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Technical assistance to countries with economies in transition

Basic principles of the ITC Capacity Development Action Plan

Note by the secretariat

Background

1. The outcome of the ECE reform review and specifically decision A(65) of the Commission in 2013, acknowledged that “9. The Transport subprogramme is a unique United Nations centre providing a comprehensive regional and global platform for consideration of all aspects of inland transport development and cooperation. The ECE Transport subprogramme, the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and its related subsidiary bodies work within current mandates in an efficient way, producing concrete results in a regular and ongoing way that have clear value added for the region and beyond”.
2. Number of United Nations General Assembly Resolutions stressed the global role of the legal instruments under the purview of the ITC and encourage all member States to accede to, including: Resolution 72/271 adopted in April 2018 and other biennial road safety resolutions; Resolution A/RES /72/212 on intermodality; and Resolution A/70/197 on connectivity and corridors.
3. The 79th session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) held in Geneva on 21 February 2017 concluded with the signing of the ministerial resolution on “Embracing the new era for sustainable inland transport and mobility” that invited the Committee to develop an ITC Strategy.
4. Having all stated in mind, the 81st session of the ITC (held on 19-22 February 2019) adopted the “Inland Transport Committee Strategy until 2030” (hereafter the Strategy) as a basic document for future directions of the ITC development.

ITC Strategy Vision and mission

5. The Strategy defines ITC Vision as: “ITC is the UN platform for inland transport to help efficiently address global and regional needs in inland transport”.

6. The mission for ITC is defined as: to contribute to sustainable inland transport and mobility for achieving the sustainable development goals in the ECE and UN member States through policy dialogue, harmonizing regulatory frameworks, as appropriate, promoting new technologies, assisting in enhancing connectivity and supporting the implementation of legal instruments.

7. According to the Strategy, in its future activities, the Committee will act as:

- **The UN Platform for regional and global inland transport conventions.** By strengthening its role as the UN platform of inland transport conventions to all UN Member States and by remaining at the forefront of global efforts to curb the road safety crisis, cut emissions by setting and promoting its vehicle standards, and reduce influence of physical and non-physical barriers with its large set of border crossing facilitation conventions and infrastructure development agreements.
- **The UN Platform for supporting new technologies and innovations in inland transport.** By ensuring that (i) its regulatory functions are keeping pace with cutting-edge technologies and transport innovation - especially in the areas of Intelligent Transport Systems, autonomous vehicles and digitalization, (ii) the different amendment processes for the different conventions do not cause fragmentation, and (iii) the dangers of stifling progress due to too early regulation are avoided.
- **The UN Platform for regional, interregional and global inland transport policy dialogues.** By providing a platform for policy dialogue to review emerging challenges in inland transport, as well as proposals for improving infrastructure and operation at its annual session.
- **The UN Platform for promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility.** By providing a comprehensive, harmonized regulatory framework, as appropriate, and institutional reference point supporting international connectivity, developing new or building on existing initiatives, agreements, or corridors, as needed.

8. A support to member States to facilitate accession to and implementation of UN legal instruments is an integral part of the first pillar of the Strategy. In form of technical assistance, the Secretariat will implement a number of activities to support all UN Member States in strengthening knowledge on transport-related UN legal instruments and its efficient implementation.

Basic principles of ITC capacity development

9. To be in line with recent global trends, the Secretariat proposed an update in formulation of current technical assistance/capacity building activities, a process which started with embracing of updated definitions proposed by the World Bank (2009):

- Capacity for development is the availability of resources and the efficiency and effectiveness with which societies deploy those resources to identify and pursue their development goals on a sustainable basis.
- Capacity development is a locally driven process of learning by leaders, coalitions and other agents of change that brings about changes in socio-political, policy-related and organizational factors to enhance local ownership for and the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve a development goal.

10. It is obvious that the term capacity development defines much better activities implemented by the Secretariat in Member States, because activities were related to improving and strengthening of existing capacities and knowledge rather than building capacities which did not exist in that time.

11. The next step in the process is setting up of general principles of capacity development, which are reflecting the intention to do more for promotion of UN transport-related legal instruments and to achieve tangible results in member States. The principles took into account support to the global coverage of UN legal instruments which was set-up in the Strategy and scarcity of the Secretariat's resources. The proposed general principles are the following:

- Offer A-Z solutions to Member States – Work hand-in-hand with Member State on efficient implementation of UN transport legal instruments. Start cooperation with sharing of basic information on benefits of accession to and efficient implementation of transport-related conventions and how they support achievement of Sustainable Development Goals; Assist Member State to build national capacities for implementation; Seek commitment from Member State for necessary legislative and organizational changes for efficient implementation of conventions and assist Member State to prepare necessary legal and organizational framework. In that sense deeper relations with member States will be established – this will ensure Member State ownership in defining goals of capacity development and request full engagement in implementation (including political support).;
- Recognize capacity development as a long-term relation and effort by member States and UNECE. Usually, it takes several years for efficient implementation of one transport-related convention, therefore both member State and UNECE should prepare capacity development framework which will realistically depict road map for implementation of one legal instrument. Introduction of the capacity development framework which combines several technical assistance activities (workshops, conferences, peer missions, analytical work, policy dialogue, etc.) should give much more tangible results with utilization of available resources. Timely provision of necessary resources will support achievement of defined goals in a most efficient and effective manner;
- Taken into account principles set-up in the Sustainable Development Goal 17, ask synergies with other international and regional institutions involved in development of sustainable transport system; Define modalities for involvement of qualified stakeholders (academia and training centres) in sharing of knowledge on UN inland transport conventions and agreements. In that sense it will be possible to create a network of “knowledge sharing/promotion” ambassadors (NGOs, academia, business sector) willing to provide assistance in capacity development framework activities;
- To reach optimal results with available resources, capacity development activities should influence all three levels of capacity development (individual, organizational and national), with special emphasis on a national level. This will support creation of a network of national experts in member State which will spearhead transposition and implementation of transport conventions in national legislation. Furthermore, availability of number of national experts will be a mitigation measure for high fluctuation of staff in developing countries ministries/agencies;
- Use capacity development action plan to mobilize XB funds – Based on the clearly recognized needs and available capacities, the capacity development framework for member State will serve for mobilization of additional XB funding for capacity development and, if necessary, allocation of RPTC fund, RB staff time, etc.

12. Activities to enhance role of ITC as the UN platform for inland transport Conventions should be grouped in four strategic areas:

- Awareness rising - Inform Member States on UN transport legal instruments and on benefits of its efficient implementation;
- Capacity enhancement - Assist member States in developing capacities for efficient implementation of the UN inland transport legal instruments;
- Seek synergies - Develop standards and competence criteria for accreditation of entities (academia, training centers, etc.) to promote the UN inland transport legal instruments;
- Monitor and evaluate results and effectiveness of applied actions/methods.

13. Proposed strategic areas will relate to detailed actions and expected outcomes, which will be closely connected with required resources (bot human and financial). In that sense all prerequisite for presentation of the draft ITC Capacity Development Action Plan will be met.

Funding of ITC capacity development activities

14. The largest funding area required for the implementation of the Strategy is capacity development and analytical work in connection with acceding to and efficient implementation of UN transport-related legal instruments (training platform including manuals, guidelines as well as organization of workshops, trainings), which should be financed by XB or other funding options outside ECE Regular Budget. To increase quality of outputs, RB staff will give substantive support to capacity development tasks. The funding is mainly required for technical assistance to developing and least developed countries, including landlocked developing countries, where the Regulate Technical Programme for Cooperation (RPTC) budget could be a regular source of funding.

15. The ITC capacity development principles will be further elaborated alongside with actions, stakeholders and required funding and presented to ITC Bureau for further consideration.
