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**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)  
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE**

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Workshop on Promotion  
of the Freight Village  
Concept and Development  
of Activity of CT Operators  
18-19 July 2002, Munich, Germany

Summary of Conclusions

A UNECE-TER workshop on the introduction of the Freight Villages (FVs) concept and development of activity of combined transport (CT) operators was organized jointly with UIRR (Brussels) and Kombiverkehr (Germany). The workshop took place on 18-19 July 2002 in Munich, Germany. The agenda of the meeting is attached (Annex 1).

The meeting was attended by representatives of 10 TER member countries as well as international organizations and combined transport operators, efficiently operational among which the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Eurochambres) and the European network of Freight Villages (Europlatforms). The list of participants is attached as Annex 2.

At the end of the meeting, the following conclusions summarizing the interventions of the speakers were considered useful to be followed up:

- FVs and their main components, the intermodal terminals, represent indispensable infrastructure fabrics that should be in place in order for the combined transport to be operational and develop further.
- FVs, as multi-firm commercial estates concentrating different transport activities from different transport operators and users, offer not only the ideal framework for optimal use of modes but also new options for the development of advanced systems of efficient management of sustainable freight flows. The economies of scale achieved by FVs users, from sharing the same facilities and equipment and from the synergy generated by the concentration of transport activities in one and the same place, decrease the overall transport cost while offering a higher quality of transport services.

- For many years, FVs have been developed in most Western European countries, offering extremely useful services by responding accurately to existing transport related needs and market evolutions. The preparation of conditions for the establishment of such centres in the CEEC is vital for the future development of an efficient combined transport system in Europe and the smooth integration of the accession countries to the EU. All the participants agreed on the importance of implementing the necessary measures for a wide spread of the FVs concept in the enlarged European Union and the whole of Europe.
  
- The participants to the workshop supported the initiative of the UNECE, TER, TEM, Eurochambres and Europlatforms, to join their efforts and, in cooperation with EC DG REGIO – ISPA and DG TREN, to embark upon an integrated promotion of the FVs concept in the 10 ISPA countries and their CEE neighbours by organizing meetings for the transfer of know-how and sharing of experiences from the West.
  
- The importance of the activity of combined transport as such was recognized by all. Measures for supporting this activity and elaboration of an adequate legislation to be implemented in the TER countries was considered of vital importance.
  
- It was felt that a competitive railway environment should be put in place, creating a context in which the client will ultimately have the possibility to choose his traction supplier(s); in such environment, bi- or multimodal co-operation among railway companies in various fields may contribute to a more efficient railway activity in general and provide better results and profits for the sector. CT (road and rail) was appreciated as one of the major ways for increasing railway revenues.
  
- The implementation of the objectives provided by EU Directive 2002/16 on Interoperability was considered not only useful but also necessary. This process will need some time and resources.
  
- The necessity of concluding concrete intergovernmental agreements for facilitating the transit transport both for passenger and freight in international traffic, was recognised. These agreements should provide concrete tasks and obligations for the railways as well as the customs and border police authorities.
  
- It was also recognized that the transport evolution and trends indicate the establishment of an extended and permanent cooperation among different transport players in the field of freight and combined transport activity. Possible harmonization of the equipment in terminals, as well as their organization and services offered, was considered helpful for the future development of combined transport activity.

The workshop was highly appreciated by the participants. It was considered that a follow-up of the subjects discussed would be very valuable for further debate at a later date.