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Report of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics on its fifty-seventh session

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Attendance	1–4	3
II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)	5	3
III. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (agenda item 2)	6–17	3
A. Status of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) and adopted amendment proposals	6–8	3
B. Amendment proposals (Updating and extension of the AGTC network)	9–11	4
C. Amendment proposals (Minimum infrastructure and performance standards)	12–17	4
IV. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement (agenda item 3)	18–26	5
A. Status of the Protocol	20–21	5
B. Amendment proposals	22–25	6
V. Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) (agenda item 4)	26–28	6
VI. Climate change and intermodal transport (agenda item 5)	29–38	7
A. Mitigation	29–32	7
B. Adaptation	33–35	7
C. Diesel Engines	36–38	8

VII.	Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and technological developments in intermodal transport (agenda item 6)	39–41	8
VIII.	Annual themes on Intermodal Transport: (agenda item 7)	42–51	9
	A. Follow-up to the 2013 workshop on weights and dimensions of Intermodal Transport Units (ITU)	42–46	9
	B. 2014 Theme: Role of freight forwarders and logistics in intermodal transport chains	47–51	10
	C. Selection of a theme for substantive discussions in 2015	52	10
IX.	Intermodal transport terminals (agenda item 8)	53–56	11
X.	Preparing National Master Plans on freight transport and logistics (agenda item 9)	57–60	11
XI.	New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 10)	61–67	12
	A. Trends and performance in the intermodal transport and logistics industry ...	61–62	12
	B. Activities of the European Commission in intermodal transport and logistics	63	12
	C. Pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies	64–66	12
	D. Intermodal Transport Statistics	67	13
XII.	Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 11)	68–69	13
XIII.	Election of officers (agenda item 12)	70	14
XIV.	Date and venue of next sessions (agenda item 13)	71	14
XV.	Summary of decisions (agenda item 14)	72	14

I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics held its fifty-seventh session on 10 and 11 November 2014 in Geneva.
2. The session of the Working Party was attended by the following countries: Belgium; Croatia; Czech Republic; Germany; Netherlands; Poland; Russian Federation; Switzerland and Turkey.
3. The following non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations were represented: Eurasian Economic Commission, European Rail Infrastructure Managers (EIM); Groupement européen du transport combiné (GETC); International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA); International Road Transport Union (IRU); International Union of Combined Road/Rail Transport Companies (UIRR); Russian Intermodal Logistics Association. The Association of International Forwarding and Logistics Service Providers (UTIKAD, Turkey); Plaske JSC (Ukraine) and the Swedish International Freight Association (SIFA) participated upon invitation by the secretariat.
4. In accordance with the decision taken at its fifty-sixth session (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/133, paras. 69–71), the session was chaired by Mr. I. Isik (Turkey).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)¹

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/134

5. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/134).

III. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (agenda item 2)

A. Status of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) and adopted amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.6

6. The Working Party noted that, at present, the AGTC Agreement has 32 Contracting Parties.² Detailed information on the AGTC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.5), a map of the AGTC network, an inventory of standards stipulated in the Agreement as well as all relevant Depositary Notifications are available on the UNECE website (www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html).

¹ All documents and presentations made at the session are available at www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

² Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

7. To date, eight amendments to the AGTC Agreement have come into force, the latest on 10 December 2009.

8. The Working Party took note of the information provided and the need of the Administrative Committee for more time before adopting several of the pending amendment proposals. To avoid further delay in implementing amendments that have been agreed upon, the Working Party requested the secretariat to transmit to the depository of the AGTC agreement the amendment proposals to Annex I of the AGTC Agreement modifying names of cities and border crossing points in Kazakhstan (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, paras. 34–35 and annex) adopted in 2011.

B. Amendment proposals (Updating and extension of the AGTC network)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1

9. The Working Party recalled that at its last session, it requested the secretariat to again contact all concerned States and Contracting Parties on the amendment proposals affecting Armenia, Georgia and Turkmenistan (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1) and Denmark, Germany and Sweden (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4) with the objective of finalizing the required consultation process before adopting the proposed amendments.

10. The secretariat informed the Working Party that it had sent letters (July 2014) to all concerned States and Contracting Parties asking for their consideration and approval of the proposed amendments for inclusion into the AGTC Agreement.

11. The Working Party and the Administrative Committee of the AGTC agreement took note of the efforts of the secretariat in contacting concerned States and Contracting Parties on the amendment proposals. The Administrative Committee of the AGTC agreement agreed to wait for the responses from the countries before taking any decision on the amendment proposals. Given the lengthy period of time since the original proposal of the amendments, the Administrative Committee agreed that it would discuss ways to move forward on these amendments at its next session even if no further information is provided.

C. Amendment proposals (Minimum infrastructure and performance standards)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/1–ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2014/1, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/5, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3

12. The Working Party recalled that, as indicated in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/2, several of the 15 countries that had responded to a secretariat survey on the relevance of the minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters in annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement, had felt that some may need to be reviewed and updated.

13. It also recalled that, based on secretariat documents (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3), in 2010 and 2011 the Working Party had conducted a first review of possible new minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters for inclusion into annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, paras. 37–41; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 37–42).

14. The Working Party again reviewed the minimum infrastructure standards of the AGC and AGTC Agreements taking account of comments by the European Commission referring to the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) applicable in the European Union (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/5).

15. The Working Party confirmed its view on the applicability of the TSI for the AGTC Agreement (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/129, para. 40, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, para. 44) and invited experts to prepare, in cooperation with the secretariat, appropriate amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement, in close cooperation with the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2).

16. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat that it prepared in cooperation with the secretariat of SC.2 and the European Railway Agency document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/1 containing amendment proposals of possible new minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters for inclusion into annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement.

17. The Working Party postponed decision on amendment proposals to the AGTC agreement based on official document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/1–ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2014/1 as it was prepared by the secretariat and the European Railway Agency and to await the decision of the Working Party on Rail Transport for the same amendments. In addition, the Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare and send letters with the proposed amendments to the Contracting Parties to the agreement asking for their consideration and approval.

IV. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement (agenda item 3)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.3/144/Rev.2

18. The Working Party recalled that the objective of the Protocol is to make container and Ro-Ro transport on inland waterways and coastal routes in Europe more efficient and attractive to customers. The Protocol establishes a legal framework that lays down a coordinated plan for the development of intermodal transport services on pan-European inland waterways and coastal routes in line with those in the AGN Agreement, based on specific internationally agreed parameters and standards.

19. The Protocol identifies some 14,700 km of E waterways and transshipment terminals that are important for regular and international intermodal transport in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland and Ukraine. The Protocol stipulates technical and operational minimum requirements of inland waterways and terminals in ports that are required for competitive container and Ro-Ro transport services.

A. Status of the Protocol

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1 and 2

20. The Working Party took note of the status of the Protocol as presented by the secretariat. The Working Party recalled that the Protocol had come into force on 29 October 2009 and had been signed by 15 countries. So far, 9 countries have ratified the Protocol.³ The text is in documents ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1 and 2.⁴ Detailed information on the

³ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland.

⁴ It should be noted that only the text kept in custody by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement and its Protocol, constitutes the authoritative text of the Agreement.

Protocol, including the text of the Protocol and all relevant Depositary Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.

21. The Working Party recalled that the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) had encouraged concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible.

B. Amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6

22. The Working Party recalled that, at its fifty-third session, it had considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6 containing a consolidated list of amendment proposals submitted by Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania as well as modifications to the Protocol proposed by the secretariat. So far, only one amendment proposal from Austria had been considered and accepted by the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 50).

23. The secretariat informed the Working Party that it had sent letters (July 2014) to all concerned States and Contracting Parties asking for their consideration and approval of the proposed amendments for inclusion into the Protocol.

24. The Working Party took note of the efforts of the secretariat in contacting concerned States and Contracting Parties on the amendment proposals. The Working Party agreed to wait for the responses from the countries before taking any decision on these amendment proposals.

25. Furthermore the secretariat informed the Working Party of ways to possibly align annexes I and II of the Protocol with the revised AGN Agreement. The Working Party requested the secretariat to cooperate with the secretariat of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport, proceed with such an analysis and if considered necessary prepare amendment proposals to annexes I and II of the Protocol for approval at the next session.

V. Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) (agenda item 4)

26. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat of developments in the endorsement of the CTU Code by relevant bodies of the UNECE, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

27. The Working Party took note that since the previous session in November 2013, the CTU Code - a joint publication developed over two years in coordination with the ILO and IMO - has been endorsed by the following bodies: the ITC of UNECE in February 2014 and the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO in July 2014. The secretariat also informed the Working Party that the ILO has provided unofficial information that the CTU Code had been endorsed by its Governing Body (November 2014), but had not yet provided an official confirmation. The Code is currently available electronically in the original English version as well as in Spanish and French as a result of efforts by the IMO. The IMO is continuing its work on translation and the Code will soon be available in German and Russian as well. The UNECE has developed a draft version of a website for the Code and will publish it shortly upon confirmation of the endorsement of the ILO's Governing Body. The three had agreed that they should discuss further promotion of the Code. The Working Party exchanged ideas and opinions on how to further promote the Code.

28. The Working Party noted that the CTU Code is a major step forward and improves safety of the traffic and of employees in the transport sector. Furthermore, it requested the secretariat to provide information on any further developments on the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units at its next session.

VI. Climate change and intermodal transport (agenda item 5)

A. Mitigation

29. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the 2013–2014 developments in the For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS) project, a project initially funded by the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) in 2013.

30. Sustainable transport can be assessed in ForFITS by the simulation of Avoid-Shift-Improve policies which also take into account the expected evolution of relevant macroeconomic parameters. The ForFITS tool is available online along with a user manual which covers all necessary information on how to use ForFITS, as well as practical examples to facilitate the self-learning process.⁵

31. The last phase of the UNDA project included regional and national capacity-building workshops. The objective was to raise awareness about the CO₂ emissions in inland transport as well as to provide information about the ForFITS tool. Whenever possible the regional and national workshops were organized back to back with the launching of the pilots. Over the course of the pilot phase, ForFITS was tested seven countries which represent all five United Nations regions: Chile, Ethiopia, France, Hungary, Montenegro, Thailand and Tunisia.

32. The Working Party took note of the information provided on ForFITS tool and reiterated its support for the further development of this tool. The Working Party requested the secretariat to present any developments on this issue at the next session.

B. Adaptation

Documentation: UNECE Publication on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for International Transport Networks

33. The secretariat informed the Working Party about the publication which was launched in December 2013 and was distributed to all experts and participants of the Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation to International Transport Networks.

34. In addition, the Working Party took note of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the continuation of the work of the Group of Experts. The ToR includes directives to:

(a) Identify and establish, if possible, inventories of transport networks in the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region which are vulnerable to climate change impacts;

(b) Use/develop models, methodologies, tools and good practices to address potential extreme hazards (e.g. high temperatures and floods) to selected inland transport infrastructure in the ECE region under different scenarios of climate change;

⁵ Further details on ForFITS are available at www.unece.org/trans/theme_forfits.html.

(c) Identify and analyse case studies focusing on the potential economic, social, and environmental consequences of the climate change impacts and provide a cost/benefit analysis of the adaptation options.

35. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the continuation of the Group of Experts and the change of the title from Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for International Transport Networks to Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Transport Networks and Nodes. The Working Party proposed that intermodal terminals should be considered in Group of Experts' work plan.

C. Diesel Engines

Documentation: UNECE Publication "Diesel engine exhausts: Myths and realities"

36. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the discussion paper "Diesel engine exhausts: Myths and realities" prepared by the secretariat.

37. The objective of this discussion paper is:

(a) to offer a balanced view on the ongoing debate about the harmful effects of diesel engine exhaust emissions on human health and the environment;

(b) to take stock of recent studies on the harmful effects of diesel exhausts to public health;

(c) to provide information about diesel emissions from different economic sectors including inland transport;

(d) to give an overview of the recent policy developments on the reduction of pollutant emissions to address health and environmental concerns; and

(e) to give an overview of any technological developments in diesel engines that reduce or even eliminate the harmful effects to public health.

38. It was noted that within the UNECE progress had been made on the improvement of diesel engines and the reduction of emissions. The Working Party considered the discussion paper and exchanged ideas for disseminating its findings and for a possible follow-up on issues relevant to intermodal transport. In addition the Working Party suggested that, if possible, an update of the paper with newly available data should take place. The Working Party noted its appreciation for the work done by the secretariat on preparing this discussion paper and requested a presentation at the next session on any developments on the issue.

VII. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and technological developments in intermodal transport (agenda item 6)

39. The Working Party appreciated the presentation given by Mr. B. Buthe (Germany) and thanked him for his participation in the Working Party's discussions. The representative of Germany presented an electronic tool which illustrates the cargo flows of clustered national supply chains along the geographical region of Germany. This tool combines transport statistics with production statistics, shows the importance of some corridors/routes for the national economy and provides the data for calculation on how much CO₂ emissions specific corridors produce.

40. The representative of Belgium and Vice Chair of the Working Party Mr. K. Schockaert informed the delegates about the Joint UNECE-Belgium Workshop on

ITS “Towards a new transportation culture: Technology innovations for safe, efficient and sustainable mobility” (Brussels, 17–18 November 2014). The workshop will bring together ITS experts to discuss how innovations based on information and communications technology can help create a driving and transportation culture that contributes to safe, efficient and sustainable mobility. The workshop is one of the 20 global actions of the UNECE Road Map for promoting ITS.

41. The Working Party requested the secretariat to update developments in ITS and other technologies for intermodal transport at its next session.

VIII. Annual themes on Intermodal Transport (agenda item 7)

A. Follow-up to the 2013 workshop on weights and dimensions of Intermodal Transport Units (ITU)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/2

42. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the follow-up to the 2013 workshop on weights and dimensions of Intermodal Transport Units (ITU). It was indicated that EU Directive 96/53 was revising this issue.⁶

43. The follow-up workshop was hosted by the International Union of Railways (UIC) and was held on 6 and 7 February 2014 at Paris. It was attended by 18 experts. Mr. H. Maillard, former Chair of the Working Party, moderated the workshop which reviewed the interoperability requirements for road, rail and inland water transport of various ITUs. The workshop noted that the safe transport by road of rectangular ITUs would require an additional permissible loading length of around 15 cm beyond the current 13.60 m loading length for semi-trailers. The workshop also reviewed proposals to improve the aerodynamics and road safety of ITUs which will necessarily increase the overall length of ITUs or road transport vehicles.

44. The representative of Turkish Association of International Forwarding and Logistics Service Providers (UTIKAD), Mr. K. O. Turan, noted that the provision on articulated vehicles with five or six axles should be revised and include 45-foot International Standards Organization (ISO) containers. Revising the current provision, which permits the circulation of three-axle motor vehicle with two or three-axle semi-trailer carrying a 40-foot container as a combined transport operation 44 tonnes, would further promote intermodal transport.

45. The workshop also noted that for European intermodal transport as part of port hinterland operations, ISO standard and high-cube containers were the benchmark and could be carried without difficulty on intermodal transport services by road, rail and inland waterways. The possible realization of a universal standard for maritime and inland transport units (53 ft-16.15 m long, 8.6 ft-2.6 m wide and 9.6 ft-2.9 m high) would depend to a large extent on the needs of the transport industry for such high-volume units.

46. On 7 February 2014, the participants of the workshop visited the Quai de la Bourdonnais on the river Seine. Every morning, twenty-six tailor-made containers were shipped by reach-stacker from an inland water barge onto seven trucks that ensured their final distribution to eighty supermarkets in inner Paris (at a distance of 4 to 7 km).

⁶ Available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31996L0053>.

B. 2014 Theme: Role of freight forwarders and logistics in intermodal transport chains

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/3, Informal document WP.24 No. 2 (2014)

47. The Working Party took note of the background document on the workshop, in “the Role of freight forwarders and logistics in intermodal transport chains”.

48. The representative of Belgium and Vice-Chair of the Working Party, Mr. K. Schockaert, provided information about the discussions during the workshop hosted by the Government of Belgium (Brussels, 12 and 13 June 2014). The workshop was moderated by Mr. H. Maillard, former Chair of the Working Party. The programme consisted of four sessions: (a) Terms and Statutes, (b) Actors of multimodality, (c) Actors in the supply chain, and (d) Relevance of an international statute. The four topics were discussed and information was provided on the basis of presentations from private industry and governments information.

49. Participants discussed the terminology for functional titles of professions as well as the status and existence (in form and content) of legal devices by country. A presentation from the European Association for Forwarding, Transport, Logistics and Customs Services (CLECAT) noted that governments could help create environments where the mode of transportation can be chosen based on efficiency, by aligning legislative measures at the international level, by better assessing the necessity of some rules and regulations and by identifying and eliminating institutional hindrances to interoperability. FIATA gave an overview on the services supplied by freight forwarders. The “importance of ensuring logistics connectivity” was emphasized and obstacles to connectivity such as regulatory bottlenecks were identified. A discussion followed in which participants from the industry clarified that it is in the best interest of freight forwarders to lessen the difficulty in navigating through different rules and regulations between countries. Opinions of workshop participants on the need to create a status for freight forwarders were varied. While some participants saw a great value in creating such a status to increase confidence and trust in the industry, others felt that creating such a status would result in unwanted side effects including a less competitive market. It was noted that the creation of a status could be based on, for example, concepts as the Authorised Economic Operator and of the ISO certification.

50. Mr. T. Pilarp, Senior Legal Counsel of the SIFA provided information to the Working Party in a presentation. He highlighted the importance of each mode of transport to the entire transport chain. He further noted the need for legislators to be aware of this in order to avoid restrictions on any one mode of transport that would lower the efficiency of the transport chain.

51. The Working Party noted its appreciation for the presentations made by the distinguished speakers and thanked them for their participation. The Working Party decided, based on the outputs of this workshop, that a study should be prepared by the secretariat on the status of freight forwarders in different countries. This study should be based on a questionnaire which will address all relevant issues. The Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare this questionnaire for approval at its next session.

C. Selection of a theme for substantive discussions in 2015

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/4

52. The Working Party took note of the document prepared by the secretariat on the possible theme for the next year’s session and decided on “Intermodality leads to

Sustainability”. A high level workshop should be organized by the secretariat during one day of the Working Party session. The Working Party also decided that for reasons of efficiency and effectiveness, a workshop should be organized every year during the sessions of the Working Party.

IX. Intermodal transport terminals (agenda item 8)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/5

53. The Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/5 prepared by the secretariat on intermodal transport terminals. The Working Party recalled that it addressed this topic during its thirty-seventh session (18–19 April 2002) where it had established a Group of Experts to consider measures to increase the efficiency of combined transport terminal operations and during its fifty-fourth session (2–3 November 2011) where “The Role of terminals and logistics centres for intermodal transport” was the theme for substantive discussion.

54. The Working Party felt that concrete follow-up activities should be undertaken to support the development of seamless international rail and intermodal transport operations at the pan-European level including possibly of (a) Mapping and categorizing the types of terminals (i.e. simple terminal, gateway terminal, etc.) and the facilities offered by such terminals (Customs facilities, dangerous goods, etc.); (b) Identifying opening and operating hours of combined transport terminals which determine largely the level of service available for intermodal transport; (c) Updating the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) based on the new information acquired and possibly on the new categorization of the types of terminals.

55. Many delegates reported that these data exist to some extent on the internet and could be easily collected. However, the Working Party decided that it should first discuss and agree on the structure of the information needed before addressing the ways that this information should be collected and made available.

56. The Working Party decided that a concrete study should be prepared by the secretariat on mapping and categorizing the types of terminals that exist in the ECE region and on the facilities offered by such terminals. The Working Party requested the secretariat to draft a formal document for the next session on how such a study should be structured for approval at its next session. The UNECE report on hinterland connections could provide background information.

X. Preparing National Master Plans on freight transport and logistics (agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/6

57. The Working Party took note of the document prepared by the secretariat on preparing national master plans on freight transport and logistics. The Working Party recalled that during its fifty-first session (19–20 March 2009), it had addressed the topic of modern transport chains, national logistics master plans and the role of governments in the design and management of freight and intermodal transport. The secretariat, in cooperation with a virtual Group of Experts on transport chains and logistics and contributions from Austria and the GETC (Informal documents WP.24 Nos. 5 and 6 (2008)), had prepared a study on the design and management of freight and intermodal transport and the role of governments (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/4).

58. The Working Party discussed the role of WP.24 in the development of national freight transport and logistics master plans, such as a platform for the (a) exchange of good practices in the preparation and implementation of national logistics action or master plans; and (b) monitoring and analysis of national measures that influence the design and management of freight transport with a view toward enhancing the use of intermodal transport.

59. The Working Party discussed possible concrete actions such as (a) the preparation of a framework of guidelines on how to prepare a national freight transport and logistics master plan based on national experiences and expert advice and; (b) the preparation of a tool-box of policy measures and mechanisms that, depending on national circumstances, could be utilized to this end.

60. The Working Party agreed that this topic needed further analysis and some concrete actions should be taken. The Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare a formal document for the next session of the Group of Experts elaborating further on the idea of guidelines for these possible actions.

XI. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 10)

A. Trends and performance in the intermodal transport and logistics industry

Documentation: Informal document WP.24 No. 5 (2014)

61. On the basis of a presentation made by the representative of IRU and statements reported by the representatives of other international organizations such as GETC and EIM, the Working Party had an exchange of views on recent developments and trends in intermodal transport and logistics in UNECE member countries.

62. The secretariat was requested to continue monitoring new developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics and report on new trends at its next session.

B. Activities of the European Commission in intermodal transport and logistics

63. The Working Party took note of information provided by the secretariat on activities undertaken by the European Commission on intermodal transport and logistics. The secretariat was requested to continue monitoring new developments and best practices in European Commission and provide a report on this basis at its next session.

C. Pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies

Documentation: Informal document WP.24 No. 3 (2014), Informal document WP.24 No. 6 (2014)

64. The Working Party was informed by the representative of Netherlands, Mr. B. Oudshoorn, on developments in the Rotterdam Rules. The Rotterdam Rules establish a modern, comprehensive, and uniform legal regime governing the rights and obligations of shippers, carriers and consignees under contract for door-to-door shipments

that involve international sea transport including digitalisation of the information and improved liability provisions. Mr. Oudshoorn informed the Working Party that the Netherlands would like to invite all countries to investigate the possibility of ratifying this Convention. Based on the report of the representative of Netherlands, the Rotterdam Rules fully cover all intermodal aspects in the following provisions:

- (a) Article 82. International conventions governing the carriage of goods by other modes of transport;
- (b) Article 26. Carriage preceding or subsequent to sea carriage;
- (c) Article 12. Period of responsibility of the carrier;
- (d) Article 59. Limits of liability.

65. The representative of UTIKAD, Mr. K. O. Turan, pointed out that pan-European Corridors can be made stronger with the projects undertaken by Turkey which connect Asia, Middle East and Europe, through corridor IV. He stated that the enhancement of network interoperability, the construction of sufficient and sustainable infrastructure, the removal of regional and economical barriers, the harmonization and standardization of intermodal loading units and the use the common CIM/SMGS consignment note are efficient solutions that maximize operational ability.

66. The Working Party took note of information provided by Governments and representatives of international organizations on developments in intermodal transport and logistics and requested the secretariat to continue monitoring pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies and report at its next session.

D. Intermodal Transport Statistics

Documentation: Informal document WP.24 No. 4 (2014)

67. The Working Party took note of information provided by the secretariat on intermodal transport statistics and requested the secretariat to provide information on any developments in the intermodal transport statistics task force.

XII. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 11)

Documentation: Informal document WP.24 No. 1 (2014)

68. The Working Party was informed about current activities in UNECE on intermodal transport and logistics and, particularly those of the ITC and its subsidiary bodies.

69. The Working Party also considered Informal document WP.24 No. 1 (2014) on the participation of non-ECE countries, Contracting Parties to UNECE conventions, in the activities of Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies. The Working Party noted that based on EXCOM document ECE/EX/1 of 9 October 2006, Working Parties are open to all UNECE member States for participation. Non-UNECE member States can participate as observers or, if agreed by the parent Sectoral Committee, as full members. In addition, relevant international organizations and NGOs can also be invited as observers, in compliance with the United Nations rules and practices in this respect. The terms of this guideline clearly allow non-UNECE countries to be given full member status within Working Parties. However, this status must be approved by the relevant Sectoral Committee, in this case, the Inland Transport Committee. Furthermore, it may reasonably

be assumed that the Working Party's Rules of Procedure should be amended accordingly to allow for such participation.

XIII. Election of officers (agenda item 12)

70. The Working Party elected Mr. I. Isik (Turkey) as Chair and Mr. K. Schockaert (Belgium) as Vice-Chair of the Working Party for its sessions in 2015 and 2016.

XIV. Date and venue of next sessions (agenda item 13)

71. The secretariat tentatively scheduled the fifty-eighth session of the Working Party for 30 November–1 December 2015 at the Palais des Nations (Geneva).

XV. Summary of decisions (agenda item 14)

72. As agreed on and in line with the decision of the ITC (ECE/TRANS/156, para. 6), the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair and in consultation with participating delegates, prepared this report for transmission to the ITC at its next session (24–26 February 2015).
