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Seventieth session

Geneva, 22-24 November 2016

Report of the Working Party on Rail Transport on its seventieth session

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Attendance.....	1-6	3
II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)	7	3
III. Workshop on “International Rail Passenger Traffic on the route East-West” (agenda item 2)	8-10	3
IV. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (agenda item 3)	11-13	5
V. Rail Security (agenda item 4).....	14-15	5
VI. Euro-Asian rail transport (agenda item 5).....	16-17	6
VII. Trans-European Railway (TER) project (agenda item 6).....	18-19	6
VIII. Railway infrastructure financing and Public-Private Partnerships (agenda item 7)	20-23	6
IX. Master Plan on High-Speed Trains (agenda item 8).....	24-25	7
X. Towards unified railway law in the pan-European region and along Euro-Asian transport corridors (agenda item 9).....	26-28	7
XI. New convention on the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail (agenda item 10)	29-35	8
XII. Intelligent Transport Systems and other technological applications for Rail Transport (agenda item 11)	36-38	9
XIII. Productivity in Rail Transport (agenda item 12).....	39-40	9

XIV.	Climate Change and Rail Transport (agenda item 13)	41-46	10
	A. Group of Experts on Climate Change impacts and adaptation for transport networks and nodes	41-42	10
	B. Climate Change mitigation: Presentation of UNECE ForFITS tool	43-44	10
	C. Diesel engine exhausts	45-46	10
XV.	Railway Reform (agenda item 14)	47-49	10
XVI.	Facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region (agenda item 15).....	50-52	11
	A. Facilitation of rail border crossings	50-51	11
	B. Harmonization of technical specifications on different railway systems.....	52	11
XVII.	Rail Review (agenda item 16)	53	11
XVIII.	Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings (agenda item 17)	54-56	11
XIX.	Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 18).....	57	12
XX.	Activities of the European Commission in rail transport (agenda item 19)	58-59	12
XXI.	Activities of international organizations in rail transport (agenda item 20)	60-61	12
XXII.	Other business (agenda item 21)	62	12
XXIII.	Date and venue of next session (agenda item 22)	63	12
XXIV.	Adoption of decisions (agenda item 23).....	64	13
Annex			
	ITC Resolution on International Rail Passenger Traffic on the route East-West		14

I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) held its seventieth session from 22 to 24 November 2016 in Geneva.
2. The session of the Working Party was attended by the following countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey. Representatives of Jordan and Tunisia attended under Article 11 of the Terms of Reference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). A representative of DG Move of the European Union was present.
3. The Eurasian Economic Commission, the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), the International Transport Forum, the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) and the Project Central Office of UNECE Trans-European Railway were represented.
4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies, International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, the International Rail Transport Committee and the International Union of Railways (UIC).
5. Representatives of the following organizations and industry groups attended at the invitation of the secretariat: CMS Cameron McKenna LLP, Coordinating Council on Trans-Siberian Transportation (CCTT), EuroMed Road, Rail and Urban Transport Project (EuroMed), Moscow State University for Transport Engineering (MIIT), Public-Private Sector Research Center and PPP for Cities.
6. In accordance with the decision taken at its sixty-ninth session (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/224, para. 72), the session was chaired by Mr. K. Kulesza (Poland) and vice-chaired by Mr. H. Groot (Netherlands) and Mr. A. Rom (Israel).

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

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/225

7. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat.

III. Workshop on “International Rail Passenger Traffic on the route East-West” (agenda item 2)²

Documentation: Informal document No. 1 (2016)

8. During its last session the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) requested SC.2 (ECE/TRANS/254, para. 97) to hold a high-level conference on the current situation in international rail passenger traffic on the route East-West with a holistic approach. The

¹ All informal documents and presentations made at the session are available from:

www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2inf_70.html and
www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2-presentations/presentations_70.html

² All presentations made at the workshop are available from

www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2_events/2016_international_rail_passenger_traffic_on_the_route_east-west.html.

high-level workshop took place during the first day of the session (22 November 2016) and took stock of the main challenges that international rail passenger traffic faces on the East-West route: security, missing links, levels of services, cost of tickets, lack of cooperation among the railways so that through trip services cannot be established (i.e. one ticket, one time schedule), visa and border crossing delays, interoperability and technological integration as well as several legal regimes are the main challenges that railway passengers face today.

9. The participants:

(a) Agreed that actions should be urgently taken otherwise international rail passenger traffic will be further reduced if not eliminated;

(b) Noted that the reduction of subsidies has increased the cost of tickets and, as a result, the number of passengers travelling by trains has fallen;

(c) Indicated that railways do not benefit from, or do not take advantage of, the fact that thousands of passengers have aerophobia and, therefore, they do not travel by air;

(d) Agreed that the development of high-speed rail services could be a source of rail passenger traffic development, however, the development of such services needs considerable analysis especially on the cost of tickets, the cost of maintenance, countries' GDP and the purchasing power of citizens;

(e) Noted that UIC had developed standards on the "rail customer experience lifecycle" which includes timetable information, pricing and tariffs, booking and availability, ticketing options, information services control and compensation refunds and invited interested railways to implement these standards in order to optimize the services provided to customers;

(f) Agreed that different legal regimes for passengers traffic by rail and insufficient cooperation between railway undertakings on single services, on time schedules, on competitive and transparent tariffs on the route East-West increases costs, further decrease international rail passenger traffic, reduce competitiveness and impede the development of effective rail transport operations and efficient railway business;

(g) Agreed that a competitive level playing field should be ensured among all transport modes;

(h) Observed that despite the progress made the European Union, the passenger rail industry lags far behind the aviation industry in the ease with which passengers can find, compare and buy the most appropriate ticket for long-distance or international train journeys;

(i) Noted that different legal regimes apply to the East-West corridor: the Uniform Rules concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Passengers by Rail (CIV) in the west, and the Agreement on International Passenger Transport by Rail (SMPS) in the east (and many other bilateral interstate agreements) and highlighted the need, if not to harmonize, to at least ensure smooth interoperability among the different regimes;

(j) Observed the challenges of safety and security in rail transport, and took account of the technical differences that should not become barriers to the development of East-West rail passenger transport.

10. The Working Party considered that these conclusions and recommendations were crucial for the development of international rail passenger traffic from east to west and decided to adopt them as a resolution (annex). It requested the secretariat to submit this resolution to the next session of ITC in February 2017 for its endorsement as an ITC resolution. The Working Party thanked the experts for their interventions during the

workshop and requested the secretariat to address this topic in the agenda of the Working Party on a regular basis.

IV. European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (agenda item 3)

Status of the AGC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2009/1, Informal document No. 6 (2016)

11. At present, the AGC Agreement has 27 Contracting Parties.³ Detailed information on the AGC Agreement, the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/63/Rev.1), a map of the AGC network, an inventory of minimum standards stipulated in the Agreement and the relevant Depository Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.⁴

12. The Working Party took note of the secretariat efforts to increase the number of Contracting Parties to the AGC Agreement. Special efforts were given to the discussions with Kazakhstan and to EU members States following the amendments adopted at the previous session of the AGC Administrative Committee (on minimum infrastructure and performance standards in consultation with the European Railway Agency (ERA)).

13. The AGC Administrative Committee recalled that at its previous session, it had agreed to approve amendments from Germany to the AGC agreement proposals that would affect Denmark, Germany and Sweden (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2009/1). The secretariat had been requested to prepare the appropriate depository notification. The Administrative Committee took note of amendments proposed by Germany (Informal document No. 6 (2016)).

V. Rail Security (agenda item 4)

14. The secretariat presented the electronic space on rail security which will operate as an international observatory on rail security. Users of this platform will have the possibility to introduce information and upload documents by country, by theme of rail security as well as by type of document (project, study, etc.).

15. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the development of the web platform on rail security and requested the secretariat to send invitations to all interested stakeholders in order to nominate focal points and users of the international rail security observatory.

³ Albania; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Montenegro; Poland; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Turkey and Ukraine.

⁴ www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2_AGC_text.html.

VI. Euro-Asian rail transport (agenda item 5)

Documentation: Informal document No. 2 (2016)

16. The secretariat informed the Working Party about the progress of work in the Group of Experts on EATL and the recent developments of the EATL project Phase III. The Working Party took note of the report prepared by the consultant of the Group the Scientific and Research Institute of Motor Transport (Informal document No. 2 (2016)).

17. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the EATL project and requested the secretariat to inform the Working Party about any developments on this issue at its next session.

VII. Trans-European Railway (TER) project (agenda item 6)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2016/1

18. The acting Deputy Project Manager of TER, Mr. A. Zimmer briefly presented a report on the activities of the TER Project for 2015-2016 (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2016/1). The Project Managers focused on revitalizing the project by starting the Master Plan on High-Speed Trains, visiting and discussing with existing and prospective member States, preparing new marketing material and incorporating new items in the agenda of the TER Steering Committee such as level crossings, benchmarking transport infrastructure, etc.

19. The Working Party thanked the Russian and Austrian railways for providing the Project and Deputy Project Managers. The Working Party took note of the information on the TER activities and requested the Project Managers to inform the Working Party of any developments on this issue at its next session.

VIII. Railway infrastructure financing and Public-Private Partnerships (agenda item 7)

20. The Working Party recalled the discussions on good practices on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) implementation in railway infrastructure development, and the development of standards while implementing PPP projects.

21. The Working Party took note of the presentation of Mr. M. Planas, the representative of the Public-Private Sector Research Center and PPP for Cities, on the development the underground metro in Seville (Spain) with PPP: the project had been completed with a 2-year delay and 63 per cent increase over the initial budget. However, with this investment, the number of public transport users in the city of Seville had increased, the use of private cars had fallen, commuting had increased and, as a consequence, retail commerce, especially in the centre of the city, had been revitalized.

22. The representative of CMS Cameron McKenna LLP (who is also the Project Leader on ECE PPP Standards for railways), Mr. J. Beckitt, presented the draft standards on best practice for the management of PPP programmes in the rail sector. The aim of the project is to provide standards that will help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the rail sector. The standards will analyse project types and examples, review advantages and disadvantages of PPP programmes in the rail sector as well as identify appropriate models to meet “people first” objectives.

23. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the speakers, welcomed the cooperation with the PPP Centre of Excellence of the UNECE Economic

Cooperation, Trade, and Land Management Division and requested the secretariat to inform the Working Party about any developments on this issue at its next session.

IX. Master Plan on High-Speed Trains (agenda item 8)

24. The Working Party recalled the agreement with the TER Project on a common methodology to develop a Master Plan on High-Speed Trains first in the TER region and afterwards in the UNECE one. The TER Project has already hired a consultant who presented the main preliminary findings of his work at the session.

25. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat, the TER Project Manager and the TER consultant Mr. H. Adelsberger on developing a Master Plan on High-Speed Trains in the TER region. It requested the secretariat to inform the Working Party about any developments on this issue at its next session.

X. Towards unified railway law in the pan-European region and along Euro-Asian transport corridors (agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/2016/18, ECE/TRANS/2016/17

26. The Working Party recalled that ITC at its February 2016 session had adopted a draft resolution on unified railway law (ECE/TRANS/2016/17) and had approved new terms of reference (ECE/TRANS/2016/18) for the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law. Based on this resolution and terms of reference the Group should in one year coordinate the preparation and/or review the current documents for rail transport on the draft legal provisions, as well as monitor the results of pilot tests performed by interested stakeholders and prepare recommendations. The Working Party was informed about the work of the Group of Experts and the results of the sessions of 2016 (June, August and October).

27. Some experts were of the opinion that they should not use existing documents when preparing documents for this Working Party because existing documents had been prepared either for specific legal instruments (COTIF Convention/SMGS Agreement) or for specific projects (common CIM/SMGS consignment note) and new ones should be prepared. Some other experts were of the opinion that they should not reinvent the wheel and that existing documents should be used to serve the new legal provisions. When monitoring of the results of pilot tests, the experts agreed on a concrete road map for the implementation of pilot tests. They all agreed that the organization and implementation of the pilot tests is a time-consuming process that has to be developed in a manner that is structured, and commonly agreed upon by the main stakeholders. However, more time is needed in order to perform these pilot tests. The experts requested the secretariat to report at the next session of Working Party on Rail Transport on the developments of the Group's work and asked for an extension of the Group's mandate for one more year.

28. The Working Party took note of the excellent work done by the Group of Experts on Unified Railway Law, thanked the experts for their commitment and dedication to this difficult task and approved the extension of Group's mandate for one more year.

XI. New convention on the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail (agenda item 10)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2016/2, ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2016/3

29. The Working Party recalled that ITC at its seventy-eighth session in February 2016 welcomed the progress of the informal Group of Experts on a new convention concerning the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail and thanked the Group for its work. The Committee invited Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) and SC.2 to organize an ad hoc meeting in 2016 in cooperation with interested ITC participants and relevant stakeholders in order to finalize the draft of the Convention and consider the development of a compendium of guiding good practices for future adoption by the Committee as well as opening for signature by interested countries and to report to the ITC session of 2017 on the progress achieved (ECE/TRANS/254, para. 95).

30. The Working Party also recalled that WP.30 at its 144th session (October 2016) had considered that its internal discussions were not yet developed to an extent that warranted the organization of such joint ad hoc session with SC.2. The Working Party delegated the Chair or the secretariat to report progress on this issue to SC.2 at its 2016 annual session and to ITC at its 2017 session. At the same time, the Working Party agreed that it would revert to the organization of an ad hoc meeting at a future session depending on the progress made in drafting the new Convention.

31. The delegation of the Russian Federation reminded the secretariat of the urgent need to convene an ad hoc session of WP.30 and SC.2 in order to revise the draft convention, in line with the aforementioned invitation of ITC at its seventy-eighth session (February 2016). The delegations of Azerbaijan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan supported this proposal.

32. The representative of EU pointed out that the Commission sees some merit in the principle of a multilateral agreement which would apply at EU external borders and between third countries, and which would allow that the myriad of bilateral agreements could be replaced by one multilateral agreement. The Commission would like to verify the current (final) draft in order to ensure that comments submitted by DGs TAXUD and MOVE, in respect of customs policy and security, have been fully taken into account. The Commission's belief is that customs comments were partly but not completely integrated while comments referring to police and immigration have mostly not been integrated yet. The Commission would need to ensure that an appropriate disconnection clause is introduced to clarify that between the EU members States only the EU acquis (and not the Convention would apply). Finally, the Commission needs to reserve its position until such time as it can verify with colleagues responsible for customs policy and border controls the implications for moving forward with this agreement.

33. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat and relevant stakeholders. It agreed that further improvement of the text (editorial and substantive) is needed.

34. The Working Party agreed on the following road map for the finalization of the new Convention:

- (a) First substantial review of the draft by WP.30: February 2017;
- (b) Circulation of an amended draft by the secretariat to WP.30 and to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs in New York: March 2017;
- (c) Finalization of the draft by WP.30: June 2017;

- (d) Circulation of the final text to WP.30 and SC.2: July 2017;
- (e) Adoption of the final text by WP.30: October 2017;
- (f) Adoption of the final text by SC.2: November 2017;
- (g) Endorsement of the final text by the ITC: February 2018.

35. The Working Party encouraged interested Governments to further contribute to the discussions and finalization of the Convention.

XII. Intelligent Transport Systems and other technological applications for Rail Transport (agenda item 11)

Documentation: UNECE publication, Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) for sustainable mobility (2012)

36. The Working Party recalled that this agenda item considers activities on the monitoring of ITS and other technological applications developments in rail transport and provides a platform for the exchange of information and best practices.

37. The EU reported on activities regarding ERTMS and telematics applications development which are the backbone of rail digitalisation. In the fourth Railway Package the one stop shop was introduced in order to streamline and increase efficiency in the vehicle authorisation and safety certification procedures. On ticketing the EU and the rail industry have made very significant progress in creating common technical and administrative standards and interfaces to encourage digital interoperability. The ERTMS specification brings necessary stability to decrease the financial and technical risks and therefore allow for a large scale deployment. One of these features is the Automatic Train Operation (ATO) which has the potential for very considerable benefits in terms of capacity increase, energy savings, punctuality, availability, maintenance costs of rolling stock and infrastructure and flexible response to demand.

38. The Working Party took note of information provided by EU and the secretariat on ITS and requested the Secretariat to inform the Working Party at its next session on any developments on this topic.

XIII. Productivity in Rail Transport (agenda item 12)

39. The Working Party discussed the topic of the rail productivity indicators in combination with agenda item 16: Rail review. The secretariat informed the Working Party that it plans to send both questionnaires together to Governments in order to facilitate data collection from the Governments and reduce the number of questionnaires sent by the secretariat. However, these questionnaires will be sent by the secretariat in early 2017 because during the last months Governments had already received a lot of questionnaires from different Working Parties of the Division.

40. The Working Party took note of information provided by the secretariat on Productivity in Rail Transport in combination with agenda item 16: Railway review and requested the secretariat to inform the Working Party at its next session on any developments on these issues.

XIV. Climate Change and Rail Transport (agenda item 13)

A. Group of Experts on Climate Change impacts and adaptation for transport networks and nodes

Documentation: UNECE publication Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for International Transport Networks.

41. The secretariat informed the Working Party about the UNECE publication and about the continuation of the work of the Group of Experts on Climate Change impacts and adaptation for transport networks and nodes.

42. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the continuation of the Group of Experts and requested the secretariat to inform the Working Party at the next session about developments in adaptation issues and railways.

B. Climate Change mitigation: Presentation of UNECE ForFITS tool

43. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the developments in the For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS) project during 2015 and 2016.

44. The Working Party took note of the information provided on ForFITS and reiterated its support for the further development of this tool. The Working Party requested that the secretariat present any developments on this area at the next session.

C. Diesel engine exhausts

Documentation: UNECE publication “Diesel engine exhausts: Myths and realities”

45. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the discussion paper “Diesel engine exhausts: Myths and realities”.

46. The Working Party requested that the secretariat present any developments on this area at the next session.

XV. Railway Reform (agenda item 14)

47. The Director of the National Society of Tunisian Railways (SNCFT), Mr. M. Y. Zribi, presented Tunisia’s experience in on the restructuring of railways to the Working Party.

48. The investment and restructuring plan of SNCFT adopted for the period 2016-2020, includes the following:

- (a) Ensure the revitalization of SNCFT activities and operations after the decline observed due to the revolution;
- (b) Support the economic growth of railways operations;
- (c) Contribute to the development of poor regions;
- (d) Set the foundations for modernization of Tunisian railways.

49. The Working Party thanked Mr. Zribi for providing such useful information on the reform of the Tunisian Railways and requested the secretariat to provide information on any developments on this issue at its next session. It also thanked the representative of EuroMed

for his intervention. The Working Party welcomed the invited participants from the Mediterranean countries of North Africa and the Middle East. The Working Party will seek to enhance cooperation with these countries and with the EuroMed, for the exchange of good practices, the transfer of know-how and the harmonization of standards and regulations in the transport sector, in these neighbouring countries, by inviting them to participate in future Working Party meetings and to attend Group of Experts such as the Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings.

XVI. Facilitation of international rail transport in the pan-European region (agenda item 15)

A. Facilitation of rail border crossings

50. The Working Party reiterated its support for the monitoring of the action plan on possible implementation mechanisms of the provisions in the new Annex 9 to the “Harmonization Convention” for the facilitation of rail border crossings in the pan-European region approved at its last session. It invited Governments based on this action plan to attend the Working Party sessions and present their efforts in implementing Annex 9.

51. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat and the OSJD Committee and requested the secretariat to provide updated information on this issue at its next session.

B. Harmonization of technical specifications on different railway systems

52. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the OSJD Committee on the harmonization of technical specifications on different railway systems and requested the OSJD Committee and the secretariat to provide updated information on this issue at its next session.

XVII. Rail Review (agenda item 16)

53. This agenda item was discussed under agenda item 12.

XVIII. Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings (agenda item 17)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/GE.1/17, ECE/TRANS/WP.1/GE.1/19, Informal document SC.2 No. 5 (2016)

54. At its seventy-third session (1-3 March 2011, Geneva), ITC discussed the importance of addressing key issues of enhancing safety at level crossings. The Committee recommended that the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety, the Working Party on Road Transport and SC.2 consider creating a joint Group of Experts of a limited duration to work on enhancing safety at level crossings, drawing, where possible, on all relevant experience within other bodies such as ERA (ECE/TRANS/221, para. 50).

55. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the results of the meetings of the Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings that took place on

21-22 March 2016 (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/GE.1/17), on 1-2 June 2016 (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/GE.1/19) and of the final draft report of the Group (Informal document SC.2 No. 5 (2016)).

56. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the work of the Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings and requested the secretariat to provide updated information on this issue at its next session.

XIX. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 18)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/254

57. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the activities of ITC, its subsidiary bodies, on the ministerial meeting of February 2017 at the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of ITC and requested the secretariat to provide updated information on these issues at its next session.

XX. Activities of the European Commission in rail transport (agenda item 19)

Documentation: Informal document No. 3 (2016)

58. The Working Party was informed by the representative of EU about its most recent developments (Informal document No. 3 (2016)).

59. The Working Party took note of the information provided on EU activities in rail transport and requested that EU and the secretariat provide updated information on this issue at its next session.

XXI. Activities of international organizations in rail transport (agenda item 20)

60. The Working Party was informed by the Head of the Legal Department of OTIF, the Deputy Director of OSJD Mr. V. Zhukov and the representative of OSJD, Mr. L. Casullo about the organizational activities of 2016.

61. The Working Party took note of the information provided by the representatives of the international organizations in rail transport and requested the international organizations and the secretariat to provide updated information on this issue at its next session.

XXII. Other business (agenda item 21)

62. No other business was reported.

XXIII. Date and venue of next session (agenda item 22)

63. The Working Party's seventy-first session is tentatively scheduled to take place in Geneva from 27 to 29 November 2017.

XXIV. Adoption of decisions (agenda item 23)

64. As agreed upon and in line with the Working Party's decision taken at its fifty-second session (TRANS/SC.2/190, para. 6), the Working Party adopted its main decisions during the session and the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair and Vice-Chairs prepared the present report.

Annex

ITC Resolution on International Rail Passenger Traffic on the route East-West

Resolution No. xxx

The Inland Transport Committee,

Recalling the main objectives of its decision during its seventy-eighth session requesting SC.2 to hold a high-level conference concerning the current situation in, and taking a holistic approach on, international rail passenger traffic on the route East-West,

Recalling further the conclusions and recommendations discussed and proposed during the high-level workshop organized during the seventieth session of SC.2 on 22 November 2016 in order to increase rail passenger traffic on the route East-West,

Invites Governments to take efficient measures in order to support and improve international rail passenger traffic and cover passengers' needs for such services,

Being conscious that different legal regimes for passengers traffic by rail as well as insufficient cooperation among the railway undertakings on single services, time schedules, competitive and transparent tariffs on the route East-West increases costs, further decreases international rail passenger traffic, reduces competitiveness and impedes the development of effective rail transport operations and efficient railway business,

Being conscious that a competitive level playing field should be ensured among all transport modes,

Convinced that long distance East-West rail passenger traffic may significantly increase, if faster, reliable, seamless, affordable and high quality rail passenger services are developed,

Aware that globalization, railways reform and opening of transport markets provide railways with new options to reach out to transcontinental traffic and to turn East-West transport market opportunities into rail business,

Aware the challenges posed by rail transport safety and security and taking account of the technical differences that should not become barriers to the development of East-West rail passenger transport,

Welcoming the work undertaken and draft Convention prepared by the OSJD secretariat and informal Group of Experts on a new convention concerning the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail by taking into consideration good practices already implemented as well as comments, amendment proposals and suggestions prepared by all interested in this Convention stakeholders and competent bodies,

Taking note of the work undertaken by OTIF, CIT, and OSJD secretariats on legal interoperability between the Uniform Rules concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Passengers by Rail (COTIF-CIV), the Rail passenger rights in the EU (Regulation 1371/2007/EC (PRR)) and the Agreement on International Passenger Transport by Rail (SMPS) which would enable a better understanding of the state of art for better contractual solutions and possible future approximation of legal provisions and therefore:

Invites Railway Undertakings along the East-West route to cooperate on a regular basis in order to envisage, design and establish rail passenger services by agreeing single services, time schedules, competitive and transparent tariffs and itineraries,

Proposes that Governments of interested countries more actively attract mechanisms of Government support to preserve International rail passenger transport services by improving their regulatory framework conditions,

Suggests to Governments on the basis of profound market analysis of passenger traffic to apply the principles of economic responsibility in carrying out international traffic,

Following decision taken during the seventieth session of SC.2 on the road map towards finalization of the new convention concerning the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail, *invites* interested countries to take action and finalize the draft Convention as well as to inform the UNECE secretariat for their willingness to sign and ratify this new Convention when finalized,

Invites the UNECE secretariat to provide its good offices to facilitate such endeavors in particular to address on a regular basis in SC.2 agenda the topic of international rail passenger traffic,

Requests the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) to report progress on the above-mentioned issues as well as to suggest possible next steps of the efforts on increasing international rail passenger traffic along the East-West route at the eighty-first session (2019) of the Inland Transport Committee for its consideration and approval.