.1  
TRANS/WP.24/R.80/Rev.1
  
5. European Agreement on Important  
International Combined Transport Lines  
and Related Installations (AGTC)
  - (a) Status of the AGTC Agreement      ECE/TRANS/88 and Corr.1  
(www.unece.org/trans)  
(www.un.org/depts/treaty)
  - (b) Amendments proposed to the  
AGTC Agreement<sup>1/</sup>      TRANS/WP.24/77, annex 1  
TRANS/WP.24/71, annex 1
  
6. Protocol on combined transport on inland  
waterways to the European Agreement  
on Important International Combined  
Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)      ECE/TRANS/122, Corr. 1 and 2  
ECE/RCTE/CONF./7/FINAL  
TRANS/SC.3/1997/2

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<sup>1/</sup> For consideration of this item, see footnote on page 1.

7. Inventory of existing AGTC standards and parameters TRANS/WP.24/1998/2  
"Yellow Book" and  
Addendum
8. Interregional links in combined transport TRANS/WP.24/1998/3  
andCorr.1  
TRANS/WP.24/79  
TRANS/WP.24/1997/2  
TRANS/WP.24/R.86  
TRANS/WP.24/R.81
9. Possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization TRANS/WP.24/79  
of civil liability regimes governing combined transport Informal document No.6 (1998)
10. New developments in the field of combined transport Documents to be  
in ECE member countries transmitted by delegations  
TRANS/WP.24/79
11. Programme of work for 1999 to 2003 TRANS/WP.24/79, annex  
TRANS/WP.24/77, annex  
E/1998/38-E/ECE/1365  
ECE/TRANS/125
12. Other business  
  
Date of next session
13. Adoption of the decisions taken by the Working Party

Annex: Revised draft programme of work for 1999 to 2003

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## **1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda (TRANS/WP.24/80).

## **2. ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION**

In accordance with its decision, the Working Party may wish to formally adopt the decisions taken at its twenty-ninth session on the basis of the draft prepared by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.24/79). Following the issuance of the draft decisions, some amendments have been proposed to this text (TRANS/WP.24/1998/4). If acceptable to the Working Party, the secretariat will issue a revised report.

## **3. ACTIVITIES OF ECE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY**

### **(a) Economic Commission for Europe**

The Working Party will be informed about the results of the fifty-third session of the Economic Commission for Europe (21-23 April 1998) as it relates to matters of interest to the Working Party, particularly as they concern the presentation of its programme of work (E/1998/18-E/ECE/1365, para. 29)(see also agenda item 11). Detailed information on the activities of the ECE and its subsidiary bodies, including the Working Party on Combined Transport, are available on the ECE web site ([www.unece.org](http://www.unece.org)).

The Working Party will also be informed of the activities of other subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee, such as the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1), Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2), Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30), as far as they relate to combined transport matters.

### **(b) European Commission (EC)**

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

### **(c) European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)**

The Working Party may wish to be informed of the outcome of the Council of Ministers meeting held at Copenhagen (26 and 27 May 1998) as regards combined transport as well as on the follow-up envisaged by the ECMT.

(d) Other organizations

The Working Party may wish to be informed of current and planned activities in combined transport of other international organizations, such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), International Maritime Organization (IMO), Committee of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhd), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Union of Railways (UIC), International Union of Combined Road/Rail Transport Companies (UIRR) and others.

Informal document No. 7 (1998) (English and French only) prepared by the European Intermodal Association (EIA) will be available at the session.

**4. FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

The Working Party may recall the outcome of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment, held in Vienna from 12 to 14 November 1997. In particular, the Conference had adopted a Declaration and a Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF./2/FINAL; ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL). The Conference had also been addressed by the Chairman of the Working Party, Mr. H. Maillard (Belgium) (TRANS/WP.24/1998/1).

The Working Party may also recall that it had prepared earlier two background documents for the Conference on the promotion of combined transport to foster a sustainable transport policy in Europe (TRANS/WP.24/R.85/Rev.1; TRANS/WP.24/R.80/Rev.1).

At its twenty-ninth session, the Working Party considered in particular Chapter III and IV of the Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF.3/FINAL) and identified the following programme elements to be undertaken at the international level: III (b), (d), (j),(k),(l); and IV (d). Delegations were invited to contact their national focal points who have been designated by their respective Governments to monitor and implement the Programme of Joint Action with regard to the implementation of these elements.

The secretariat will inform the Working Party of the deliberations held at a Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment, held on 7 July 1998, at which the Bureaux of the ECE Inland Transport Committee and the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy are expected to decide on concrete actions regarding the implementation of the Programme of Joint Action at the international level.

The Working Party may wish to consider concrete activities as follow-up to the Conference within its mandate.

## **5. EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT LINES AND RELATED INSTALLATIONS (AGTC)**

### **(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement**

As of 1 June 1998 the following 21 countries are Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement: Austria; Belarus; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey.

The following countries have signed the AGTC Agreement, but have not yet become Contracting Parties to it: Belgium; Finland and Poland.

Up-to-date information on the status of the AGTC Agreement as well as of other United Nations treaties may be obtained via the Internet from the web site of the ECE Transport Division ([www.unece.org/trans](http://www.unece.org/trans)) or of the Legal Office of the United Nations in New York ([www.un.org/depts/treaty](http://www.un.org/depts/treaty)).

The Working Party may wish to be informed by delegations about the intention of ECE member countries to accede to the AGTC Agreement and to invite in particular Belgium, Finland, Poland, the Republic of Moldova and the Ukraine to undertake all necessary steps with a view to becoming Contracting Parties to the Agreement as soon as possible.

### **(b) Amendments proposed to the AGTC Agreement**

The Working Party was informed that the Legal Office of the United Nations has issued on 25 March 1998 Depositary Notification C.N.91-1998.TREATIES-1 stipulating that the package of amendment proposals, adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the Working Party in 1996 (TRANS/WP.24/71, annex 1) have been accepted by all Contracting Parties and would thus come into force on 25 June 1998.

The Working Party will be informed of further developments with regard to the inclusion into the AGTC Agreement of railway lines and related installations in the Republic of Moldova and the Ukraine complementing the amendment proposals already adopted by the Working Party for Hungary and Romania in September 1997 (TRANS/WP.24/77, annex 1).

Governments which intend to propose further amendments to the AGTC Agreement, but have not yet transmitted their proposals to the ECE secretariat, are invited to do so as soon as possible.

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

The Working Party may recall that on the occasion of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12-14 November 1997), the Protocol has been signed by the following 12 ECE member countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Switzerland. Subsequently the Protocol has been signed by Slovakia on 29 June 1998. The Working Party may wish to be informed of the intention of other Governments to sign or to accede to the Protocol in accordance with articles 6 and 8 respectively. The Protocol will be open at the office of the United Nations in Geneva for signature of States which are Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement until 31 October 1998.

Amendment proposals already submitted to the Working Party at its twenty-ninth session (March 1998) by France, Hungary and Romania (Informal document No. 1 (1998) refers), will be reconsidered by the Working Party as soon as the Protocol had come into force (TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 20).

The Working Party may also wish to recall that, in accordance with operative paragraph 2 of the Resolution adopted by the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (ECE/RCTE/CONF.7/FINAL), it had decided to monitor the implementation of the Protocol and to conduct an inventory of its parameters and standards in cooperation with the ECE Working Party on Inland Water Transport. This Working Party has already completed a first inventory of the existing and target parameters of the E waterway network identified in the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN), which, to a large extent, covers the network and the parameters enshrined in the Protocol and will be repeated every five years (TRANS/SC.3/1997/2). The final version of the so-called "Blue Book" will be available in September 1998. The Working Party may wish to consider whether any further work is to be undertaken in this respect covering combined transport.

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).

## **7. INVENTORY OF EXISTING AGTC STANDARDS AND PARAMETERS**

The Working Party may recall that, at its twenty-ninth session, it approved a standard questionnaire (TRANS/WP.24/1998/2) and requested the secretariat to add to each of the pre-filled country questionnaires the new lines and related installations that are part of the amendment proposals adopted at the twenty-fifth session of the Working Party. Relevant AGC parameters and AGC lines, not part of the AGTC network, should also be added, in consultation with the secretariat of the ECE Working Party on Rail Transport, to arrive at one consolidated questionnaire covering both the AGTC and the AGC Agreements (TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 23).

In accordance with this mandate, the secretariat has prepared pre-filled country questionnaires that will be transmitted to concerned ECE member countries requesting information for the year 1997 on existing AGTC standards and parameters. This would allow for an evaluation of the development in these standards and parameters compared to the first enquiry made for the year 1992. It is planned to transmit these pre-filled questionnaires by the end of July to the countries concerned. Copies of these questionnaires may also be obtained from the ECE Transport Division (Fax: +41-22-917-0039).

The Working Party may wish to consider progress made and possible difficulties encountered in the filling-in of the requested information.

## **8. INTERREGIONAL LINKS IN COMBINED TRANSPORT**

At its twenty-ninth session, the Working Party took note of a secretariat document identifying three interregional combined transport corridors linking Europe and Asia and felt that, on that basis, the consolidation of the three existing networks based on the AGTC Agreement, the OSZhD Agreement (TRANS/WP.24/1997/2) and the Trans-Asian Railway network should be envisaged (TRANS/WP.24/1998/3 and Corr.1). At a first step, the AGTC Agreement should be extended to all ECE member countries taking account of the newly established OSZhD Agreement. The secretariat was requested to contact the countries concerned with a view to obtaining their approval for such extension (TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 24).

In accordance with this mandate, the secretariat is preparing a package of possible amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement covering railway lines and related installations as contained in the OSZhD Agreement for all ECE member countries. These proposals will be transmitted to concerned ECE member countries and for consideration by the Working Party, if possible, well before the September session.

## **9. POSSIBILITIES FOR RECONCILIATION AND HARMONIZATION OF CIVIL LIABILITY REGIMES GOVERNING COMBINED TRANSPORT**

The Working Party may recall that its programme of work for 1998 to 2002 contains, as a new priority item, the "... analysis of possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing combined transport operations. This might include the organization of a "hearing" of all private sector and governmental parties concerned."

At its twenty-ninth session, the Working Party stressed that, before any concrete work in this field could be initiated, all ECE member countries should conduct consultations at the national level on the problems encountered and on the feasibility and the approach to be taken to resolve difficulties arising from the differences in liability regimes governing the various transport modes. At the next session of the Working Party this information would then be considered in detail (TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 31).

In a number of ECE member countries legislation has been adopted or is under preparation towards a harmonization of modal requirements on civil liability at the national level. At the international level, preparation of a common international legal regime covering civil liability for inland waterways is under preparation within the ECE, CCNR and the Danube Commission complementing the existing regimes covering road (CMR) and rail (COTIF-CIM) transport. What is missing in an increasingly competitive environment governing inland transport in Europe (road, rail, inland water) are standard rules for international liability regimes applicable to all competing inland modes (road, rail, inland water, combined transport) based on modern transport requirements.

The Working Party may wish to continue its consideration on this matter taking account of the national consultation made with competent officials of Ministries of Transport and Justice as well as of the views received from international organizations.

## **10. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF COMBINED TRANSPORT IN ECE 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. An exchange of views and experiences in ECE member countries on the organization of combined transport in the context of privatized railway operations might also be undertaken (TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 30).

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.

## **11. DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 1999 TO 2003**

Taking account of the deliberations of the Working Party on its future programme of work at its twenty-eighth session (TRANS/WP.24/77, paras. 36 to 44) and pertinent decisions on the presentation of the programme of work of the various subsidiary bodies of the ECE taken by the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/125, paras. 138-144) and the Commission (E/1998/38-E/ECE/1365, para. 29), the secretariat has prepared a new presentation of the present programme of work of the work of the Working Party as contained in the annex to this agenda.

The Working Party may wish to consider its present programme as drafted by the secretariat and contained in the annex to this agenda with a view to its completion and/or modification for transmission to the Inland Transport Committee.

## **12. 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 thirty-first session of the Working Party on 13 and 14 April 1999.

## **13. ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE WORKING PARTY**

In accordance with established practice, the Working Party will adopt the report on its thirtieth session on the basis of the draft prepared by the secretariat. Due to resource limitations affecting the concerned conference room services, parts of the report may only be available in English for adoption on the last day of the session. Following the session, the final report will however continue to be available in the three ECE working languages.

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Annex

**REVISED DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK  
FOR 1999 TO 2003**

Reference: ECE/TRANS/125/Add.1

**PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.8: COMBINED TRANSPORT**

Promotion of combined and multimodal transport

Priority: 1

Description: Consideration of legal, administrative, documentary, technical, economic and environmental aspects of combined and multimodal transport with a view to the development of measures to promote combined and multimodal transport as well as the maximum utilization of equipment, infrastructure and terminals used for such transport.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Combined Transport will pursue the following activities:

Continuing activities:

- (a) Review and updating of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) with a view to:

Extending the AGTC network to all ECE member countries concerned taking account of the work already undertaken by ESCAP and the OSZhD;  
Taking into account new developments in transport markets (demands and requirements), including new east-west traffic flows;  
Implementing and, whenever feasible, improving existing standards and operational parameters;  
Raising environmental, energy and safety standards.

Output expected by 2000:

Adoption of an extended AGTC network covering all ECE member countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Inclusion into the AGTC Agreement of new East-West combined transport lines, especially in the Ukraine and in the Republic of Moldova.

Analysis of existing standards and operational parameters to be published by the ECE secretariat in an updated Yellow Book.

- (b) Analysis of transshipment and handling requirements, of marking, coding and identification systems for means of transport and loading units in combined transport, including the promotion of electronic data processing, with a view to improving the flow of information among the various operators and to allow for a better integration of production and distribution systems (logistics) using combined transport techniques.

Output expected by 2000:

No output foreseen so far (to be determined by the Working Party).

- (c) 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. This includes consideration of possibilities for standardization of loading units and the compliance with safety regulations.

Output expected by 2000:

Review of the issues based on two annual reports to be prepared by the ECE secretariat on latest developments in this field.

- (d) Study of technical and organizational measures to optimize terminal and transshipment procedures allowing for more cost-effective handling procedures of loading units.

Output expected by 2000:

No output foreseen so far (to be determined by the Working Party).

- (e) Analysis of economic and environmental aspects of combined transport, including administrative measures and activities of the transport industry, with a view to promoting sustainable transport development.

Output expected by 2000:

Follow-up to the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12 to 14 November 1998) on the basis of the Joint Programme of Action adopted at the Conference, in accordance with the decisions to be taken by the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment to be held on 7 July 1998.

No concrete output foreseen so far (to be determined by the Working Party).

- (f) Monitoring by the secretariat on behalf of the Working Party of the following subjects for consideration by the Working Party upon specific request only:

Harmonization of combined transport terminology in order to contribute to a single international glossary of terms used in this field.

Combined transport techniques and operations (including inland waterways and coastal shipping techniques) as a basis for a possible international compendium of measures for the safe handling and temporary storage of dangerous goods.

National approval procedures for containers and swap-bodies in the framework of relevant conventions, such as the CSC Convention, with a view to better harmonizing such procedures.

New services and technologies in combined and intermodal transport, including sea/inland waterways and sea/land interfaces, and the use of bimodal road/rail vehicles with a view to be able to analyse the potential of combined transport.

Output expected by 2000:

Preparation and organization of a joint ECE/ECMT expert group meeting on combined transport terminology. Approval of such terms by the Working Party.

Two annual reports to be prepared by the ECE secretariat on safe handling and temporary storage of dangerous goods in combined transport, national approval procedures under the CSC Convention and on new services and technologies in combined transport for consideration and approval by the Working Party.

Activities of a limited duration:

- (g) Analysis of possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing combined transport operations. This might include the organization of a "hearing" of all private sector and governmental parties involved. (2000)

Output expected by 1999:

Preparation of an analysis on the reconciliation and harmonization of the existing civil liability regimes, possibly followed by the preparation of a "hearing" on this subject in 2000.

- (h) Analysis of the consequences on the organization of combined transport in Europe resulting from the development of combined transport services on interregional rail links between Europe and Asia. This includes the organization of an inter-regional meeting harmonizing the legal and administrative work carried out by relevant international organizations in Europe and Asia (e.g. ESCAP, UNCTAD, EC, OSZhD). (2000)

Output expected by 1999:

Based on work carried out by ESCAP, study on the feasibility of an intergovernmental meeting, jointly organized with ESCAP, in Central Asia or the Caucasus to agree on common measures to facilitate combined transport services along the interregional links.

The Committee will cooperate, in particular, with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) with regard to international multimodal transport and its work on containerization, as well as with the European Community (EC) and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in all fields of combined transport which are of mutual concern.

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