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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Combined Transport
(18 and 19 April 2002)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10.00 hours on Thursday, 18 April 2002^{*/}**

^{*/} 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 Transport Division (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; e-mail: WP.24@unece.org). Documents may also be downloaded from the Internet web site of the UNECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans). During the meeting, documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.111, 1st floor, Palais des Nations).

In accordance with the accreditation procedures applicable for all meetings held at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to fill-in the attached registration form (also available from the web site of the UNECE (www.unece.org)) and to transmit the duly filled-in form at the latest one week before the session to the UNECE Transport Division, either by fax (+41-22-917-0039) or by e-mail (WP.24@unece.org). In Geneva, prior to the session, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at Villa Les Feuillantines, 13 Avenue de la Paix (see attached map), for issuance of an identification badge. In case of difficulties, please phone the UNECE secretariat (Int. 72453).

GE.02-

1. Adoption of the agenda TRANS/WP.24/94
2. Election of officers
3. Activities of UNECE bodies and other organizations of interest to the Working Party
 - (a) Subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) (www.unece.org)
 - (b) European Commission (EC)
 - (c) European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)
 - (d) Other organizations
4. Follow-up to the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment ECE/AC.21/2001/3
TRANS/2001/9
JMTE/AC.1/2001/2
5. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)
 - (a) Status of the AGTC Agreement (www.unece.org/trans)
 - (b) Amendments proposed to the AGTC Agreement C.N.877.2001.TREATIES-2
C.N.18.2001.TREATIES-1
6. Inventory of existing AGTC standards and parameters “Yellow Book”
Corrigendum 1 (2001)
7. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)

8. The role of railways in the promotion of combined transport
- TRANS/WP.24/2002/1
TRANS/WP.24/2002/2
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Informal document No. 1 (2001)
Informal document No. 3 (2001)
Informal document No. 4 (2001)
Informal document No. 5 (2001)
Informal document No. 6 (2001)
9. Possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing combined transport
- TRANS/WP.24/2002/5
TRANS/WP.24/2002/6
TRANS/WP.24/2002/7
TRANS/WP.24/2000/3
UNCITRAL document
A/CN.9/WG.III/WP.21
UNCTAD/SDTE/TLB/2
(available at request from the secretariat)
10. Monitoring of weight and dimensions of loading units in combined transport
11. Terminology in combined transport
- UNECE Publication
(www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/wp24/pub/html)

12. New developments in the field of combined transport in UNECE member countries TRANS/WP.24/2002/9
13. Other business.
- (a) Review of the scope of activities of the Working Party
 - (b) Date of next session
14. Adoption of decisions taken by the Working Party

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

The secretariat proposes the following preliminary schedule of work:

Thursday, 18 April 2002:	Agenda items 1-8
Friday, 20 April 2002:	Agenda items 8 (cont'd) – 12 (Adoption of the report)

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda (TRANS/WP.24/94).

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure and established practice, the Working Party will elect a Chairperson and a Vice-chairperson for its sessions in 2002.

3. ACTIVITIES OF UNECE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

(a) Subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC)

The Working Party will be informed by the secretariat of the results of the sixty-fourth session of the Inland Transport Committee (18-21 February 2002) as it relates to matters of interest for the Working Party. Furthermore the Working Party will be informed of the activities of subsidiary bodies of the ITC, such as the Working Parties on Road Transport (SC.1), on Rail Transport (SC.2) and on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) as well as the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30), as far as they relate to combined transport matters.

Detailed information on the activities of the UNECE and its subsidiary bodies, including the Working Party on Combined Transport (WP.24) is available on the UNECE Transport Division web site (www.unece.org/trans/).

(b) European Commission (EC)

The Working Party may wish to be informed of the latest activities of the EC in the field of combined transport.

(c) European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities undertaken by the ECMT Combined Transport Group.

(d) Other organizations

The Working Party may wish to be informed of current and planned activities in combined transport of other international organizations.

4. FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Working Party may wish to recall the outcome of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment held in Vienna from 12 to 14 November 1997. In particular, the Conference had adopted a Declaration and a Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF./2/FINAL; ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL). The Working Party may also wish to recall that it had prepared earlier two background documents for the Conference on the promotion of combined transport to foster a sustainable transport policy in Europe (TRANS/WP.24/R.85/Rev.1; TRANS/WP.24/R.80/Rev.1).

The Working Party will be informed of the follow-up activities undertaken by UNECE member countries, and concerned international organizations and the UNECE secretariat in the implementation of the above Programme of Joint Action (POJA). In particular, the Working Party may wish to note the results of the second session of the Joint Ad-Hoc Expert Group on Transport and the Environment scheduled to be held in Geneva on 18 and 19 March 2002.

The Working Party will also be informed about all activities undertaken under the auspices of the UNECE following the High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health in June 2001 which had recommended to merge the POJA activities with those undertaken as a follow-up to the 1999 London Ministerial Conference on Transport, Environment and Health.

A report containing an overview of instruments relevant for transport, environment and health as well as recommendations for further actions, prepared by the UNECE and the WHO secretariats, is contained in document ECE/AC.21/2001/1.

Detailed information on all activities undertaken by the UNECE on the follow-up to the Vienna and London Conferences is available at the UNECE POJA website (www.unece.org/poja).

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

(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement

As of 1 February 2002 the following 23 countries are Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey. The following countries have signed the AGTC Agreement, but have not yet become Contracting Parties to it: Finland and Poland.

Up-to-date information on the status of the AGTC Agreement may be obtained from the web site of the UNECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans - Legal instruments. Part of the information is only available through subscription).

The Working Party may wish to be informed by delegations about the intention of UNECE member countries to accede to the AGTC Agreement and may wish to invite in particular, Finland, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, the Ukraine and Yugoslavia to undertake all necessary steps with a view to becoming Contracting Parties to the Agreement as soon as possible.

The Working Party will be informed about the status of the preparation of a revised map covering the AGTC network.

(b) Amendments proposed to the AGTC Agreement

The Working Party may wish to note that, the amendment proposals to Annexes I and II to the AGTC Agreement adopted by the Working Party at its thirty-fourth session (6-8 September 2000) have come into force on 17 October 2001 (Depository Notification C.N.877.2001.TREATIES-2).

The secretariat will prepare a consolidated version of the AGTC Agreement containing all amendments that have come into force in 2001. This document will be available at the session.

6. INVENTORY OF EXISTING AGTC STANDARDS AND PARAMETERS

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its thirty-fourth session (6-8 September 2000), it had taken note of the publication of the so-called “Yellow Book”, an inventory of existing AGTC and AGC standards and parameters covering the year 1997. The short analysis on the implementation of the AGTC and AGC standards and parameters as contained in the “Yellow Book” had been translated into French and Russian by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.24/2000/5).

The Working Party had at its thirty-sixth session (3-5 September 2001) taken note of Corrigendum I to the “Yellow Book” containing changes to the information concerning Austria and Poland.

The Working Party may wish to be informed about further changes to the information contained therein.

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 recall that, on the occasion of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12-14 November 1997), the Protocol to the AGTC Agreement has been signed by the following 12 UNECE member countries: Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania and Switzerland. Subsequently, the Protocol has been signed by Slovakia on 29 June 1998 and Bulgaria on 28 October 1998.

As of 1 February 2002, the Protocol has the following seven Contracting Parties: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland. It will come into force following ratification by at least five States, of which three States are linked, in a continuous manner, by the waterways identified in the Protocol.

Amendment proposals submitted to the Working Party at its twenty-ninth session by France, Hungary and Romania (Informal document No. 1 (1998); TRANS/WP.24/79, para. 20) as well as amendment proposals transmitted by the Government of Bulgaria to the secretariat may be considered by the Working Party as soon as the Protocol enters into force.

The final text of the Protocol to the AGTC Agreement (in English, French and Russian) is contained in document ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1 (F) and Corr.2 (R). Up-to-date information on the status and the text of the Protocol may be obtained via the Internet from the web site of UNECE Transport (www.unece.org/trans - Legal instruments. Part of the information is only available through subscription).

The Working Party may wish to encourage all concerned Contracting Parties to the Agreement to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible in order that the Protocol will come into force and the above amendment proposals can be considered.

8. THE ROLE OF RAILWAYS IN THE PROMOTION OF COMBINED TRANSPORT

The Working Party may wish to recall the outcome of the Joint Meeting of the Working Party and the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) that took place on 19 April 2001 as contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2001/8.

The Working Party had preliminarily exchanged views on the results of the Joint Meeting at its thirty-fifth session (TRANS/WP.24/91, paras. 33-35). The Working Party was of the view that follow-up actions resulting from the meeting should focus on the following issues:

- Partnership models, including agreements, best practices and key performance indicators taking into consideration the question of free competition and anti-trust regulations;
- Costing, pricing and subsidies focusing on the specific elements which make up each of these economic parameters, what factors influence each of the elements and how can an optimization of the elements assist in promoting combined transport;
- Facilitation of border crossing procedures, harmonization of frontier controls and interoperability in international transport;
- Harmonization of civil liability regimes in multimodal transports.

At its thirty-sixth session, the Working Party took note of Informal document No. 8 (2001) (has been reproduced as official document TRANS/WP.24/2002/1) presented by its Vice-Chairman outlining three concrete avenues for further studies:

- Interoperability
- Terminals
- Introduction of an incentive scheme.

The Working Party agreed to establish two informal ad-hoc expert groups addressing the following two issues (TRANS/WP.24/93, paras. 39-41):

- Partnership models and best practices in Combined Transport
- Combined Transport Terminal efficiency.

The Working Party also agreed that in order to make progress on these issues, it was essential to develop practical measures that could possibly be linked to the existing legal instruments administered by the Working Party, i.e. the AGTC Agreement and its Protocol on inland water transport.

The Terms of Reference of the two informal ad-hoc expert groups are contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2002/2.

In accordance with its mandate, the informal ad-hoc expert groups have prepared two documents for the consideration of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.24/2002/3 and TRANS/WP.24/2002/4).

At its thirty-sixth session, the Working Party also requested the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) to take up the issue of interoperability and to revert with its findings on this issue to the Working Party in due course. The Working Party may wish to be informed of further developments on this issue.

9. POSSIBILITIES FOR RECONCILIATION AND HARMONIZATION OF CIVIL LIABILITY REGIMES GOVERNING COMBINED TRANSPORT

The Working Party may wish to recall that its programme of work contains as a priority item, the “... analysis of possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing combined transport operations.” Following a request by the Inland Transport Committee to investigate existing difficulties for combined transport operations (ECE/TRANS/128, para. 86), the Working Party decided to further consider possible difficulties arising from differences in modal liability regimes and/or gaps in full coverage during combined transport operations (TRANS/WP.24/1999/1).

Following the recommendations of a small working group (TRANS/WP.24/1999/2), the Working Party requested the secretariat to initiate an informal consultative process with participation by government representatives and representatives of the interested intergovernmental organizations as well as international organizations representing the interests of transport industry, insurance and shippers as well as private companies. The results of the two hearings organized by the secretariat are contained in document TRANS/WP.24/2000/3. The consultation showed considerable differences of the various interested parties to the question of unification or at least harmonization of existing mandatory public law regimes.

At its thirty-fifth session, the Working Party considered that it was important to consolidate work in the field of civil liability. The Working Party requested the secretariat to explore the possibility of organizing a world-wide forum to bring together all government representatives and experts on civil liability in multimodal transport with the aim to come to a final conclusion concerning the question of harmonization (TRANS/WP.24/91, paras. 40-46). The Working Party also requested the secretariat as an intermediate step to explore the possibilities of aligning the liability clauses of the legal instruments governing European overland transport, in particular road and rail transport (TRANS/WP.24/91, para. 51).

At its thirty-sixth session, the Working Party agreed to reconvene its small ad-hoc expert group on civil liability to consider how to make further progress on these issues (TRANS/WP.24/93, para. 47).

The Working Party will be informed in detail about the outcome of the discussions of the Inland Transport Committee concerning this issue, which is expected to provide guidance for the Working Party on further activities in this field.

The Working Party may wish to consider a discussion paper developed by the ad-hoc expert group containing an overview of the various possibilities for harmonization of the liability rules and outlining proposals for further action in this field (TRANS/WP.24/2002/6).

The Working Party may also wish to be informed in detail about the latest developments concerning the work of UNCITRAL in developing a new legal instrument covering civil liability for transport of goods by sea. In January 2002 UNCITRAL has issued a draft instrument. The draft is contained in UNCITRAL document A/CN.9/WG.III/WP.21 (available on the UNECE web site). The UNECE secretariat, together with the informal ad-hoc expert group on civil liability has submitted comments to UNCITRAL on the draft (TRANS/WP.24/2002/5).

The Working Party may also wish to take note of the European Commission study on the economic impact of carrier liability on intermodal transport (TRANS/WP.24/2002/7).

The Working Party may wish to consider in detail the thrust of further work to be carried out in this field and the specific activities to be undertaken in this report.

10. MONITORING OF WEIGHT AND DIMENSIONS OF LOADING UNITS IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

The Working Party may wish to recall that its programme of work contains as a priority item “Monitoring of weights and dimensions of loading units used in combined transport in accordance with resolution No. 241 adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on 5 February 1993.”

The Working Party may wish to be informed about new developments in this area.

11. TERMINOLOGY IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

The Working Party may wish to recall the glossary of terms used in combined transport prepared jointly by the European Commission (EC), the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and the UNECE secretariat. The glossary contains a detailed, though not exhaustive list of definitions applied in the framework of combined transport in Europe. The definitions are available in four languages: English, French, Russian and German and are available on the UNECE Transport Division web site (www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/wp24/-Publications).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about progress made in the translation of the glossary into the other official language of the United Nations as well as other considerations for translations into further languages.

12. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF COMBINED TRANSPORT IN UNECE MEMBER COUNTRIES

The Working Party may wish to continue its exchange of information on this subject. Delegations are expected to report orally on recent operating experiences, on new and planned administrative procedures and on new technologies with regard to combined transport in their countries or organizations. Audio-visual aids, as well as written material, would be welcomed and could be distributed by the secretariat if received in time before the session.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Review of the scope of activities of the Working Party

The Working Party may wish to have a preliminary discussion reviewing the scope of activities of the Working Party.

The aim of the review should be to examine if the present mission and scope of activities of the Working Party still reflects the present main Governmental policy concerns, discussions and developments on modern transport chains, modal split, intermodality/multimodality and combined transport, logistics, supply chain and sustainable transport. The Working Party may also wish to consider whether its present programme of work (TRANS/WP.24/93, annex) should be profoundly reviewed and newly focused also taking account of newly emerging issues to be addressed at an inter-governmental, pan-European level. The secretariat will prepare a note on this issue that will be submitted to the delegates well before the session of the Working Party.

(b) Date of next session

The Working Party may wish to decide on the date for its next session. The secretariat has tentatively made arrangements to convene the thirty-sixth session of the Working Party from 7-9 October 2002.

14. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party is not expected to adopt a report on its present session, but only a short list of decisions taken (TRANS/WP.24/63, para. 54). Following the session, the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chairman, will establish a short report of the session that could then be formally adopted at the autumn session of the Working Party in September 2002.



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