

# **WORK PLAN OF ACTIVITIES OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS (EATL)**

**Approved on 7 September 2009**

## **Developing EATL Phase II**

### **I. BACKGROUND**

To address inadequate transport infrastructure, internationally unharmonized transport rules and cumbersome, costly and time-consuming border crossing procedures, the UNECE and UNESCAP worked in 2003-2007 with Governments of the Euro-Asian region as part of a global UN Development Account Capacity-building Project. The project's results have included the identification of the main Euro-Asian inland transport routes, prioritization of infrastructure projects, development of GIS database, analysis of non-physical obstacles, capacity-building workshops and the final study.

The first phase of the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) project ended in 2008 with the Ministerial Meeting in Geneva where high level representatives of 19 countries issued and signed a joint statement. The Ministers have confirmed their support for the EATL project and its continuation, endorsed the identified Euro-Asian routes and their priority development as well as promoted the creation of a mechanism to ensure co-ordination and monitoring of future EATL-related activities.

In this context, in early 2008, the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and the Executive Committee agreed to establish a Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links to ensure monitoring and coordination of EATL activities.

### **II. OBJECTIVE**

The Expert Group is to ensure monitoring and coordination of activities aimed at developing efficient, safe, sustainable and secure Euro-Asian inland transport links.

### **III. EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- EA1 An appropriate mechanism for coordination and monitoring of the development of the Euro-Asian transport links established to enhance cooperation in the field of transport in the Euro-Asian region among countries, transport related international governmental and non governmental organizations
- EA2 Coordinated planning and development of efficient, safe and secure inland Euro-Asian transport links; evaluated and prioritized infrastructure projects along main Euro-Asian transport routes.
- EA3 Strengthened national capacities to facilitate international transport and transit, including border crossing, and to share the experience and best practices along the Euro-Asian transport routes.
- EA4 Further developed and updated Geographic Information System (GIS) database.
- EA5 Dissemination of project results

#### **IV. MAIN ACTIVITIES**

- MA1.1 Establishing the Expert Group of National Focal Points (NFPs) and Experts from ECE-ESCAP countries and international organizations concerned
- MA1.2 Developing EATL overall coordination and monitoring with participation of all parties concerned
- MA1.3 Organizing meetings of the Expert Group (EGM) and other inter-regional meetings, in close cooperation with the participation of NFPs and other parties concerned.
- MA1.4 Exploring synergies and coordinating actions with other Euro-Asian transport initiatives that are implemented by other international, regional and sub-regional organizations and bodies concerned.
- MA2.1 Reviewing, extending and updating priority routes and projects identified in Phase I while using the best available methodology (based on country contributions) and considering links to major national transport axes;
- MA2.2 Conducting/consolidating studies to analyze and identify economically viable inland transport options; examining non-physical border crossing obstacles and recommending ways to remove them; collecting and analyzing statistics on transport flows
- MA2.3 Presenting a list of priority infrastructure projects for gradual implementation by the EATL countries to IFI's, international organizations and donors primary based of EATL I results.
- MA3.1 Organizing sub-regional workshops to promote project's objectives, improve the capacity of stakeholders to accede to and to effectively implement key UN international agreements and conventions in the area of transport and the Almaty Plan of Action.
- MA3.2 Providing advisory services to EATL participating countries with economies in transition
- MA3.3 Supporting and cooperating with initiatives to promote identified EATL routes and identifying border crossing bottlenecks with the aid of demonstration runs of block trains.
- MA3.4 Contributing to the development of the border crossing performance measurement methodology
- MA4 Reviewing, updating and extending the existing GIS database based on country contributions
- MA5 Reporting and disseminating project results, recommendations, and long-term strategies, based on lessons learned

## **V LIST OF ACTIVITIES THAT MAY BE TARGETED BY THE EXPERT GROUP IN CASE THAT IT IS EXTENDED AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES BECOME AVAILABLE**

1. Organizing national capacity-building workshops to enhance the competence and efficiency of relevant stakeholders, including those located at the borders of main Euro-Asian transport routes, with participation of government officials and representatives from the private sector while focusing on the implementation of major transport-facilitating international conventions administered by the UN and the promotion of best practices;
2. Developing a reporting mechanism for transit transport and border crossing performance;
3. Comparing the performance of EATL O/D (time-cost) routes with relevant maritime-based routes (port to port plus inland sections) and identifying conditions under which EATL options would be competitive,
4. Developing an internet GIS application for assessing the status of EATL routes in cooperation with stakeholders; assisting EATL countries to take full advantage from using it;
5. Apply the best available methodology to identify bottlenecks along the main Euro-Asian transport routes;
6. Support the development of models for effective cooperation between the business sector and state authorities in the financing of large-scale infrastructure projects, including PPP models suitable for transition economies.
7. Encouraging countries to eliminate the quantitative restrictions imposed by quotas and transport permits.

The proposed revised and more detailed Work plan of the Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links in 2008 and 2009 is illustrated in the following pages (5-7). Full implementation of the work plan would require the extension of the Expert Group by 2 years (to 2011) and depend on the availability of resources.

## Revised Work plan of activities of the Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) - Developing EATL Phase II

| Expected Accomplishment   | Main Activity   | Detailed description of actions  | 2008 | 2009 | 2010<br>(tentative) | 2011<br>(tentative) |
|---|---|--|------|------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <p><b>1.</b> An appropriate mechanism for coordination and monitoring of the development of the Euro-Asian transport links among countries, transport related international governmental and non governmental organizations</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Armenia, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, China, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Moldova, Mongolia, Romania, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>EC, ITF, BSEC, IRF, TRACECA, ECO, OSCE, CAREC, EURASEC, OHRL, WB, EBRD, EIB, ADB, IDB, UIC, IRU, ICC, FIATA, UIRR, IRF, Europlatforms, OSJD, SCO, WCO, WTO</p> | <p><b>1.1.</b> Establish the Expert Group of National Focal Points and Experts from ECE-ESCAP countries and international organizations concerned.</p>  | (i) Invite all ECE countries and ESCAP countries involved in Phase I and organizations to designate National Focal Points and Experts  | X    | X    | -                   | -                   |
|   |   | (ii) Establish, update and disseminate the list of NFP & Experts involved  | -    | X    | X                   | X                   |
|   |   | (iii) Encourage participation of more countries, such Poland, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Scandinavian and Baltic countries, Pakistan, India, USA, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea   | -    | X    | X                   | X                   |
|   | <p><b>1.2</b> Develop EATL overall coordination and monitoring with the participation of all parties concerned</p>  | (i) Invite countries to submit information about their transport investment plans and implementation;  | -    | X    | X                   | X                   |
|   |   | (ii) Based on country inputs develop a consolidated status report;   | -    | -    | X                   | X                   |
|   | (iii) Subject to available funding study and analyse the implementation rate, reasons of progress or lack of progress   | -  | -    | -    | X                   |                     |
|   | <p><b>1.3</b> Organize meetings of the Expert Group (EGM) and other interregional meetings with the participation of NFPs and other parties concerned.</p>  | (i) 1 <sup>st</sup> EGM Geneva, Sept. 08<br>(ii) 2 <sup>nd</sup> EGM Beijing, June 09 (combined with interregional workshop),<br>(iii) 3 <sup>rd</sup> EGM Geneva Sept. 09<br>(iv) 1-2 EGMs per year in 2010 and 2011  | X    | X    | X                   | X                   |
|   | <p><b>1.4</b> Explore synergies and coordinate actions with other initiatives that are implemented by international regional and sub-regional organizations and bodies concerned. Promote and share best practices of national governments and international organizations in the area of international transport and border crossing facilitation.</p> | Identify areas for possible cooperation with all parties concerned, namely:<br>- EurAsec, CAREC, OSCE, TRACECA, ECO, SCO, BSEC with regard to regional integration transport activities<br>- TEM, TER and EU TEN-T with regard to transport corridor and networks<br>- Subject to available funding study the feasibility for revised road, rail and intermodal transport network agreements (AGR, AGC, AGTC, AH, TAR) | -    | X    | X                   | X                   |

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| 2. Coordinated planning and development of efficient, safe and secure land and land-cum-sea Euro-Asian transport links; evaluated and prioritized infrastructure projects along main Euro-Asian transport routes. | <b>2.1.</b> Review, extend and update priority routes and projects identified in Phase I while using the best available methodology and considering links to major national transport axes  | (i) Collect country information on priority routes through uniform questionnaire  | - | - | X | X |   |
|   |   | (ii) Subject to country inputs revise the EATL priority routes  | - | X | X | X |   |
|   | <b>2.2</b> Conduct/consolidate studies to identify and analyse economically viable inland transport options; examine non-physical obstacles and recommend ways to improve them; collect and analyse statistics on transport flows   | Subject to country inputs update the list of EATL priority projects based on country inputs through uniform questionnaires and templates with a view to developing an interregional investment plan.                |   | - | - | X | X |
|   |   | (i) Conduct a SWOT analysis for EATL inland connections with inputs from the members of the Expert Group  | - | X | X | X |   |
|   |   | (ii) Collect and consolidate data on transport flows, statistics trends on EATL from the countries and other international bodies using uniform questionnaires offering synergies to the E-road and E-rail censuses | - | X | X | X |   |
|   |   | (iii) Study, compare and analyse EATL inland transport options that complement existing maritime routes   | - | X | X | X |   |
|   | <b>2.3</b> Present a list of priority projects for gradual implementation by the countries involved, in cooperation with IFI's, international organizations, including IRF and TRACECA, and donors primarily based on EATL Phase I results  | (iv) Study and analyse non-physical obstacles to international transport along the EATL routes and recommend ways to eliminating them (activity in conjunction with those under 3.1)                                | - | X | X | X |   |
|   |   | Take part in such meetings aimed at promoting priority projects   |   | - | X | X | X |
| 3. Strengthened national capacities to facilitate international transport and transit including border crossing, , share experience and best practice along the Euro-Asian transport routes                       | <b>3.1</b> Organize sub-regional workshops to promote project's objectives, improve the capacity of stakeholders to effectively implement international conventions, and the Almaty Plan of Action Plan, exploring possibilities to holding them back to back with other related meetings (SPECA, BSEC,TRACECA, etc.) | (i) 1 <sup>st</sup> Workshop, Teheran for ECO region, April 2009  | - | X | X | X |   |
|   |   | (ii) In BSEC region, 2009-2010  | - | X | X | X |   |
|   |   | (iii) 2 workshops in 2010-2011  | - | X | X | X |   |
|   | <b>3.3</b> Provide advisory services to EATL participating countries with transition economies on border  | (i) Identify and recommend the most relevant international transport facilitation conventions to which respective countries should accede in order to facilitate interregional transport of passengers and goods,   |   | - | X | X | X |
|   |   | (ii) Introduce indicators of project success e.g. harmonization Convention accepted by all EATL countries by 2011   |   | - | X | - | - |
| (iii) Contribute to their implementation monitoring   |   | -   | X | X | X |   |   |
| <b>3.3</b> Provide advisory services to EATL participating countries with transition economies on border  |   | Advisory missions to EATL countries with transition economies combined with sub-regional workshops when possible for follow-up of national actions in promoting project's objective,                                | X | X | X | X |   |

|  |  |   |                       |                       |                       |                       |
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|  | crossing facilitation  | including<br>- assistance in formulation of national transport facilitation action plans – when possible as part of trade and transport plans<br>- support of establishment of national transport and trade facilitation committees,<br>- consultation about the OSCE-UNECE border crossing performance measurement methodology and its piloting out<br>- capacity building on investment planning, investment project appraisal methodologies (see UNECE methodologies). |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|  | <b>3.4</b> Support and cooperate with initiatives to promote identified EATL routes with the aid of demonstration runs of block trains etc.  | (i) Develop cooperation in support of ongoing initiatives with:<br>- ECO Istanbul -Teheran - Almaty rail route, and its possible extension to China;<br>- BSEC Ring Highway;<br>- Analysis/corridor performance;<br>- North South rail route;<br>- DB pilot rail route China-Germany;<br>- TRACECA; Other<br>(ii) Analyse results in collaboration with respective countries and partners and disseminate/publish findings  | -<br>-<br>-<br>-<br>- | X<br>X<br>-<br>X<br>X | X<br>X<br>X<br>X<br>X | X<br>X<br>X<br>X<br>X |
| <b>4.</b> Further developed and updated Geographic Information System (GIS) database | <b>4.1.</b> Review, update and extend the existing GIS database, including technical specifications of the transport infrastructure and related facilities (border crossing, priority projects and their implementation status, investment plans) based on country contributions | Collect required contributions from countries on the GIS database   | -                     | X                     | X                     | X                     |
|  |  | Subject to quality of information update of the GIS database and the updated list of priority projects.   | -                     | X                     | X                     | X                     |
| <b>5.</b> Project results are disseminated   | <b>5.1</b> Reporting and disseminating project results, recommendations and long-term strategies based on lessons learned  | (i) Elaborate and publish the final report of the work  | -                     | -                     | -                     | X                     |
|  |  | (ii) Constantly update the existing WP.5/EG.2 (EATL Phase II) webpage with information about the progress and results of the work   | -                     | X                     | X                     | X                     |
|  |  | (iii) Disseminate information through participation and/or organizing under UNECE auspices of a final interregional event to promote the results, share best practices and experience and ensure sustainability of the work   | -                     | -                     | -                     | X                     |