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Working Party on Rail Transport

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON RAIL TRANSPORT
ON ITS FIFTY-EIGHTH SESSION
(27-29 October 2004)**

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REPORT¹

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Rail Transport held its fifty-eighth session from 27 to 29 October 2004. Mr. F. Croccolo (Italy) was Chairman of the session. Representatives of the following UNECE member States participated: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Austria; Bulgaria; Germany; Georgia; Hungary; Italy; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Latvia; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland; Turkey and Uzbekistan. The representative of the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) was also present. A representative of the UNECE Trans-European Railway Project (TER) also attended the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/201.

2. The provisional agenda (TRANS/SC.2/201) was adopted.

ACTIVITIES OF ECE BODIES OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

(a) Economic Commission for Europe

Documentation: E/2004/37-E/ECE/1416.

3. The Working Party was informed about the decisions taken by the Commission at its fifty-ninth session (Geneva, 24-26 February 2004), concerning such questions as the UNECE reform, follow-up to the global and regional conferences, major policy directions of UNECE's work, and the UNECE technical cooperation programmes.

4. In connection with the discussion of the outcome of the last annual session of the Economic Commission for Europe, the Working Party noted the large amount of documentation produced by the secretariat for the current session, as well as the increased amount of administrative work related to a larger participation due to the holding of a joint meeting of the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport and the ECMT Group on Railways as back-to-back meetings. Bearing this in mind, it underscored the need to maintain the resources for the railway sector at the current level so that the secretariat could continue to service the meetings and provide relevant documentation appropriately.

¹ Text underlined indicates a decision taken during the session and adopted by the Working Party.

(b) Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/156.

5. The Working Party was informed about the results of the sixty-sixth session of the Inland Transport Committee (17-19 February 2004) and its discussions to the extent that they were related to the area of work of interest to the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/156, paras. 78-84).

6. The Working Party took note of TRANS/2004/18 and TRANS/2004/19 and agreed to discuss possible implications of the newly adopted strategic objectives of the Committee for its programme of work under agenda item 12.

- Safety and security in railway transport

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/2 and Adds.1-2; Informal document No. 2.

7. The Working Party noted document TRANS/SC.2/2004/2 prepared by the secretariat which outlined ways in which it could further contribute to the ongoing work on railway security. The Working Party, conscious of the need to avoid duplication of activities carried out elsewhere, was of the opinion that, within its sphere of competence, it could contribute towards raising the awareness of the importance of the security aspects of the rail transport.

8. In this context, the Working Party agreed that, at this point in time, there was no need for the establishment of an Ad hoc group which would be entrusted to develop recommendations for security and safety in rail transport. In order to further develop awareness of security and safety aspects in international rail transport, the Working Party asked the secretariat to prepare, for its next session, a review of all relevant international Agreements and other legal instruments in the area of rail safety and security. Furthermore, the Working Party invited member Governments to consider and discuss, at the next session, the need for convening an International Conference on Transport Security and Safety. The conference, dealing with security and safety issues in all transport modes, would include all actors involved in security and safety issues at the technical level (Governments, transport operators, international organizations, transport associations, specialized bodies (COLPOFER), etc.

ORGANIZATION OF DEMONSTRATION RUNS OF CONTAINER BLOCK TRAINS ON EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/6; TRANS/WP.5/2004/4.

9. The Working Party took note of information transmitted by the Government of Turkey on the experiences with demonstration runs of block trains between Istanbul and Almaty through its territory, and regretted that Romania and the Russian Federation were not able to provide the similar information on organization of demonstration trains on their respective territories.

10. The Working Party asked the representatives of the Russian Federation, Romania, Turkey and other member countries to inform the Working Party about the results of the demonstration runs of block trains and other activities related to further promotion of Euro-Asian railway corridors at its next session. Furthermore, the Working Party asked the representative of the

OSZhD to provide information on the development of a rail transport database for all OSZhD rail corridors and other related activities at its next session.

EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT CORRIDORS

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/3.

11. Following the request by the Working Party at its previous session, the secretariat prepared an information note on ongoing developments along all four Euro-Asian land transport corridors. The Working Party noted with appreciation the document (TRANS/SC.2/2004/3) which gave an overview of the relevant developments on the Euro-Asian transport links. It also took note of the information by the Director of the UNECE Transport Division who presented the joint UNECE/UNESCAP UNDA Project on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages and the particular role of railways in this context. The Working Party noted that the EU had undertaken the task of reviewing the Pan-European transport corridors. It, therefore, asked that the coordination between the ongoing activities in the EU and in the UNECE/UNESCAP project be ensured in order to achieve the coherent results at the end of these projects, in particular bearing in mind the fact that several countries were involved in both activities at the same time. In addition, the Working Party asked to be informed about new progress in the project on the Development of Euro-Asian transport links at its next session.

FACILITATION OF BORDER CROSSING IN INTERNATIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT

(a) Preparatory meeting for the International Conference on Facilitation of Railway Border Crossing

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/7.

12. The Working Party noted the information on the progress made in the preparation for the organization of an International Conference on Facilitation of Railway Border Crossing Procedures. It supported the intention of the OSZhD, UNECE, and other involved international organizations and countries to convene the Conference in early 2006. Noting that border crossing issues are of particular importance for international railway transport in competition with other modes, the Working Party asked the secretariat to provide the information on progress in the preparation of the Conference at its next session.

(b) Monitoring of progress made in the facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/8 and Add. 1-2.

13. The Working Party noted that the monitoring of border stopping time on border crossings located on the AGC network provided a useful tool for assessing the progress in compliance with the ITC's resolution No. 248 of 1999, which calls for the reduction of the border stopping time of shuttle trains in international traffic to 60 minutes. In order to continue monitoring developments and further improvements on rail border crossings along the AGC network, the Working Party again invited all member Governments to submit information referred to in the monitoring system for the period 7-20 February 2005.

- (c) Border-crossing facilitation project in the SECI (South-east European Co-operative Initiative) region

14. The Working Party took note of the oral report from the secretariat on the progress made by the SECI Ad hoc Working Group on the facilitation of border stopping times of shuttle trains, and asked the secretariat to report on new developments with brief written information at its next session.

PRODUCTIVITY IN RAIL TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/1.

15. The Working Party took note of the report of an Informal meeting on productivity indicators for rail transport attended by the representatives of the UIC, UNECE TER Project Central Office and the secretariat held in March 2004, in Geneva. Agreeing with the recommendations in the report of the Informal meeting, the Working Party invited all member countries to provide to the secretariat the required information for the most recent productivity indicators to the extent that such information had already been collected and available without the additional data collection effort. On the basis of information collected from member countries, the secretariat was asked to prepare a summary document for the next session of the Working Party.

DETERMINATION OF RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY INCLUDING ASPECTS RELATED TO THE FEE FOR THE USE OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE

Documentation: Informal document No. 1.

16. The Working Party considered the report of the EU Task Force which, between December 2001 and April 2002, attempted to identify the best practice concerning the implementation of the provisions on infrastructure charging. The Working Party asked the secretariat, in collaboration with EC DGTREN, to continue providing information on the progress made in the application of EC Directive 2001/14/EC and report thereon to its next session.

17. In addition, the Working Party took note of the Workshop on Railway Infrastructure Charging which was organized by the ECMT in July 2004 in Rome, and of its follow-up scheduled to take place on 28 and 29 October 2004 in Geneva.

INTEROPERABILITY AND HARMONIZATION OF CONDITIONS OF DIFFERENT RAIL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/9.

18. The Working Party took note of the information on new developments regarding interoperability provided by the EU, and asked the secretariat, in cooperation with the EU, to provide similar information for its next session. Furthermore, the Working Party took note of the

oral information on the responsibilities of the new European Railway Agency for development of Technical Standards of Interoperability for conventional railways.

19. The Working Party also took note of the information on the cooperation between the OTIF and the OSZhD based on the "Common Position" agreement of February 2003 and on the ongoing work involving OTIF, European Commission, OSZhD and other concerned international bodies on harmonization of conditions of different rail transport systems and, in this context, of the outcome of the Conference on International Rail Transport Law, held in Ukraine in 2003, was mentioned in particular and the project for a uniform CIM/SMGS consignment note which forms a key element of the Kiev follow-up programme. The joint Conference declaration by OTIF/EC/Ministry of Transport of Ukraine is attached in annex 3 to this report. The Working Party also asked OTIF and the OSZhD to provide updated information on the progress in their common work for its next session.

EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON MAIN INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY LINES (AGC)

(a) Situation regarding the application of the AGC

20. The Working Party recalled decision F (43) adopted at the forty-third session of the Commission inviting "the Governments of ECE member States to consider taking all necessary steps in order to become Parties to the AGC" (E/1988/36-E/ECE/1170, chapter IV) and noted that the following countries were at present Parties to the AGC, bringing the total number of Contracting Parties to 24: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina (succession); Bulgaria; Croatia (succession); Czech Republic (succession); France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Poland; Republic of Moldova (succession); Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia and Montenegro; Slovakia (succession); Slovenia (succession); The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (succession); Turkey; Ukraine.

21. The Working Party noted the situation with respect to the application of the AGC Agreement in member countries and the intention of Latvia to consider acceding to the Agreement. Noting the significance of the AGC for a coherent development of railway infrastructure in the UNECE region and, to that end, of a larger number of member countries acceding to the Agreement, the Working Party invited those Governments which had not yet acceded to the Agreement to examine the possibility of doing so.

(b) Amendments proposed to Annex I of the AGC Agreement

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/10 and Add. 1.

22. The Working Party approved the updated version of Annex I of the AGC (TRANS/SC.2/2004/10), and asked the secretariat to produce a consolidated version of the Agreement.

23. The Working Party examined the amendments proposed by Germany (TRANS/SC.2/2004/10/Add.1) and, in accordance with Article 11, para. 3 of the AGC Agreement (in the presence of the following Contracting Parties: Austria, Bulgaria, Germany,

Hungary, Italy, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine), adopted the amendments to Annex I of the AGC Agreement as contained in annex 1 to this report.

(c) Data collecting efforts on the AGC network

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/12.

24. The Working Party took note of the data on total train traffic on the AGC network in 2000 and, noting their usefulness for transport planning purposes, asked Governments, which had not yet done so, to provide for its next session data on total train traffic on the AGC network in 2000. In addition, the Working Party stressed the importance of replying to the secretariat's questionnaire of updated information on the inventory of existing standards and parameters of the AGC and AGTC Agreements, as well as to the secretariat's questionnaire on the relevance of standards and parameters in the AGC and AGTC Agreements. To this end, the Working Party invited all member countries which are Contracting Parties of AGC and AGTC and which have not yet done so, to reply as soon as possible to the two above-mentioned queries.

TRANS-EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER) PROJECT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/13.

25. The Working Party took note of the annual TER report (TRANS/SC.2/2004/13) introduced by the UN/TER Project Manager and asked to be kept informed of new developments at its forthcoming session.

INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENT IN VARIOUS RAILWAY FIELDS

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/4 and Adds. 1-2.

26. The Working Party appreciated the information by representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan on the transport situation and relevant developments in the railway sector. The Working Party invited these countries to take a more active part and to contribute to its future activities. Furthermore, the Working Party took note of developments in various railway fields (environmental questions related to railway operations, safety in railway transport and introduction of new transport technologies) provided by Belarus, Ireland, Portugal, Turkey, United Kingdom and the OSZhD and invited member Governments and international organizations to report again on developments in these three areas at its session in 2006.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004-2008

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2004/14.

27. The Working Party agreed to adopt its draft programme of work as presented in document TRANS/SC.2/2004/14 and as reproduced in annex 2 to this report. It further agreed with the table reproduced in TRANS/2004/19, indicating the activities in its programme of work which cover the issues identified in the ITC's Strategic Objectives. In addition, the Working Party agreed to initiate a thorough review of its programme of work. To that end, member

Governments were invited to submit in writing their proposals regarding the present programme of work by 31 December 2004, to the secretariat and the Chairman who will prepare a revised programme of work to be discussed at the next session of the Working Party.

OTHER BUSINESS

28. The Working Party agreed that the second back-to-back meeting of the ECMT Group on Railways and the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport would be hosted by the ECMT and held in Paris, tentatively from 8-10 November 2005.

29. It was also recalled that the SC.2 website could be consulted at <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html>. The website contains the reports, agenda of forthcoming session, major publications and working documents. To facilitate and accelerate the publication by the secretariat of working documents for the SC.2 sessions, delegates were invited, whenever possible, to send their submissions for SC.2 sessions by e-mail: helmut.lehmacher@unece.org or miodrag.pesut@unece.org.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

30. In accordance with the decision taken by the Working Party at its fifty-second session (TRANS/SC.2/190, para.6), a list of decisions taken during the session will be adopted at the end of the session and the report will be established by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman with the assistance of the secretariat.

31. The decisions adopted by the Working Party during the session are contained in the following paragraphs of this report 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30.

Annex 1

**EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON
MAIN INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY LINES (AGC)**

Amendments to Annex I of the AGC adopted at the fifty-eighth session
of the Working Party on Rail Transport

**Proposed by Germany:
Proposal for amendment to Annex I of the AGC Agreement**

In accordance with Article 11 of the AGC Agreement, the German Government (Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing of Germany) proposes the amendment - alteration of the alignment of the following route under “(9) Germany” to Annex I of the AGC:

Annex I of the AGC

**RAILWAY LINES OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE
LIST OF RAILWAY LINES**

I. Numbering of lines at the European level North-South

*E 43 Köln – Limburg – Frankfurt (Main) – Heidelberg – Stuttgart – Ulm - Augsburg
Mannheim
München – Freilassing (- Salzburg)*

II. Numbering of lines at the national level

(9) Germany

*E 43 Köln – Limburg – Frankfurt (Main) – Heidelberg – Stuttgart – Ulm - Augsburg
Mannheim
München – Freilassing (- Salzburg).*

Annex 2**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2005-2009****PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.5: RAIL TRANSPORT**

02.5.1 Rail transport infrastructure Priority: 1

- I. Review of the situation concerning the implementation and possible amendments to the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC)

Description: Study of possibilities for the improvement of international rail transport.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Rail Transport will carry out the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Consideration of the AGC Agreement with a view to possibly: implementing and, whenever feasible, improving existing standards and operational parameters; taking into account new east-west traffic flows; raising environmental, energy and safety standards; taking into account the UNECE Conventions on the Environment.
Output expected: Report on amendment of the AGC network; Report on the development of a European conventional and high-speed railway network. (2005)
Priority: 1
- (b) Consideration of the influence of intermodal transport techniques, especially those concerning investment, as well as the harmonization of rolling stock and speed on railways to facilitate the integration of these techniques into the railway system and to create general interoperability.
Output expected: Report on investment in rail infrastructure and railway rolling stock in member countries. (2005)
Priority: 2
- (c) Periodic review of the list of marshalling yards of international importance with a view to cutting down their numbers.
Output expected: Updated report on the location of important marshalling yards within the European railway network. (2005)
Priority: 2
- (d) As a follow-up to the Conference on Transport and the Environment, development and implementation of programmes to build up an efficient European Rail Freight Network by improving and promoting the:
- modernization and extension of rail and combined transport infrastructure;
 - interoperability and coordination between rail systems;
 - upgrade and wider use of environment-friendly rolling stock;
 - logistics and services;
 - establishment of international rail freight companies.

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (e) Periodically survey passenger and goods traffic on the various sections of lines of the AGC network in order to provide support for transport planning; the third survey is based on data for 2000.

Output expected: Report on total train traffic on the AGC network in 2000.
(2005) Rail census in 2005.

Priority: 2

- (f) Consideration of questions concerning safety in railway tunnels.

Output expected: Review on the current situation and prospects for the development of new recommendations (2005)

Priority: 2

- (g) Consideration of developments regarding new railway initiatives on Euro-Asian transport links (e.g. organization of demonstration trains).

Output expected: Report on the current and new initiatives. (2005)

Priority: 2

II. *Special project: Trans-European Railway (TER)*

Description: Within the framework of the UNECE, the TER countries have established an appropriate administrative and financial framework, with the aim of developing a rail network as part of an integrated European international rail system.

Work to be undertaken

- (a) Consideration of specific project developments to promote international rail traffic. (Continuing)

Output expected: Annual progress report on activities carried out within the TER project.

Priority: 1

- (b) Consideration of possibilities for financing of TER in order to promote the upgrading and construction of internationally important rail lines. (Continuing)

Priority: 2

- (c) Consideration of possible utilization of the results achieved under the project in other UNECE activities in the field of rail infrastructure including the implementation of AGC and AGTC in order to benefit from mutual experiences. (Continuing)

Priority: 2

III. *Interregional Cooperation*

Description: Cooperation with other regional commissions and international bodies involved in the development of interregional links.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party will be kept informed of exchanges of information between the secretariats of the regional commissions and other international bodies in order to benefit from experiences gained in other regions of the world. (Continuing)

Priority: 3

02.5.2 Harmonization of requirements concerning international railway transport including rail safety and facilitation of its operations Priority: 1

Description:

- (a) Simplification and harmonization of administrative formalities, particularly, for documents and procedures at border crossing.
- (b) Harmonization of and search for standardized requirements concerning the utilization of railway infrastructure including computerization aspects.
- (c) Elaboration of proposals and preparation of studies aimed at strengthening, consolidating and extending the position of rail transport on international transport markets.
- (d) Analysis of problems relating to the harmonization and improvement of rail safety.
- (e) Consideration of prospects for the adoption of legal regulations applicable to the contract for the transport of goods and passengers by rail so as to establish a standard legal system (harmonization of the SMGS/SMPS and CIM/CIV systems).

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Rail Transport will carry out the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Consideration of specific difficulties encountered at border crossings in the transport of passengers and goods by rail with a view to accelerating border crossing operations and establishing a programme to deal with problems common to several routes.
Output expected: Report on bi- and multilateral contacts of Governments and railways to improve the crossing of borders in international rail traffic. (2005) Priority: 1
- (b) Consideration of follow-up of the implementation of recommendations and preparation of new texts or amendments to existing texts, if necessary, notably concerning the facilitation of border crossing with the aim to improve international rail traffic.
Priority: 1
- (c) Review of requirements concerning railway operations and regulations, reduction of transport time and improvement in the precision of movements in the international carriage of goods, new operative developments in rail transport, the integration of services of different railways.
Priority: 2
- (d) The study of the possibilities for harmonizing the application and periods of summer time with a view to upgrading transport quality in rail transport.
Output expected: Report on the application of summer time. (Report on change in application of summer time when it takes place) Priority: 3

- (e) Analysis of Government policies concerning rail safety to contribute to an improvement of safety in international transport.

Output expected: Report on safety and implementation of risk assessment techniques in rail transport in the UNECE region. (2006) Priority: 1

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (f) Analysis of the various elements of productivity in rail transport and the possibilities to increase rail productivity in particular for international transport.

Output expected: Bi-annual report on the development of productivity in rail transport in member countries. (2006) Priority: 2

- (g) Consideration on the basis of reports by the international organizations concerned of the progress accomplished on the harmonization of legal regulations applicable to the contract for the transport of goods and passengers by rail to examine whether the compatibility of the regulation concerned can be ensured.

Output expected: Report by international organizations concerned on the progress made in the elimination of difficulties arising from different legal systems in international rail transport. (2006) Priority: 3

Annex 3**Conference on International Rail Transport Law**
Kiev, 21-22 October 2003**Joint Declaration**Ministry of Transport of the Ukraine/European Commission/OTIF

1. The international "Conference on International Transport Law" was organized on 21-22 October 2003 in Kiev with the aim of finding possible means of bridging the gap between two international rail transport law systems – namely that of OSZhD and that of OTIF – particularly in the area of freight transport.
2. The Conference has established that Central and East European States that will become members of the EU, as well as the CIS States, should direct their attention firstly to improving the legal basis for transiting transport in order to create favourable conditions to attract additional transport and to exclude the possibility of a new dividing line coming into being between the EU and CIS States.
3. The railways should become more efficient and competitive compared with other modes of transport, especially roads. They should provide a quality service to customers, characterized by reliability, punctuality and safety. Special attention should be paid to smooth and efficient border-crossing procedures.
4. The fact that two legal systems regulate international rail transport in the large geographical area of Eurasia should not be an obstacle to exploiting the opportunities available to the railways. Harmonization of legislation between the two regulatory legal systems is needed with short and medium term objectives to be set up.
5. Legal and technical interoperability as well as the development of infrastructure are shared priorities although they have different timeframes.
6. The Conference has established that a real disadvantage for rail transport is the absence of a direct consignment note. Action to improve matters can be provided as follows:
 - development of a direct consignment note as a first step;
 - standardization of the laws governing questions of liability for the entire transport activity as a second step.

For the time being where harmonization is not possible a new solution can be applied; when CIM 1999 enters into force, the parties will have available the option of a legal transport regime.

7. The Conference has agreed that a work programme between OSZhD and OTIF, that will build on the existing "Common position", should contribute to reach the objectives of this declaration.

8. In addition, the European Commission will stimulate the work on a number of trans-European corridors to facilitate the implementation of joint solutions.
9. The Conference recommends to OTIF and OSZhD to create a joint working group with participation of CIT and other interested rail organizations in order to reach the declared objectives.
