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Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Activities of the ECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

Alignment to the Inland Transport Committee governance framework and review of the mandate

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. At its eighty-fifth session, the Inland Transport Committee (ITC): (a) encouraged all its Working Parties to review and align their terms of reference (ToR) and rules of procedure (RoP) to those of ITC, and (b) decided to proceed with the review process of the mandates of its Working Parties in the course of 2023 noting that it takes place in the context of a broader transformation following the endorsement of the revised ToR of ITC by the Economic and Social Council (ECE/TRANS/328, paragraphs 16 and 18).

2. In follow up to the ITC decision, the ITC Chair and the Director of the Sustainable Transport Division invited the Chairs of ITC Working Parties, and among them, the Chair of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) to support and contribute to key ITC decisions by¹:

- (a) Aligning their ToR and RoP with the ITC's revised ToR and RoP, and
- (b) Participating in the review of their mandates.

3. This document provides background information for WP.24 consideration to respond to the request received.

II. Alignment of Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure

4. WP.24 had undertaken steps to update and prepare respectively its ToR and RoP as follows:

- (a) WP.24 prepared its own RoP at the sixty-fifth session on 20 October 2020 based on the revised ITC's RoP. The WP.24's RoP were then adopted by ITC at its eighty-fifth session, and;

¹ Ref. UNECE/2023/TRANS/52 of 18 May 2023.



(b) WP.24 amended its ToR on 22 October 2021 during its sixty-fourth session. In this process, WP.24 took into account the priority areas and tasks of the ITC Strategy until 2030. As a result, WP.24's ToR were adopted by ITC at its eighty-fourth session (Geneva, 22-25 February 2023).

III. Input for the Review Process of the Mandate

5. WP.24 may consider the below information in review of its mandate. The information is structured in accordance with the review modalities provided in the letter from the ITC Chair and the Sustainable Transport Division's Director.

(a) Subsidiary Body Mandates and Governance Framework

6. Alignment with the ITC ToR and RoP: this information is provided in section II of this document.

(b) Work objective

7. In accordance with the WP.24's ToR, the WP.24 objective is to:

“Carry out activities in support of the objective of the ECE transport subprogramme to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport. In this context, WP.24 leads activities aimed at making freight transport more sustainable and climate neutral, in particular by increasing the share of intermodal freight transport in freight transport, whereby freight is moved in one and the same loading unit or road vehicle using successively two or more modes of transport without handling the freight in changing modes. These WP.24 activities are also aimed at supporting the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030, in particular related to tasks such as (i) servicing and administering legal instruments related to intermodal transport, (ii) developing training material, standards and competency criteria for intermodal transport, (iii) identifying, fostering and facilitating introduction of new intermodal technologies, and (iv) supporting integrated regional and interregional intermodal connectivity.”

(c) Work areas and their coverage of transport facilitation, safety and environmental/climate performance:

8. In accordance with the WP.24 ToR and its Long-term programme of work, WP.24 focuses on the following work clusters:

(a) Monitoring, review and updating of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) and the Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC (Protocol to AGTC);

(b) Policies and measures in support of intermodal transport;

(c) Review and monitoring of emerging issues in freight transport and logistics;

(d) Review and update of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code).

9. With this, WP.24 covers transport facilitation (through clusters i, ii and iii), safety (through cluster iv), and environmental and climate performance (through clusters i, ii and iii).

(d) Efficiency and value-added (internal and external overlaps and synergies)

Internal overlaps

10. WP.24 is the only ITC subsidiary body addressing freight transport and its transitioning to sustainable freight transport through promoting intermodal transport. WP.24 in working on its focus areas delivers on ITC tasks as contained in the ITC Strategy which are stipulated above under ‘(b) work objective’.

External overlaps

11. There is no other intergovernmental body with an equivalent mandate. In addition, WP.24 in accordance with ITC’s decision (ECE/TRANS/192, paragraph 90) continues work of the former European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in: (a) monitoring and analysis of national measures to promote intermodal transport; and (b) monitoring enforcement and review of the ECMT Consolidated Resolution on Combined Transport.

Internal synergies

12. WP.24 collaborates closely on:

(a) Intermodal issues along Euro-Asian Transport Links – WP.24 contributes to the operationalization of EATL Route 3, as undertaken by the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5);

(b) Intermodal transport and TIR Convention – WP.24 keeps abreast and considers new applications of TIR system and in particular electronic TIR to intermodal transport operations as undertaken by TIR Executive Board;

(c) Intermodal transport on inland waterways – WP.24 explores this subject with the Working Party on Water Transport as per the ITC Resolution on facilitating the development of container transport on inland waterways;

(d) Geospatial analysis for intermodal transport chains – WP.24 explores this type of analysis for identification of links on which more intermodal transport could take place in collaboration with the Working Party on Transport Statistics;

(e) Intelligent Transport System (ITS) – WP.24 contributes to the implementation of the ITC Road Map until 2025 on ITS. In this regard, it collaborates with other ITC subsidiary bodies involved in the Road Map’s implementation;

(f) Charging infrastructure for electric light- and heavy-duty vehicles – WP.24 considers the role that intermodal terminals could play for providing charging infrastructure for these vehicles. It collaborates on this issue with WP.5.

External synergies

13. WP.24 collaborates closely on:

(a) Networks for intermodal transport – WP.24 ensures that the AGTC and TEN-T lines and related facilities are aligned. In doing so, WP.24 collaborates with the European Union;

(b) Safety of supply chains – WP.24 works closely with the International Labor Organization (ILO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO) in administering the ILO/IMO/UNEC Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units. Industry and various freight transport associations are involved in review of the clauses in the CTU Code;

(c) Decent jobs in freight transport – WP.24 addressed this issue in its Handbook for national master plans for freight transport and logistics. ILO was involved in preparation of this Handbook;

(d) Policies and measures in support of intermodal transport – WP.24 regularly discusses such measures and policies with involvement of the European Commission, FIATA, UIC and other partner organizations.

(e) Work methods

14. The WP.24 deliverables, including the number of meetings, official documents, and publications, are indicated in the ITC programmes of work of the Transport subprogramme, programme plans and publication programmes, as follows:

- 2023: ECE/TRANS/2023/11, ECE/TRANS/2023/12, ECE/TRANS/2023/13/Rev.1;
- 2022: ECE/TRANS/2022/8, ECE/TRANS/2022/9, ECE/TRANS/2022/10 and Corr.1;
- 2021: ECE/TRANS/2021/8, ECE/TRANS/2021/9, ECE/TRANS/2021/10;
- 2020: ECE/TRANS/2020/21, ECE/TRANS/2020/22/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/2020/23;
- 2019: ECE/TRANS/2019/23, ECE/TRANS/2019/24;
- 2018: ECE/TRANS/2018/21, Add.1 and Corr.1, ECE/TRANS/2018/22.

(f) Main partners:

15. The main partners are listed under point (d) above.

(g) Results achieved.

16. WP.24 is regularly, on biennial basis, reviewing its results and is adjusting its actions as appropriate in line with its Long-term programme of work. This review for the last 4 years is provided in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2023/11 (review of 2022–23 programme of work) and in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2021/12 (review of 2020–21 programme of work). Earlier evaluations are provided in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2017/4 (for 2016–2017) and in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/8 (for 2014–2015).

17. In support of its work, WP.24 organizes annual workshops. In the recent years the following workshops were held:

- 19 October 2022 – Automation in freight transport and logistics;
- 17 October 2022 – National experience and challenges faced with intermodal transport information or document digitalization;
- 12 October 2022 – Development of container transport on inland waterways and river-sea transport;
- 20 October 2021 – Recent actions and projects in support of sustainable development of intermodal transport and logistics;
- 28 October 2020 – Intermodal transport and logistics' role in making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
- 26 June 2020 – Meeting of the Friends of the Chair of WP.24 on the COVID-19 impacts on intermodal transport and logistics;
- 30 October 2019 – Sustainable Transport Connectivity between Europe and Asia in the framework of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics.

18. Worth noting is also the fact that ITC adopted resolutions worked out by WP.24, among them: ITC Resolutions 268 on Strengthening intermodal freight transport and 269 on Facilitating the development of container transport on inland waterways.

(h) Results and changes expected in near future:

19. WP.24 formulates in its biennial programmes of work expected accomplishments on the basis of which it assesses achievements. ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2023/11 formulates activities for 2024–25 biennium and their respective accomplishments.

20. WP.24 notes that its activities are supported by 25 per cent of one staff member's time of the Economic Commission's for Europe Sustainable Transport Division. Given the WP.24 activities and accomplishments the secretariat capacity appears limited for WP.24 work, let alone any intensification of these activities which would require increasing secretariat resources.
