



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

**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)
Steering Committee Meeting
28th Session, 22 – 23 April 2010
Innsbruck, Austria**

**ABRIDGED
REPORT**

1. The 28th Session of the TER Steering Committee was held on 22 - 23 April 2010 in Innsbruck, Austria.
2. The countries that participated in the meeting were: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Representatives of the UNECE, TER PCO and its consultants on the TER Master Plan Revision also attended the meeting. List of participants is attached (ANNEX I).

OPENING OF THE SESSION

3. The session was opened by Mr. H. Meelich, the TER Project Manager.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The Agenda (ANNEX II) was approved.

ELECTION OF THE OFFICERS

5. The participants in the Steering Committee elected as its Chairman Mr. F. Hep (Czech Republic) and as its Rapporteur Mr. M. Radl (Austria).

REPORT OF THE PROJECT MANAGER

6. The Project Manager presented his report on activities carried out in the reporting period and informed the session about the TER PCO's and his own activities in the short space of four months, which passed from the last Steering Committee's session held in Vienna on 3 December last year. He especially appreciated the close collaboration with the UNECE in this period, reported on some high level meetings related to the TER Project he attended and on the results of collaboration with some other international organizations dealing with transport such as OSCE, CEI, BSEC and ECO, which might support the Project's extension eastwards.

7. He also mentioned the possibility of merging the TEM and TER Project Central Offices, having now the same Project Manager, in order to improve and simplify the coordination of their activities, which may also result in budget savings.
8. The Romanian representative expressed his support for the materialization of such a merger as soon as possible, since it might increase the efficiency of work of both Projects.
9. Using the opportunity, the Project Manager – also on behalf of all the participants – extended sincere thanks for very successful long-lasting co-operation to the UNECE representative, Mr. J. Cekota, who was going to be promoted to the UNECE Executive Office soon after the session.
10. The report of the Project Manager was endorsed by the Committee.

STATUS OF TER TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2010

11. The Project Manager reported on the financial position of the Project and about the status of 2010 Trust Fund contributions, which were transferred to the respective bank account in Geneva. Since some countries have not contributed to the Fund yet, their representatives were asked to expedite the fulfillment of these obligations as much as possible.
12. The participants raised and discussed the problem of complicated and time consuming activities related to funding the Project activities and asked the UNECE representatives whether there was any possibility to facilitate and simplify the related procedures. The UNECE representatives explained that such efforts had been already made with the negative result since these procedures are being applied in accordance with the UN rules and regulations.

REVISION OF THE TER MASTER PLAN

13. Mr. P. Pospisil presented the summary report on the work done in the reporting period and informed about the results of examination of the following documents:
 Final draft list of New and Revised Master Plan Projects;
 Final draft of TER Backbone Network Status in 2010, 2015, 2020;
 Draft final Revised Master Plan Backbone Network (map and list of sections);
 Interrelationships between the TER and TEM Backbone Networks;
 Preliminary results of the rail traffic development in the period 2008/2009
 by the Fourth Joint Meeting of the TEM and TER Expert Groups held on 20 - 21 April 2010
 and about the recommendations adopted by the Group.
14. The Steering Committee took note of these recommendations, requested the TER PCO to send the above documents to the participating countries by e-mail immediately after the session, asked for their comments to them to be delivered to the PCO by 21 May 2010 at the latest and decided that the comments dispatched after that date could not be taken into account.
15. The Steering Committee took note of the updated final Master Plan Revision Timetable, proposed by the TER PCO, according to which the works on the TER Master Plan Revision should be terminated by November 2010.
16. In the light of the TER Master Revision, the UNECE representative informed the session about the planned review of the AGTC and AGC Agreements, which should be taken into account in the course of the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations of the Revision in the future.

LONG TERM STRATEGY OF THE TER DEVELOPMENT

17. The Project Manager confirmed that the present short-term strategy was focused on successful termination of the TER Master Plan Revision, the results of which should be presented at the next Steering Committee session in Vienna in November 2010 and at the ITC Session in February 2011 in Geneva and then published. As far as the long term

strategy was concerned, he especially mentioned the extension of the project activities to Eastern Europe and Central Asia and further close co-operation with the CEI, OSCE, BSEC and ECO. In this connection, he underlined the great potential of collaboration with the OSCE, based on Memorandum on Understanding signed between it and the UNECE, which resulted in the OSCE's in-kind contribution to the next TEM and TER Steering Committees' sessions in Vienna and which might also lead to joint funding of some TER transport infrastructure projects in the future.

18. The TER long-term strategy would also include such topics as railway safety and security, intermodality, environmental aspects and responses to the impacts of climate change with respect to transport infrastructure planning, construction and operation.
19. In the context of this strategy, Mr. J. Cekota pointed out that it would be necessary to focus on efforts to make railways more competitive which might be attained inter alia by improving border crossing procedures. Apart from the technical problems related to the different gauges between Central and Eastern Europe and Asia, there also exist legal problems because of two parallel legal systems - COTIF and SMGS. Aiming at their harmonization and possible future unification, the UNECE established the URL (Unified Rail Law) Expert Group and the interested TER countries were invited to participate in its work. In order to respond to challenges caused by the climate change, the UNECE Working Party on Transport and Economics started the work on analysis of its expected impacts on traffic infrastructure, which work might be also of interest for the TER Project. All these issues were recommended to be reflected in the TER strategy.
20. In the framework of the ensuing discussion, the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina proposed 5 TER long-term development areas, namely a consistent strategy, legislative, operational and financial issues and cost effectiveness.
21. The representative of Serbia informed the session about the positive improvements due to inspections of trains at freight terminals.
22. The Polish representative suggested that in order to be successful in making railways more competitive through facilitation and simplification of border procedures, any improvement in technical aspects of the state border control procedure has to be accompanied by a parallel improvement in administrative aspects.

TRUST FUND AGREEMENT

23. Since the present TER Project phase terminates at the end of 2010, the Steering Committee approved its continuation also in the period 2011 – 2015. The Committee therefore asked the UNECE to send to the participating countries the draft final Project Document (Attachment to the TER Co-operation Trust Fund Agreement) covering this next phase 2011 – 2015, the draft of which, elaborated by the TER PCO was presented at the session, to the Governments of the participating countries at its earliest convenience. A period of 3 months was considered as appropriate for the necessary examination procedures in these countries. Should the results of these examinations be positive, the Attachment would be approved by the next TER Steering Committee session? If this would not be the case, the special session of the Committee would be convened in early autumn 2010.

OTHER BUSINESS

24. The UNECE representative informed the session about the two recently issued Commission's documents related to transport matters, namely about the Report on Hinterland Connections of Seaports and on Identification of Bottlenecks, Missing Links and Quality of Service in Infrastructure Networks. These documents will be made available to the participating countries through the TER PCO.
25. The Steering Committee approved the document "Innsbruck Initiative for Safe, Secure, Prosperous and Environmentally Friendly Transport", elaborated jointly by the UNECE and the TER PCO and decided to include the objectives and activities related to this Initiative

into the TER Programme of Work for the period 2011 – 2015. The UNECE as the Executing Agency of the Project was requested to support and promote the Innsbruck Initiative on the European transport arena. The Project Manager was asked to communicate the document to the UNECE to be published as its press release (Annex III).

26. The Project Manager informed the session that the next session of the Steering Committee will be held in Vienna prior to the 64th session of the SC.2 to take place there on 18 – 19 November. Concerning its exact timing, it will be consulted with the UNECE and the Project Manager will inform the National Coordinators accordingly.
27. On the opportunity of the forthcoming retirement of the Czech member of the Steering Committee, Mr. V. Novacek, the Project Manager expressed his thanks and gratitude to him for his great personal contribution to the work of the Committee and wished him full personal satisfaction and good health in the years to come.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

28. The Steering Committee adopted the report of the session.
29. The participants extended their thanks to the Austrian Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology for hosting the session and to its representatives as well as to the TER Project Manager for its outstanding organization.

ANNEXES: 3