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Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Rail Transport****Seventy-first session**

Geneva, 27-29 November 2017

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

Trans-European Railway (TER) project**Development of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project****Submitted by the TER Project Manager****I. Objectives of the Project**

1. The Trans-European Railway (TER) project aims to improve the quality and efficiency of transport operations, to assist the integration process of European transport infrastructure systems, and to develop a coherent and efficient international railway and combined transport system in accordance with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Pan-European infrastructure agreements.

2. Of the many goals of the TER project, the following may be emphasized: (a) facilitation and development of a coherent and efficient international railway and combined transport system between the Central and Eastern European countries (through the territories of the TER countries and between them and other European countries), (b) contribution to absorbing an important part of the congestion in Central and Eastern Europe, and (c) reduction of environmental and safety problems on major international railways in these same countries.

II. TER development and activities in 2016

3. The TER Steering Committee at its thirty-ninth session (Geneva, 24-25 November 2015) adopted the following activities for the TER Programme of Work 2016:

(a) Connectivity

- integration into the Pan-European and Asian networks and corridors in full;
- cooperation with EU, OSJD and the EATL project;

- cooperation in corridor management beyond the EU borders;
- start the activities of High Speed Master Plan project.
 - (b) Visibility
- new TER web homepage should be developed with revised information;
- increase the number of TER members; finalise the process of adhesion by Belarus and Kazakhstan to the Project;
- print and circulate the TER Project brochure.
 - (c) Capacity-Building
- studies conducted within the Coordinating Council on Trans-Siberian Railway Transportation: e.g. Annual Transsib Digest. There are agreements reached with Korean and Chinese research centres, which can also provide the Project with that kind of information.
 - (d) Safety
- cooperation with UNECE in preparing a questionnaire to get an overview of all level crossings on the TER network and include assessment of risk levels.
 - (e) Development
- implementation of the TER Master Plan revision and report on its implementation;
- TER data collection will be extended to non-TER participating countries (future prospects).
 - (f) Management
- open the TER Project Central Office (PCO) in Belgrade;
- finalise the Project Management contracts;
- organize two sessions of TER Steering Committee;
- organize a TER technical workshop.

4. During the fortieth TER Steering Committee session (Vienna, 17 May 2016) the following were discussed and agreed on:

- (a) Management focus its efforts on discussing and negotiating with the Governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in order for these countries to become members of the Project;
- (b) Works on the High Speed Rail Master Plan had started and the consultant reported on the first results of his study, based on an agreed upon methodology;
- (c) The content of the TER brochure as part of project's promotion activities, the technical specifications and vendor selection that would finalize and print the brochure was discussed and decided;
- (d) The TER backbone network is being revised and draft maps were prepared by the consultant that reflect the status of the network in 2016;
- (e) The TER Host Country Agreement with the Government of Serbia was finalised and the TER office in Belgrade was prepared by the Serbian authorities;
- (f) The contract of TER project manager was finalized and that of the deputy project manager was in the final phase.

III. Activities in 2017

5. The TER Steering Committee at its forty-first session (Geneva, 21-22 November 2016) adopted the following activities for the TER Programme of Work 2017:

(a) Connectivity

- participation of international Steering Group Sessions (EC, OSJD, EUAR, etc.);
- comprehensive study on possible High Speed Lines for a High Speed Master Plan.

(b) Visibility

- activities aimed at increasing the number of TER member countries;
- redesign and update the TER webpage;
- finalise, print and distribute the TER info brochure.

(c) Capacity-Building

- identification of infrastructure bottlenecks and lobby for their removal;
- initiation of an international Infrastructure Service Comparison;
- organization of a TER Workshop.

(d) Development

- implementation of the 2011 TER Master Plan Follow-up monitoring;
- progress reports on results of Master Plan Revision monitoring and the TER backbone network status 2017;
- data collection and processing, and possible extension of the TER system to non-TER countries;
- presentation of results of the implementation of the Master Plan Revision on the UNECE/TER website.

(f) Management

- functioning PCO;
- activities aimed at a new Host Country Agreement;
- activities for new contracts for the TER Management;
- organize two TER Steering Committee sessions;
- draft a TER Budget and Programme of Work for 2018.

6. During the forty-second session of the TER Steering Committee (Belgrade, 3-4 April 2017), the following were discussed and agreed:

(a) Management focus its efforts on discussing and negotiating with the Governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Hungary and Kazakhstan in order for these countries to become members of the project;

(b) A draft report on Phase 1 of the High Speed Rail Master Plan was presented and is subject to approval, upon the reception and incorporation of comments from the Steering Committee members;

(c) The draft version of the TER brochure, introduced to the session, was approved as amended for printing and distribution. This brochure will be available also on TER homepage;

- (d) The TER backbone network is being revised, and draft maps were prepared by the consultant that reflect the status of the network in 2016-2017;
 - (e) The TER office in Belgrade was officially opened and started operation;
 - (f) The contract of the deputy TER project manager was finalized and officially signed;
 - (g) The TER Workshop on International Cargo Transport — Obstacles and Chances will be held in Karlovy Vary (Czech Republic) in October 2017.
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