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Report of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics on its fifty-fourth session

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Attendance	1–4	3
II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)	5	3
III. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 2).....	6–17	3
A. Trends and performance in the intermodal transport and logistics industry ...	6–13	3
B. Pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies ..	14	4
C. Activities of the European Commission in intermodal transport and logistics	15	5
D. Identification of Intermodal Loading Units in Europe (ILU-Code).....	16–17	5
IV. National policy measures to promote intermodal transport (agenda item 3).....	18–20	5
V. Follow-up to the 2010 Theme: Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport by inland waterways (agenda item 4).....	21–23	6
VI. 2011 Theme: Role of terminals and logistics centres for intermodal transport (agenda item 5).....	24–29	6
VII. Theme for substantive discussion in 2012 (agenda item 6).....	30–31	7
VIII. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (agenda item 7).....	32–41	8
A. Status of the AGTC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals.....	32–33	8
B. Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network).....	34–36	8
C. Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)	37–41	9

IX.	Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement (agenda item 8).....	42–47	9
	A. Status of the Protocol.....	44–45	10
	B. Amendment proposals	46–47	10
X.	Civil liability regimes in intermodal transport (agenda item 9)	48–53	10
XI.	IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for packing of cargo in intermodal transport units (agenda item 10).....	54–60	11
XII.	Weights and dimensions of loading units in intermodal transport: The modular concept (agenda item 11)	61–62	12
XIII.	Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and other technological applications for intermodal transport (agenda item 12)	63–64	13
XIV.	Activities of international organizations relating to intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 13)	65	13
XV.	Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 14).....	66	13
XVI.	Programme of work, biennial evaluation and terms of reference of the Working Party (agenda item 15)	67–71	14
	A. Programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2012–2013.....	67–68	14
	B. Work plan for 2012–2016.....	69	14
	C. Terms of reference (ToR)	70–71	14
XVII.	Election of officers (agenda item 16).....	72	14
XVIII.	Date and venue of next sessions (agenda item 17).....	73–75	14
XIX.	Summary of decisions (agenda item 18).....	76	15
Annex			
	Amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement adopted by the Working Party on 4 November 2011		16

I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics held its fifty-fourth session on 2 and 3 November 2011 in Geneva. On 3 November 2011 a half day session was held jointly with the Working Party on Rail Transport and agenda items 5 and 7 (c) were considered jointly.
2. The session of the Working Party was attended by the following countries: Austria; Belgium; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Germany; Netherlands; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Spain and Switzerland.
3. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was represented. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Bureau of Containers (BIC); International Union of Combined Road/Rail Transport Companies (UIRR); International Union of Railways (UIC). The Association of German Freight Villages and ETS Consulting participated upon invitation by the secretariat.
4. In accordance with the decision taken at its fifty-third session (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 69), the session was chaired by Mr. M. Viardot (France).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)¹

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/128

5. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/128).

III. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 2)

A. Trends and performance in the intermodal transport and logistics industry

6. On the basis of presentations made by the representatives of UIRR and UIC, the Working Party had an exchange of views on recent developments and trends in intermodal transport and logistics in UNECE member countries.
7. On the basis of a comprehensive presentation made by the UIRR representative (UIRR companies carry out half of total intermodal road-rail transport operations in Europe), the Working Party noted that intermodal road-rail transport had recorded, since the late 1990s and until 2008, annual growth rates in the order of 6–7 per cent. The financial and economic crisis already led in 2008 to a slow-down in operations (+2 per cent) and in 2009 to a dramatic decline of 17 per cent (for details see ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 6–13; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 4–8).
8. In 2010, UIRR companies recorded again a considerable increase in traffic in the order of 8 per cent, both for unaccompanied (containers, swap bodies and semi-trailers) and accompanied transport (Rolling Road). This amounted to total shipments in the order of

¹ All informal documents and presentations made at the session are available on the following website: www.unece.org/trans/wp24/wp24-presentations/24presentations.html.

3.03 million consignments or 6.06 million TEU equivalents (5,16 million TEU for unaccompanied and 0,90 million TEU for accompanied traffic).² However, post-crisis levels have not yet been attained.

9. The growth of unaccompanied traffic took place largely on transalpine corridors covering around 60 per cent of total UIRR traffic. Accompanied road-rail transport saw solid increases on the Swiss and Austrian corridors.

10. International traffic increased in 2010 by 9 per cent (3,52 million TEU) whereas national traffic grew by only 6 per cent (2,54 million TEU).

11. Particular problems arose in 2010 due to the lack of rail pocket wagons able to carry semi-trailers. At present, this intermodal transport technique accounts for 10 per cent of all road-rail transport operations and may further increase since the number of semi-trailers suitable for vertical transshipments was rapidly growing and has reached nearly 50 per cent of all newly produced units. At the same time, many rail pocket wagons have reached the end of their life and must be replaced quickly.

12. Intermodal road-rail traffic continued to grow in the first half of 2011. However, this upward trend is already slowing down in the second half of 2011. The outlook for 2012 is bleak as economic growth in Europe will be negatively affected by the austerity measures taken in a number of European countries. In addition, the scheduled temporary closure of the Brenner railway line in 2012 for maintenance and rehabilitation works will complicate transalpine services and may reduce its reliability and punctuality, while increasing costs.

13. The Working Party was also informed by the representative of UIC about the results of a study on Intercontinental Combined Traffic (ICOMOD) that estimated that Euro-Asian rail transport volumes could reach 1 million TEU annually by 2030. This included traffic from East Asia (mainly China), Kazakhstan and Mongolia. Traffic from South Asia could add another 150.000 TEU annually. In principle, nearly 500.000 TEU could already be transported annually on Euro-Asian corridors on the four routes along the Trans-Siberian railway line (via the port of Vostochny, Manzhouli/Zabaikalsk or Mongolia) and through Kazakhstan (Alashankou/Dostyk). To arrive at such traffic volumes and to capture market shares from maritime transport, Euro-Asian rail transport must become attractive for high-value goods that are produced and consumed away from major sea ports. Their high capital costs can make the relatively short Euro-Asian rail transit operations competitive (11 versus 30 days for sea transport) if, in parallel, high reliability, predictability and frequency of services could be ensured.

B. Pan-European developments in intermodal transport and transport policies

14. The representatives of Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands and Slovakia provided specific information on latest developments in combined transport in their countries. In all these countries, intermodal road-rail transport had recovered in 2010 from the dramatic decline in traffic in 2009. Germany and Belgium also reported that new supporting schemes for intermodal transport and terminal operations would be renewed in 2012 and 2013 respectively.

² One consignment is equivalent to two twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU).

C. Activities of the European Commission in intermodal transport and logistics

15. In view of the absence of the representative of the European Commission (DG MOVE), no information was provided.

D. Identification of Intermodal Loading Units in Europe (ILU-Code)

16. The Working Party was informed by the representative of UIRR that the recently launched ILU-Code, based on European standard EN 13044-1, had introduced an owner-code for the identification of European intermodal loading units (i.e. swap-bodies and semi-trailers). In the future, only one uniform type of owner codification of loading units will be applied: the worldwide BIC-Code for freight containers (ISO 6346) and the new ILU-Code for European loading units fully compatible with the BIC-Code.

17. Even though use of the ILU-Code is not mandatory, an implementation plan has been decided upon by UIC railway undertakings and UIRR operators. ILU-Codes will be issued as of 1 July 2012 at a cost of Euro 250. As of 2014 only intermodal loading units marked with a valid BIC-Code or ILU-Code would be transported and as of 2019 every loading unit will need to be fitted with the new codification plate. The administrator of the ILU-Code is UIRR.³

IV. National policy measures to promote intermodal transport (agenda item 3)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/1 and ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/Add.1/Corr.1

18. In accordance with a decision of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC), the Working Party continues the work carried out by 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 (ECE/TRANS/192, para. 90).

19. The Working Party took note of updated and corrected information from Austria (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/1 and ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/Add.1/Corr.1) covering the agreed 11 policy measures. It requested the secretariat to continue to transmit, possibly every three years, pre-filled questionnaires to UNECE member countries in order to ensure a consistent, comparable and comprehensive picture of Governmental support measures for intermodal transport.

20. The Working Party welcomed that, as of early 2012, information from 14 countries would be made available online by the secretariat, together with links to Government sites providing more detailed information in the respective national languages.⁴ Countries that had not yet transmitted relevant information to the secretariat were invited to do so. Such information should be made available as an official document of the Working Party.

³ For more information: www.ilu-code.eu.

⁴ Such information will be available at: www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

V. Follow-up to the 2010 Theme: Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport by inland waterways (agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/2

21. The Working Party took note of the secretariat report of a technical visit to Strasbourg (France, 16 and 17 May 2011) which concluded the activities under the 2010 theme: Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport by inland waterways (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/

2). Consultations were held with staff of the Central Commission for Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) followed by a technical visit of the Port of Strasbourg.

22. As a follow-up to this visit at the Port of Strasbourg, the Working Party was informed by Ms. Cécile Cohas of «Voies Navigables de France» (VNF) about a study undertaken in France on the use of 45 ft. plate-wide containers in inland water transport. It noted that such containers, allowing transport of 6 additional palettes compared to ISO containers and having the same loading features as European road semi-trailers, were today mainly used in short sea shipping between the European North Range ports, the United Kingdom and the Baltic States. While international transport of such 45 ft. long containers was generally not permitted on European roads, rail transport did not cause major problems. However, inland navigation vessels and hubs often still needed to be adapted in order to be able to transport and tranship such intermodal loading units efficiently.

23. Concluding its discussions of this topic, the Working Party felt that the newly introduced cycle of activities around an annual theme, starting with the preparation of a background document by a group of volunteers, followed by in-depth discussions at the session of the Working Party and completed by a technical visit, had proved to be interesting and should be continued along these lines. The secretariat was requested to ensure the necessary guidance and moderation of these activities.

VI. 2011 Theme: Role of terminals and logistics centres for intermodal transport (agenda item 5)⁵

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/3 and Add.1

24. On the basis of a secretariat document and presentations made by Mr. Philippe Rigaud, Direction régionale de l'environnement, de l'aménagement et du logement (DREAL) (France) and Mr. Thomas Nobel, Managing Director, Association of Freight Villages (Germany), the Working Party analysed and discussed, in collaboration with the Working Party on Rail Transport, the role of terminals, logistics centres and freight villages for the development of intermodal and rail transport in Europe.

25. The joint session considered best practices in the planning, construction and operation of intermodal terminals, logistics centres and freight villages. In Western Europe alone, there exist more than 100 of such important installations of different type, functions and locations that serve different clients and markets and have been developed with specific commercial and political objectives in mind. These objectives include traffic (avoidance/reduction, modal shift), economics (better transport productivity and logistics services, commercial flexibility), ecology (less noise and air emissions in sensitive urban

⁵ Joint session with the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2).

areas), land use planning (relocation of industry and physical separation from housing and leisure activities) as well as employment considerations.

26. The joint session agreed that while the private sector was usually responsible for investments into new installations and for their operation, Governments at all levels had an important role to play in the establishment of terminals, logistics centres and freight villages. It noted that in several UNECE member countries, Governments provide financial support for infrastructure investments to allow for an optimal location of such installations, to ensure open access and to avoid negative external effects, such as additional traffic, congestions, noise and air pollution. Some countries also provide support for technical equipment as well as for terminal operations, sometimes for the start-up phase only.

27. The joint session noted that the AGTC Agreement contained listings of important terminal in annex II as well as minimum performance standards that had been developed in the 1990s and may need to reviewed and brought in line with the latest developments.

28. The Working Party felt that such joint sessions with other UNECE Working Parties on a specific topic provided a value added to its activities and should be pursued as appropriate ensuring however that adequate time was given to allow a thorough discussion of the topics.

29. To conclude its activities on the 2011 theme, the Working Party invited the secretariat to consider organizing, as in the past, a technical visit allowing delegations to assess the realities of establishing and operating intermodal terminals and logistics centres. A report on such follow-up activities should be submitted at the next session.

VII. Theme for substantive discussion in 2012 (agenda item 6)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/5

30. In line with its road map on future work and operation (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/5) adopted by the Working Party in 2009 (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, para. 21) and following a review of its activities undertaken under the 2010 theme: Inland water transport (see para. 23 above) and the 2011 theme: Intermodal terminals (see paras. 24–29 above), the Working Party decided to take up in 2012 the theme: Intelligent Transport Systems – Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport (being part of regional and global transport chains).

31. The Working Party invited volunteers, assisted by the secretariat, to prepare a note on this theme for its autumn session in 2012 that should contain issues for consideration and proposals for policy action by UNECE Governments.

VIII. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (agenda item 7)

A. Status of the AGTC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.5

32. The Working Party noted that, at present, the AGTC Agreement has 32 Contracting Parties.⁶ Detailed information on the AGTC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.5), a map of the AGTC network, an inventory of standards stipulated in the Agreements as well as all relevant Depository Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party at www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

33. So far, eight amendments to the AGTC Agreement have come into force, the latest on 10 December 2009.

B. Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1

34. The Working Party considered amendment proposals transmitted by Kazakhstan relating to Annex I of the AGTC Agreement (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/4). They introduced modifications of city names along railway lines C-E 24, C-E 50 and C-E 60 as well as insertion of a new border crossing point on C-E 597. All of these modifications affected only the territory of Kazakhstan.

35. In accordance with article 15 of the AGTC Agreement, the representatives of Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement present and voting at the session of the Working Party, adopted unanimously these amendment proposals as reproduced in the annex to this report. The secretariat was requested to transmit these proposals to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement for issuance of the required depositary notifications.

36. The Working Party noted that no further information on the required consultations among concerned Contracting Parties on amendment proposals affecting Armenia, Georgia, Hungary and Turkmenistan (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1) and Denmark, Germany and Sweden (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4) had been received. At its last session, amendment proposals relating to Austria had been withdrawn (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 35). Recalling its discussions on this subject at its fifty-second session (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 29–31), the Working Party decided to revert to this issue at its next session, as appropriate.

⁶ Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

C. Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)⁷

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3

37. The Working Party recalled that, as indicated in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/2, several of the 15 countries that had responded to a secretariat survey on the relevance of the minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters in annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement, had felt that some of them might need to be reviewed and updated.

38. It also recalled that, at its last session and based on two secretariat documents (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3) the Working Party undertook a first review of possible new minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters for inclusion into annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 37–42).

39. In collaboration with the Working Party on Rail Transport responsible for the administration of the AGC Agreement, the Working Party reviewed once more the minimum infrastructure standards contained in the AGC and AGTC Agreements (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2).

40. Both Working Party noted that none of the Contracting Parties to the AGC and AGTC Agreements had transmitted to the secretariat written comments on the suitability of the infrastructure and performance standards and parameters in the AGTC and AGC Agreements as had been requested at the previous session (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 42). They agreed however that the Technical Specifications for Interoperability (TSI) applicable in the European Union were generally in line with the present minimum AGC and AGTC technical characteristics, but contained at least 20 more technical parameters that were considered essential for trans-European rail systems and had been prepared by the European Railway Agency (ERA) under the so-called Interoperability Directive 2008/57/EC. The scope of these TSIs went however well beyond the objective and the minimum requirements enshrined in the pan-European AGC and AGTC Agreements. Thus, not all TSI parameters would necessarily need to be considered for inclusion into the AGC and AGTC Agreements (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/216, paras. 11–14).

41. Both Working Parties requested the secretariat to continue this work, assisted by a group of volunteers and to prepare, as appropriate, modification or amendment proposals to the minimum infrastructure standards contained in annex II to the AGTC and AGC Agreements.

IX. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement (agenda item 8)

42. The Working Party recalled that the objective of the Protocol is to make container and Ro-Ro transport on inland waterways and coastal routes in Europe more efficient and attractive to customers. The Protocol establishes a legal framework that lays down a coordinated plan for the development of intermodal transport services on pan-European inland waterways and coastal routes in line with those in the AGN Agreement, based on specific internationally agreed parameters and standards.

⁷ Joint session with the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2).

43. The Protocol identifies some 14,700 km of E waterways and transshipment terminals that are important for regular and international intermodal transport in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland and Ukraine. The Protocol stipulates technical and operational minimum requirements of inland waterways and terminals in ports that are required for competitive container and ro-ro transport services.

A. Status of the Protocol

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122, ECE/TRANS/122/Corr.1, ECE/TRANS/122/Corr.2

44. The Working Party noted that the Protocol that had come into force on 29 October 2009 had been signed by 15 countries. So far, only 9 countries have acceded to the Protocol.⁸ Its text is contained in document ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1 and 2.⁹ Detailed information on the Protocol, including the text of the Protocol and all relevant Depository Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.¹⁰

45. The Working Party recalled that the ITC had encouraged concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible.

B. Amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6

46. The Working Party recalled that the ITC had requested the Working Party to consider and decide on amendment proposals to the Protocol that had been submitted earlier (ECE/TRANS/200, para. 93). It also recalled that, at its last session, it had considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6 containing a consolidated list of an amendment proposals submitted earlier by Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania as well as modifications to the Protocol proposed by the secretariat. So far, only amendment proposal by Austria had been considered and accepted by the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 50).

47. Due to lack of information, no further decisions on these amendment proposals could be taken.

X. Civil liability regimes in intermodal transport (agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/10, Informal document WP.24 No. 2 (2011)

48. The Working Party recalled the discussions at its previous sessions, summarized in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/3 and ECE/TRANS/WP.24/123, paras. 36–43 as well as the detailed information provided at its fifty-second session by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) about the origin, main innovations

⁸ Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Hungary; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Romania; Serbia; Switzerland.

⁹ It should be noted that only the text kept in custody by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement, constitutes the authoritative text of the Agreement.

¹⁰ www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

and concepts enshrined in the new Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea (Rotterdam Rules) (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 14–15).

49. The Working Party also recalled that it had invited an informal group of experts (volunteers) to prepare a note on the scope of application and the practical consequences of the Rotterdam Rules for pan-European land and intermodal transport operations. This note should be available for comments by the Working Party well before its next session in autumn 2011 (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 52–55).

50. The Working Party noted with regret that the informal group of experts, having exchanged numerous documents and views, could not arrive at a common understanding on a report for transmission to the Working Party.

51. The Working Party took note of a note on the Rotterdam Rules transmitted by the Netherlands and Poland (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/10 (English only)) that, during the session, was supported by the delegates of Denmark and Spain. It also took note of a document prepared by UNCTAD on the same subject.

52. Concluding the debate on this subject for the time being, the Working Party was informed by Mr. Jean-Marie Millour, French Shortsea Promotion Center, of a study that proposed to create a single European transport document and liability regime on the basis of contractual arrangements. Such a private law approach, mainly based on the principles of the UNECE Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) governing international road transport, would not require modification of existing nor the negotiation or coming into force of new legal instruments and would be in line with the applicable mandatory road (CMR), rail (COTIF/CIM), inland water (CMNI) and short sea shipping (Hague-Visby, Hamburg) legislation. It would provide a short-term solution and establish a non-negotiable transport document allowing for seamless intermodal transport, including short sea shipping in Europe. In order to become widely applicable, such contractual arrangements should be established under the framework of a EU directive, regulation or similar instrument applicable at the pan-European level.

53. In line with its mandate to facilitate intermodal land transport and to provide a level playing field for intermodal transport at the pan-European level, the Working Party requested the secretariat to continue monitoring these issues and to report back to the Working Party, as appropriate.

XI. IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for packing of cargo in intermodal transport units (agenda item 10)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/5

54. The Working Party recalled that in 1996 it had finalized, in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Office (ILO), international guidelines for the safe packing of cargo in freight containers and vehicles covering also the requirements of land transport modes (TRANS/WP.24/R.83 and Add.1).¹¹ It had been suggested at that time that the guidelines should be updated from time to time and supplemented by additional elements, such as provisions on fumigation (TRANS/WP.24/71, paras. 32–36). In 1997, ITC had approved these guidelines and had expressed the hope that these guidelines would help reduce personnel injury while handling

¹¹ www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

containers and would minimize physical hazard to which cargoes were exposed in intermodal transport operations (ECE/TRANS/119, paras. 124–126).

55. In March 2009, the Working Party agreed to contribute to a review and update of the guidelines initiated by IMO. It requested the secretariat to coordinate with ILO and IMO in this respect and to report on new developments and procedures envisaged (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/123, paras. 45–47). In October 2010, the Working Party approved the activities of the secretariat in this field (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/4) including the establishment of a joint group of experts that should follow a holistic approach in the revision and update of the guidelines together with concerned industry groups (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 56–60).

56. The Working Party adopted the terms of reference of the group of experts (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/5) and was informed by Mr. Bill Brassington, ILO consultant to the group of experts, about the results of its first meeting (Geneva, 6–7 October 2011). While 25 experts from the transport, shipping and insurance industries as well as from employer's and workers' organizations participated at this meeting, only 5 Governments (Canada, Germany, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan and Sweden) attended. It was felt that more Governments should be involved in the revision work.

57. The Working Party endorsed the proposal to elevate the guidelines to a non-mandatory code of practice. While guidelines aim to provide broad orientations, a code of practice is typically more detailed and technical and is intended to assist Governments, the industry, employers' and workers' organizations in drawing up national regulations. It could thus be used as a model for internationally harmonized legislation in this field.

58. The Working Party took note of the work plan established by the group of experts that foresaw conclusion of the revision process by 2013 with adoption of the new code of practice by UNECE, ILO and IMO in the first half of 2014.

59. The schedule of meetings of the group of experts for 2012, in addition to more than 10 correspondence groups for specific issues, such as on dangerous goods, tank containers, lashing specification and packing certificates, is as follows:

2nd session: 19–20 April 2012 (Geneva, Palais des Nations)

3rd session: 4–6 July 2012 (Geneva, Palais des Nations)

4th session: 15–16 October 2012 (Geneva, Palais des Nations)

60. More detailed information on the activities of the group of experts is available at: www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/documents.html.

XII. Weights and dimensions of loading units in intermodal transport: The modular concept (agenda item 11)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/6

61. The Working Party recalled the considerations at its previous sessions on the impact of “mega-trucks” with a maximum length of 25.5 m and weights of up to 60 tonnes on the European road network and on intermodal transport (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115, paras. 36–38, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117, paras. 38–46; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paras. 22–24 and ECE/TRANS/WP.24/121, paras. 41–43; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 61–64). It also recalled documents ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/8 and ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/5 that provided an overview of the policy discussions and trials with such long and heavy vehicles in several UNECE member countries in 2008 and 2010.

62. Due to time constraints, the Working Party could not consider the requested secretariat report on new developments in this field, mainly within EU countries that refers also to the so-called modular concept as stipulated in European Directive 96/53/EC (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/6). It agreed to revert to this issue in more detail at its next session. The secretariat was requested to continue monitoring this matter and to report new developments.

XIII. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) and other technological applications for intermodal transport (agenda item 12)

Documentation: Informal document WP.24 No. 1 (2011)

63. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat on the preparation of a UNECE road map to promote Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) that contained 20 global actions for implementation by 2020 (Informal document WP.24 No. 1 (2011)). The ITC had invited its subsidiary bodies to incorporate ITS into their programme activities (ECE/TRANS/208, para. 97).

64. In accordance with this request, the Working Party decided to monitor and review ITS solutions applicable for intermodal transport and logistics and to consider this matter in depth under its 2012 theme: Intelligent Transport Systems – Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport (refer to paras. 29–30).

XIV. Activities of international organizations relating to intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 13)

65. No activities were reported under this agenda item.

XV. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 14)

66. Due to time constraints, the secretariat could not inform the Working Party about current activities within UNECE relating to intermodal transport and logistics. Relevant activities were carried out in 2011 by the following UNECE bodies:

- Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2): www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html.
- Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6): www.unece.org/trans/main/wp6/wp6.html.
- SPECA Working Party on Transport and Border Crossing: www.unece.org/trans/main/speca/speca.html.
- TEM and TER Revised Master Plan: www.unece.org/trans/main/tem_ter.html.

XVI. Programme of work, biennial evaluation and terms of reference of the Working Party (agenda item 15)

A. Programme of work and biennial evaluation for 2012–2013

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/7

67. In accordance with the decision of the ITC to review its programme of work every two years, the next review being in 2012 (ECE/TRANS/200, para. 120), the Working Party reviewed and adopted its programme of work for 2012–2013 as well as the relevant parameters allowing for its biennial evaluation as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/7 with the exception of the following modification:

In section III.: Biennial evaluation, replace in the table: Biennial Assessment, under Indicators of Achievement, the indicator (c) to read as follows: Review and update of the IMO/ILO/UNECE guidelines for packing of cargo in intermodal transport units – Performance measure: Completion target: 2013.

68. In accordance with the guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Working Parties within UNECE which requires a review of the mandate and the extension of these Working Parties every 5 years (ECE/EX/1), the Working Party, having reviewed its activities, proposed to the ITC to renew its mandate and status for another cycle of 5 years as of 2013.

B. Work plan for 2012–2016

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/8

69. As requested by the ITC Bureau on 20 June 2011, the Working Party reviewed and adopted its traditional 4-year work plan for 2012–2016 (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/8).

C. Terms of reference (ToR)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/9

70. In line with the guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Working Parties within UNECE, each Working Party has to prepare its terms of reference which must be adopted by its parent Sectoral Committee (ECE/EX/1, para. 3 (a)).

71. In accordance with this request, the Working Party adopted its terms of reference (ToR) as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/9.

XVII. Election of officers (agenda item 16)

72. The Working Party re-elected Mr. M. Viardot (France) as Chair and Mr. H. Maillard (Belgium) as Vice-Chair of the Working Party for its session in 2012.

XVIII. Date and venue of next sessions (agenda item 17)

73. The secretariat has tentatively scheduled the fifty-fifth session to be held on 7 and 8 November 2012 at the Palais des Nations (Geneva). Several delegations felt, however, that the session should be held earlier in the year, possibly back-to-back, but without overlap

with other Working Parties, such as the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) in order to reap synergies and address issues of common concern (see also para. 27).

74. The informal group of experts working on the WP.24 theme is scheduled to hold two sessions in 2012 with the objective to follow-up on the considerations under the 2011 theme and to prepare the discussions for the 2012 theme.

(a) Follow-up to 2011 theme: “Role of terminals and logistics centers for intermodal transport”

Tentative date: April/May 2012

Tentative venue: To be decided

(b) Preparation of the 2012 theme: “Intelligent Transport Systems – Opportunities and challenges for intermodal transport”

Tentative date: June/July 2012

Tentative venue: Paris.

75. Experts willing to participate in these informal expert groups are invited to contact the secretariat.

XIX. Summary of decisions (agenda item 18)

76. As agreed and in line with the decision of the ITC (ECE/TRANS/156, para. 6), the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair and in consultation with delegates, has prepared this report for transmission to the ITC at its next session (28 February–1 March 2012).

Annex

Amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement adopted by the Working Party on 4 November 2011

European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)

Annex I: Railway lines of importance for international combined

(38) Kazakhstan

- (a) *Modify* existing line C-E 24 *to read* as follows
C-E 24 (Zauralie-) Presnogorkovskaya-Kökshetaú-Astana-Mointy-Dostyk (-Alashankou)
Contracting Parties directly concerned: Kazakhstan, Russian Federation.
- (b) *Modify* on line C-E 50 the city Kandagach *to read* Kandyagash
Contracting Parties directly concerned: Austria, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Ukraine.
- (c) *Modify* on line C-E 60 the city of Chengeldy *to read* Saryagash
Contracting Party directly concerned: Kazakhstan.
- (d) *Modify* existing line C-E 597 *to read* as follows
C-E 597 Makat-Beyneu-Oazis (-Kungrad)
Contracting Parties directly concerned: Kazakhstan, Russian Federation.
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