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**MONITORING OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE FACILITATION OF  
BORDER CROSSING IN INTERNATIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT**

Transmitted by the Government of Serbia\*

1. The Government of the Republic of Serbia took a series of measures in order to improve the quality of railway traffic performance - whether it concerned conditions of infrastructure, or rolling stock, i.e. of passenger and freight wagons or increase efficiency of work at border crossings or to reduce stopping time of trains at border stations.
2. However, a lot of funds invested by Serbia, its neighbours and the international community could be made worthless at border crossings, i.e. efficiency measures cannot reclaim the time lost at border crossings. Significant reserves which lie in reduction of time for transport of goods and passengers require a lot of energy in coordination of activities involving a large number of participants. As they require enormous energy and they are not about investments, projects of this type are not very attractive. However, they made the challenge of improving and facilitating border crossing operations even bigger.

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\* The UNECE Transport Division has submitted the present document after the official document deadline due to resource constraints.

3. Aware of the problems at border crossings and their importance for integration processes in the region, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has undertaken a series of activities. The Government Committee for border crossings and the Committee for preparation and organization of national strategy for service management and control of crossing of State borders were established. The National Strategy for Integrated Border Management was adopted and compilation of harmonized and synchronized sector strategies and National Strategy implementation plans were started.

4. Simultaneously with these Government activities, Ministries in charge of traffic in Serbia and Bulgaria, with full support of border authorities of both countries, prepared a New Bilateral Agreement on railway traffic border control. The Agreement was ratified by the Parliaments of both countries and activities on the final phase of implementation are under way. In the following four weeks, Agreement is expected to be implemented, according to which the stopping time of trains at border crossing shall be decreased by 40%.

5. In accordance with the New Agreement, the stopping time of freight trains shall be only at the joint border station Dimitrovgrad (Serbia), while passenger trains control shall be performed during movement of trains between border stations Dimitrovgrad (Serbia) and Dragoman (Bulgaria). In addition to the opening of a joint station, the Agreement will solve the problem of joint work of border services of both countries at the same place.

6. The Ministry of Capital Investment of the Republic of Serbia, together with border authorities, intends to pursue a similar approach when trying to solve problems of stopping time of trains at other international railway border crossings, especially those on the Corridor X and its branches.

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