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Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Rail Transport****Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law****Fifteenth session**

Geneva, 22-24 May 2017

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda**Annotated provisional agenda for the fifteenth session^{*}, ^{**}**

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva starting at 10 a.m. on Monday, 22 May 2017

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Mandate: Inland Transport Committee Resolution No. 263 on Unified Railway Law.
3. Preparation of the necessary documents following the draft legal provisions.
4. Monitoring results of pilot tests.
5. Possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law.
6. Other business.
7. Date of next session.
8. Summary of decisions.

* Delegates are requested to register online at the following address:
<https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=4prZ2s>. Upon arrival at the Palais des Nations, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate (14, Avenue de la Paix). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone (+41 22 917 2432). For a map of the Palais des Nations and other useful information, see website www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm.

** For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of all relevant documents to the session. There will be no documentation available in the conference room. Before the session, documents may be downloaded from the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division's website www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html. During the session, official documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.337, the third floor, Palais des Nations)

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

The first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.2/GEURL/2017/1

2. Mandate: Inland Transport Committee Resolution No. 263 on Unified Railway Law

The Group of Experts may wish to recall that during the seventy-eighth session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), a resolution (ECE/TRANS/2016/17) on Unified Railway Law was considered and adopted.

By adopting this resolution the ITC welcomed the work undertaken and report prepared by the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law, having managed, in three years, to prepare legal provisions towards the Unified Railway Law. These provisions included the contract of carriage and took into consideration good practices already implemented by the Uniform rules concerning the Contract of Carriage of Goods by Rail (CIM-COTIF Convention) and SMGS Agreement as well as other International Transport Conventions.

Furthermore, ITC:

(a) Invited Governments to disseminate these legal provisions to all key stakeholders in their countries;

(b) Encouraged Railways Undertakings and International Organizations for railways to test these legal provisions, whenever possible, in practice;

(c) Invited the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law to work in order to prepare the necessary documents for rail transport following the legal provisions prepared, as well as to monitor results of pilot tests and prepare recommendations accordingly;

(d) Requested that further development and progress in the application of the above mentioned activities should be reported by the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law at the seventieth session (2016) of UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2);

(e) Requested the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) to report the results of the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law work as well as to suggest possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law at its seventy-ninth session (2017) for its consideration and approval.

During the seventieth session of the Working Party on Rail Transport (Geneva, 22-24 November 2016), Governments took note that the organization and implementation of the pilot tests is a time-consuming process that has to be developed in a manner that is structured, and commonly agreed upon by the main stakeholders. Therefore, the Working Party and then the Inland Transport Committee at its seventy-ninth session (21-24 February 2017) agreed to extend the mandate of the Group of Experts for one more year.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/2016/17

3. Preparation of the necessary documents following the draft legal provisions

The main task of the Group of Experts is the coordination of the preparation and/or of the review of the already prepared necessary documents for rail transport by the relevant international associations in the railway sector, meaning: the Organization for Cooperation between Railways, the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail and the International Rail Transport Committee. They should follow the draft legal provisions prepared during the previous phase of the Group of Experts.

The Group may wish to continue discussions on this issue and decide the list of documents that should be used and their content/structure.

4. Monitoring results of pilot tests

The Group of Experts may wish to recall that the ITC resolution on Unified Railway Law encouraged Railways Undertakings and International Organizations for railways to test the draft legal provisions, whenever possible, in practice and invited the Group of Experts to monitor the results of these pilot tests and prepare recommendations accordingly.

The Group of Experts may wish to recall that during its last session it discussed and agreed on a concrete road map for the implementation of pilot tests. It may wish to consider presentations by Railways Undertaking and International Organizations for railways that have tested the draft legal provisions in practice, discuss and analyse the results of such pilot tests, as well as suggest possible recommendations for the application of these draft legal provisions in the future. In addition, it may wish to discuss ITC document ECE/TRANS/2017/18 which compares Unified Railway Law and other rail regimes in order to facilitate the monitoring of legal provisions during the pilot tests.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/2017/18

5. Possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law

ITC during its seventy-eighth session requested the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) to report the results of the Group of Experts towards the Unified Railway Law work, as well as to suggest possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law at its seventy-ninth session (2017) for its consideration and approval.

The Group of Experts may wish to discuss and exchange views on the possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law and provide some recommendations for consideration by SC.2 in November 2017.

6. Other business

At present, there are no proposals under this item. Proposals can be transmitted to the UNECE secretariat (sc.2@unece.org).

7. Date of next session

The next session of the Group of Experts is scheduled to be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 1 to 3 November 2017.

8. Summary of decisions

In accordance with established practice, the Chair will briefly summarize the decisions taken. Following the session, the Secretary, in cooperation with the Chair, will draft the final report.
