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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on Intermodal Transport and Logistics¹

(26-28 September 2005)

UNECE Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics

(27 and 28 September 2005)

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY²**

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
starting at 9.30 hours on Tuesday, 27 September 2005³**

1. Adoption of the agenda [TRANS/WP.24/108⁴](#)
2. Adoption of the decisions taken at the
fourth session of the Working Party [TRANS/WP.24/107](#)

¹ The UNECE and ECMT have adopted cooperative arrangements in establishing the “Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on Intermodal Transport and Logistics” consisting of separate ECMT and UNECE segments, the UNECE segment consisting of its Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24).

² 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 secretariat (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; e-mail: WP.24@unece.org). Documents are also available at: <http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html>. Delegations are requested to complete the attached registration form (also available at: <http://www.unece.org/trans/info.delegates.html>) and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat, at the latest, two weeks prior to the session.

³ The ECMT segment will be held on Monday, 26 September 2005 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva (for draft agenda and documents refer to <http://www.cemt.org/>). The session of the UNECE Working Party is planned to be concluded on Wednesday, 28 September 2005, at 13.00 hours.

⁴ Document references are hyperlinked, allowing on-line access (in PDF format); just click on reference number.

3. Follow-up to the ECMT/UNECE Seminar on Intermodal Transport between Europe and Asia (Kiev, 27-28 September 2004) [TRANS/WP.24/2005/1](#)
[TRANS/WP.24/107](#)
4. Border crossing facilitation procedures relating to intermodal transport operations in a pan-European context [TRANS/2005/15](#)
[TRANS/SC.2/2004/7](#)
[TRANS/2005/13 and Corr.1](#)
5. Implementation of “model” action plans and partnership agreements at the pan-European level [TRANS/WP.24/2005/7](#)
6. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations ([AGTC](#))
 - (a) Status of the AGTC Agreement [ECE/TRANS/88/Rev. 3](#)
 - (b) Status of amendment proposals adopted by the Working Party [TRANS/WP.24/103/Corr.1](#)
[C.N.6.2005.TREATIES-1](#)
[TRANS/WP.24/2005/6](#)
[TRANS/WP.24/2005/2](#)
7. [Protocol](#) on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) [ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1 and 2](#)
8. Role of intermodal transport in European express freight and parcel markets Conference Room Document
9. Interoperability and intermodal transport [TRANS/WP.24/2005/5](#)
[TRANS/WP.24/107](#)
10. Opinion on 45 ft long containers: Follow-up to the ISO TC 104 decision [TRANS/WP.24/2005/8](#)
[TRANS/WP.24/2005/4](#)
[TRANS/WP.24/107](#)

11. Reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing intermodal transport [TRANS/WP.24/2002/6](#)
12. Intermodal transport and security [ECE/TRANS/162](#)
13. Programme of work for 2006 to 2010 [TRANS/WP.24/2005/9](#)
14. Date of next sessions
15. Election of officers for the sessions of the Working Party in 2006
16. Summary of decisions taken [TRANS/WP.24/63](#)
[ECE/TRANS/156](#)

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda ([TRANS/WP.24/108](#)).

2. ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE FOURTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party may wish to formally adopt the decisions taken at its forty-third session on the basis of the draft report prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairman ([TRANS/WP.24/107](#)).

3. FOLLOW-UP TO THE ECMT/UNECE SEMINAR ON INTERMODAL TRANSPORT BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA (KIEV, 27-28 SEPTEMBER 2004)⁵

The Working Party may wish to continue its considerations on the follow-up activities to the Kiev Seminar ([TRANS/WP.24/2005/1](#)) following a first round of discussions at its March 2005 session ([TRANS/WP.24/107](#), paras. 4-6) and the adoption of a [framework action plan](#) for the promotion of intermodal transport on transport links between Europe and Asia by the Council of Ministers of ECMT (Moscow, 24 and 25 May 2005).

In this context, the Working Party will be informed about the outcome of the third [Expert Group Meeting on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages](#) (Istanbul, 27-29 June 2005) organized under the auspices of UNECE and UNESCAP.

4. BORDER CROSSING FACILITATION PROCEDURES RELATING TO INTERMODAL TRANSPORT OPERATIONS IN A PAN-EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The Kiev Seminar has identified the persistent problems at border crossings, particularly in rail transport, as one of the main weaknesses for the effective development of transport linkages between Europe and Asia. Subsequently, the Council of Ministers of ECMT, in its framework action plan, has underlined that priority needs to be given to facilitating border crossings, all components and all modes combined, but with the focus on rail transport.

⁵ Basic consideration of this item will be held during the ECMT segment of the Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on 26 September 2005. Decisions on specific follow-up activities of the Working Party to the Kiev Seminar will be taken under this agenda item.

Before possibly embarking on specific activities of its own, such as preparation of relevant provisions into the AGTC and/or AGC Agreements, the Working Party may wish to be informed about practical border crossing problems encountered in international rail and intermodal transport on important European East-West rail corridors. The Working Party will also be informed of current activities in this field by UNECE and other organizations aiming at facilitation of border crossing procedures in international rail transport. This relates, in particular, to a planned International Conference on Facilitation of Railway Border Crossing to be held in 2006 under the auspices of UNECE and OSZhd ([TRANS/2005/15](#); [TRANS/SC.2/2004/7](#)) as well as to the preparation by UNECE of a Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail under Cover of SMGS Consignment Notes ([TRANS/2005/13](#) and [Corr.1](#)).

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF “MODEL” ACTION PLANS AND PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS AT THE PAN-EUROPEAN LEVEL⁶

Following adoption by the ECMT Council of Ministers of a [recommendation on “model” action plans and partnership agreements](#) for the development of intermodal transport that had been prepared by the Working Party in March 2005, the Working Party may wish to consider how to facilitate use of these models by ECMT and UNECE member Governments and how and when to report on their implementation as stipulated in the Ministerial recommendation ([TRANS/WP.24/2005/7](#)).

The objective of these models is to promote better practices for cooperation between players in international intermodal transport at the policy as well as technical and commercial levels and to establish benchmarks to measure performance.

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

(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement

As of 1 July 2005, the AGTC Agreement has 26 Contracting Parties⁷. The Working Party may wish to be informed of the intentions of UNECE member Governments to accede to the Agreement.

⁶ Considerations of this item could already take place during the ECMT segment of the Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on 26 September 2005 when discussing the outcome of the ECMT Ministerial Council meeting in Moscow (24 and 25 May 2005).

⁷ Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Luxembourg; Kazakhstan; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey.

The up-to-date and consolidated text of the AGTC Agreement is contained in document ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.3 and is available at the web site of the Working Party in English, French and Russian (<http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html>).

(b) Status of amendment proposals adopted by the Working Party

The Working Party may wish to note that the amendments proposed by the Russian Federation and adopted by the Working Party at its forty-first session (TRANS/WP.24/103/Corr.1) have come into force on 7 April 2005 (Depositary Notification C.N.6.2005.TREATIES-1).

The Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement, present and voting at the forty-third session of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.24/107, para. 11), have adopted unanimously amendment proposals to annexes I and II of the AGTC Agreement as contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2005/6. As requested, the secretariat has transmitted these proposals to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement for issuance of the required depositary notifications. The Working Party may wish to be informed of the status of these amendment proposals.

As agreed, work has continued on a second package of amendment proposals based on initial work carried out by the secretariat with a view to extending the AGTC network to Central Asia and the Caucasus (TRANS/WP.24/2005/2). In case the required information is forthcoming well before the session, the secretariat will table these amendment proposals in an official document for consideration by the Working Party.

7. 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 wish to be informed of progress made in the ratification of the Protocol following transmission of a communication by the secretariat to concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement.

The Protocol has been signed by 15 countries and ratified so far by seven countries, but is not yet in force⁸. Its text is contained in document ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1 and 2 (<http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html>).

⁸ Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Romania; Switzerland.

8. ROLE OF INTERMODAL TRANSPORT IN EUROPEAN EXPRESS FREIGHT AND PARCEL MARKETS

On the basis of a survey made by the “Groupement européen du transport combiné (GETC)”, the Working Party may wish to discuss whether and under which conditions national and international intermodal transport services could play an increased role in the European express freight and parcel markets. While these markets require very high quality and logistics standards (speed, reliability, traceability, etc.) of intermodal transport services, they provide access to very considerable volumes to be carried often over-night between main European centres and are forecasted to grow considerably faster than the European freight market as a whole.

9. INTEROPERABILITY AND INTERMODAL TRANSPORT

At its forty-third session, the Working Party considered the results of a survey carried out by the secretariat on the relevance of the existing infrastructure and performance standards as well as target values contained in the AGTC Agreement ([TRANS/WP.24/2005/5](#)). With a view to analysing the coherence between the various rail and intermodal infrastructure and service parameters and to examining, if necessary, their harmonization in the longer term, the Working Party felt that it was of particular importance to cooperate with the relevant railway groups within UNECE and ECMT as well as with the competent authorities within the European Union dealing with infrastructure standards of national rail networks ([TRANS/WP.24/107, paras. 13-14](#)).

The Working Party may wish to be informed by experts and delegations from international organizations and member countries about current activities on the harmonization of rail infrastructure standards in Europe with a view to possibly adjust the current infrastructure standards contained in the AGTC and AGC agreements.

10. OPINION ON 45 FT LONG CONTAINERS: FOLLOW-UP TO THE ISO TC 104 DECISION

At its forty-third session, the Working Party considered the results of a consultation with UNECE member States on the ISO proposal to standardize maritime containers with the following dimensions: 45' x 8' x 9'6" (Length x Width x Height) ([TRANS/WP.24/2005/4](#)). On this basis, the Working Party adopted an opinion on the ISO proposal. This opinion was then transmitted to the session of the ISO Technical Committee 104 (ISO TC 104) held at London on 12 and 13 May 2005 ([TRANS/WP.24/107, paras. 20-22](#)).

ISO TC 104 approved the proposal to standardize a 45 ft long container and to amend ISO Standard 668 accordingly. It also requested its Chairman to respond to the UNECE opinion.

The response of the chairman of ISO TC 104 is contained in document [TRANS/WP.24/2005/8](#) for consideration by the Working Party.

11. RECONCILIATION AND HARMONIZATION OF CIVIL LIABILITY REGIMES GOVERNING INTERMODAL TRANSPORT

The Working Party may wish to be informed of progress made by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) [Working Group III \(Transport Law\)](#) in the preparation of an international instrument on maritime transport that would also extend to all contracts of carriage involving a sea leg, including short-sea shipping and port hinterland transport by road, rail or inland water transport (for background information, see [TRANS/WP.24/2002/6](#)).

The Working Party may also wish to be informed of the status of the study commissioned by the European Commission on civil liability regimes applicable to intermodal transport

12. INTERMODAL TRANSPORT AND SECURITY

The Working Party may wish to note that the Inland Transport Committee had requested its subsidiary bodies to accelerate existing and potential new activities in the field of transport and security and to play a more proactive role in relation to this question. The Committee decided to organize a multi-disciplinary Round Table on Transport Security in conjunction with its sixty-eighth session in February 2006. The Round Table should primarily focus on the areas of expertise of the UNECE and should encompass all relevant authorities of UNECE member States, intergovernmental organizations and business organizations with an interest in the question of transport security in the UNECE region ([ECE/TRANS/162, para. 20](#)).

Taking into account the activities of ECMT in this field, particularly its recent study on container transport security across modes, the Working Party may wish to decide on follow-up work, if any.

13. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2006 TO 2010

The Working Party may wish to consider and review its programme of work covering the period 2006 to 2010 as contained in a draft prepared by the secretariat ([TRANS/WP.24/2005/9](#)). As decided at its forty-second session ([TRANS/WP.24/105, para. 4](#)) and approved by the Inland Transport Committee ([ECE/TRANS/162, paras. 133 and 134](#)), the Working Party may wish to

add specific references to its programme of work relating to “transport safety and security” as well as to “globalization of the world economy.

14. DATE OF NEXT SESSIONS

The spring 2006 session of the joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group has already been scheduled to be held on 29 and 30 March 2006 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. It will be hosted by the UNECE. The ECMT segment is planned to be held on 29 March 2006 and the UNECE segment on 30 March 2006.

Tentative dates for the autumn 2006 sessions: 2-4 October 2006 (Paris).

15. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE SESSIONS OF THE WORKING PARTY IN 2006

In line with the procedures adopted for the Inland Transport Committee, the Working Party may wish to elect a Chair and possibly a Vice-Chair for its sessions in 2006.

16. SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN

In line with established practice (TRANS/WP.24/63, para. 54) and in accordance with the decision of the Inland Transport Committee ([ECE/TRANS/156, para. 6](#)), at the end of the session the Chair will make a brief summary of the decisions taken. Following the session, the UNECE secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair, will establish a report on the outcome of the session for transmission to the Inland Transport Committee.

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