
**Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and
Connectivity (TWG-STTC)**

22nd Session
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Astana, Kazakhstan

**Identification, isolation and elimination of major bottlenecks along international
transport routes**

(Item 4.4 of the Agenda)

Note by ECE/ESCAP

ECE activities on border crossing facilitation

1. The strategic importance of Central Asia makes it a unique region, and this is highlighted by its connective potential as a transport hub between two continents. The region also faces unique challenges, where all of the SPECA member countries are landlocked with divergent economic development.
2. Within the SPECA framework, ESCAP and the ECE offer capacity-building and other forms of technical assistance that contribute to the efficient and safe operation of regional transport infrastructures and the identification of bottlenecks. The numerous UN transport legal instruments administered by ECE, as well as ECE analytical, capacity building and technical assistance activities provide a solid basis for the development of harmonized regulatory frameworks for regional transport, particularly in the SPECA region.
3. Introduction, facilitation and development of international transport have always been a major objective of national Governments. However, since vehicles in international transport cross borders, facilitation and development of international transport raise specific problems, the solution of which requires cooperation and agreement among Governments. The objective of this cooperation is to develop coherent international infrastructure corridors and networks, simplified border-crossing and uniform rules and regulations that enable a high level of efficiency, safety and environmental protection in transport.

4. UNECE provides these indispensable intergovernmental cooperation platforms and addresses transport, across five key areas – accessibility, affordability, safety, security and environmental impact. Particularly as concerns SPECA countries, UNECE and its transport sub-programme has a special role to play in realizing these goals, given its long-standing expertise in the region and the availability of a vast array of tools and legal instruments.

International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods

5. Taking the international legal framework as a starting point, it should be mentioned that among the vast array of available UN transport legal instruments, several are aimed at the simplification and harmonization of procedures at border crossings and few are most prominent, broadly used in the SPECA region. For example, the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods¹, generally known as the “Harmonization Convention” forms one of the most broadly accepted legal foundations of coordinated border management. There are 58 Contracting Parties² to it, including all SPECA countries except Afghanistan. Turkmenistan acceded to the Harmonization Convention on 27 November 2016, on the occasion of the first Global Sustainable Transport Conference convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Contracting Parties are committed to streamlining administrative procedures at borders and reducing the number and duration of controls carried out by customs authorities.

6. On 30 November 2011, Annex 9 on rail border crossings to the Harmonization Convention entered into force. The Annex introduced key principles for the facilitation of border crossing procedures for international rail freight. Since that time, the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) has developed an action plan for monitoring its implementation at the national level.

7. The plan includes actions to facilitate the issuance of visas for professionals in the railway industry; to develop cooperation mechanisms for border and other controls; to enhance risk assessment and evaluation procedures; and to set time limits for technical operations. The action plan was presented and approved at the sixty-ninth session of SC.2 (23–25 November 2015) and can be found in document ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2015/6. SC.2 continued discussions on this topic at its seventieth session in 2016.

¹ Detailed information on Harmonization Convention, TIR Convention, eTIR project and other customs transit facilitation measures are available on http://www.unece.org/trans/main/itc/itc_doc_2015.html. Please refer to document ECE/TRANS/2015/17.

² https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XI-A-17&chapter=11&clang=_en

8. In November 2016 in accordance with Annex 8 of the Harmonization Convention, the secretariat launched an online survey concerning the implementation of Annex 8 on road border crossings at the national level. The preliminary analysis of the received answers shows that Contracting Parties are successfully implementing several provisions of Annex 8. However, there is also a need for further action on topics, such as but not limited to: (a) the use of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC); (b) the facilitation of visa procedures; (c) the transfer of control procedures from the border crossing points to places of departure or destination; (d) the accession to the Agreement Concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections (1997); and (e) the acceptance of the International Technical Inspection Certificate.

9. In 2016, the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30), embarked on the development of a new Annex 10 to the Harmonization Convention, to address facilitation of maritime port procedures. WP.30 has reviewed a preliminary draft at its 143rd session (June 2016) and, following a round of comments, will be reviewing an amended draft in forthcoming sessions.

Development of a new Convention on rail border crossings for passengers and their luggage

10. WP.30 and SC.2 with the active participation of various stakeholders (such as OSJD), has been discussing, over the course of 2017, a new draft Convention on the facilitation of border crossing procedures for passengers, luggage and load-luggage carried in international traffic by rail, as prepared by an informal group. The draft Convention is not exclusively a customs convention but a comprehensive legal instrument that should accommodate all types of border controls related to the international movement of passengers and their baggage that can be made by border control agencies, including border police. WP.30 has also conducted a comparative study to assess the level of necessity of this Convention, in view of the fact that the 1952 Convention on the same issue is considered outdated. At the seventieth session of SC.2 in November 2016, delegates agreed on a Road Map for the finalization of the Convention with a number of milestones to be achieved. Drafting work has continued in 2017. In October 2017, WP.30 will commence renewed considerations on a revised draft, elaborated under the guidance of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations. The outcomes of these discussions will be reported in due course. It should be noted that the draft Convention is of particular interest for OSJD member countries.

The Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention)

11. The Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention), of 1975, sets up the procedure that permits the international carriage of goods by road vehicles or containers from one customs office of departure to a customs office of arrival, through as many countries as necessary, without intermediate check of the goods carried and without the deposit of a financial guarantee at each border. The procedure includes the use of secure vehicles, an international guarantee chain, set up under the Convention, to cover duties and taxes at risk throughout the journey and each vehicle must carry an international customs document (TIR Carnet) which certifies the contents of the cargo as checked at the customs office of departure. All this results in minimum procedures and delays at borders and in lower transport costs, which in turn results in lower export and import costs.

12. It should be noted that, since the previous report, the TIR Convention has acquired one new Contracting State namely India, for which the TIR Convention will formally enter into force of 15 December 2017 This development is expected to boost trade and regional integration across South Asia and beyond.

13. The intergovernmental process towards the computerization of the TIR procedure (eTIR), has gained momentum. In Geneva, TIR Contracting Parties, including SPECA countries, have concluded the work on the technical and conceptual aspects of eTIR and established a dedicated expert body to work on developing the appropriate legal framework for computerization. The legal Expert Group will be concluding its mandate at the end of October 2017 and will transmit, to the governing bodies of the TIR Convention, a proposed comprehensive legal framework for the operationalization of eTIR in the form of a new optional Annex to the TIR Convention, for the consideration of Contracting Parties and its, eventual, adoption. At the same time, the two initial eTIR pilot projects demonstrated the feasibility and identified potential drawbacks in the envisaged computerization. These will now be followed by further projects, within the framework of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Road Transport Union (IRU). The MoU is to be concluded between UNECE and IRU within October 2017 and will provide, inter alia, funding for UNECE Information and Communication Technology (ICT) related activities for projects to be launched in the framework of this MoU. The aim of the collaboration will be focused on devising and launching new projects to further explore all aspects related to the computerization of the TIR procedure and find synergies between existing projects.

14. The first UNECE-IRU eTIR pilot project between Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Turkey was successfully concluded on 20 February 2017 and the final report of the project is available as Informal document GE.1 No. 2 (2017) (see http://www.unece.org/trans/bcf/adhoc/conc_tech/conc_tech_inf_docs_2017.html).

15. The second eTIR pilot project launched between Georgia and Turkey on 26 January 2016, on the occasion of the 2016 International Customs Day, with the signature of a Protocol on electronic data exchange in the framework of a joint eTIR Pilot Project by Mr. Nodar Khaduri, Minister of Finance of Georgia, and Mr. Bülent Tüfenkci, Minister of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey. This pilot was partially funded by the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project: “Strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to facilitate legitimate border crossing, regional cooperation and integration”, which was completed in 2016. The UNDA funding allowed for the development of a Central Exchange Platform (CEP) which allows both countries to securely exchange data electronically and provided technical assistance to Georgia to connect its ICT system with the CEP. The pilot project between Georgia and Turkey is still on-going, with the most recent development being the imminent migration of the Central Exchange Platform from the test to production environment.

Developments in cross-border transport facilitation in ESCAP region

16. In order to improve the efficiency of international transport routes and corridors, both transport infrastructure and operational connectivity issues need to be addressed. Major bottlenecks along international transport routes ought to be identified, isolated and eliminated.

17. Transport plays a key role in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development considering its role in providing people, industry and agriculture with access to economic and social opportunities and in combating climate change. It is considered an enabler to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

18. The existence of non-physical barriers negatively affects the efficiency of international road transport and increases logistics costs. Going forward, effective regional road transport will require political commitment and institutionalization of the integration processes, including removal of non-physical barriers to transport and ensuring harmonization of regulations and norms along with standardizing technical and operational requirements and cross-border procedures.

19. The Third Session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport was organized by ESCAP and the Ministry of Transportation of the Russian Federation on 5-9 December 2016 in Moscow,

Russian Federation. Transport ministers and senior government officials from across the Asia-Pacific region, including representatives of all SPECA countries, exchanged views on emerging issues in developing sustainable transport connectivity, and discussed ways to make transport systems in the region integrated, safe, affordable, inclusive and environmentally sound.

20. Ministers assessed the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016) and adopted Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including a Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) to support member States in achieving transport infrastructure and operational connectivity. The new regional action programme is expected to introduce maritime transport corridors that complement existing land networks to form an intra- and inter- regional intermodal integrated transport system for enhancing the transport connectivity of landlocked developing countries, including SPECA countries, coastal countries and small island developing states.

21. Ministers adopted a set of new transport facilitation tools, namely the model bilateral agreement on international road transport, the model subregional agreement on transport facilitation, the model multilateral permit for international road transport and the standard model of logistics information systems. These raise to eight the number of mutually complementary transport facilitation models developed by ESCAP. The Ministers also updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016-2020.

22. During the Conference, China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport Along the Asian Highway network. It is the first agreement to formalize the use of the Asian Highway for international road transport operations. The agreement will be open for accession by other Asian Highway member countries to further enhance regional connectivity. Please see: <http://www.unescap.org/events/ministerial-conference-transport-third-session>

23. As for railway transport, due to imperatives of sustainable development and consequently to encourage sustainable modes of transport many countries in the region are developing railways as a preferred mode of transport. These initiatives need to be supported as railway transport is energy efficient and environmentally friendly, however railways require huge investments and therefore railway transport projects need to be planned and implemented so as to create maximum synergies.

24. To exploit transit potential between Asia and Europe most countries in Central Asia and those adjoining it are making efforts to improve railway transport and numerous projects are underway to provide connectivity between Asia and Europe through Central Asia and the South Caucasus. However, challenges persist, many related to the complexity of formalities and procedures. For example, in Uzbekistan the transit time by railway on the route Keles – Galaba (north-south crossing), 882 km-long connecting Kazakhstan, Russia, China, and Mongolia with Afghanistan takes four to five days. On the route Karakalpakstan – Galaba (east-west crossing), 1,735 km-long connecting Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, with Afghanistan the transit time by railway is nine to ten days. On the route Karakalpakstan-Kudukli (east-west crossing), 1,728 km connecting Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus with Tajikistan the transit time by railway is also nine to ten days.

25. In order to support members and associate members in implementing the Framework, the secretariat is undertaking a project on the harmonization of rules and regulations for the facilitation of international railway transport. The project aims to develop (a) commonly agreed technical standards and harmonized operational procedures for efficient international railway transport and (b) a model/manual of railway border crossings practices to reduce time for regulatory controls for international railway transport operations.

26. The situation regarding technical and operational interoperability of railways is not clear and there appears to be a divergence in various technical standards and operational procedures among countries that challenges international railway transport in the region and beyond. Further, to help modal shift and make railways attractive to shippers on a regular basis, it is critically important to increase the reliability and predictability of freight train services. To this end, railway border crossing procedures need to be streamlined to reduce administrative burdens and delays.

27. Therefore, the secretariat is also undertaking a study on railway border crossings to enhance understanding of the processes involved with a view to suggesting streamlining of procedures. This could help railway authorities to reduce border crossing delays and increase reliability of train services.

28. The study has grouped railway border crossing processes under the following heads: (a) border crossing procedures related to railway freight traffic that includes those related to a break of gauge, change of locomotive and crew, transfer of wagons, railway technical inspections, and transfer of goods (b) documentary requirements for railway border crossings such as wagon lists, consignment notes (c) use of electronic information systems for the exchange of information

between railways and customs, and (d) processes related to completion of customs and other government agencies(OGA) formalities that include pre-arrival intimation, mutual recognition of control measures, risk based inspections, use of new technologies, and sharing of information.

ESCAP activities for cross-border transport facilitation

29. The Regional Meeting on Handbook for Cross-Border Transport along the Asian Highway, Multilateral Permit System and International Road Organization was organized by ESCAP on 23-24 June 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand where representatives of Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan took part. The purpose of the Regional Meeting was to review and finalize the Handbook on Cross-Border Transport along the Asian Highway and a set of cross-border road transport performance indicators which had been developed under the project “Enhancing Efficiency and Effectiveness of Cross-Border Transport on the Asian Highway Network”. Following a request by a number of regional meetings, the secretariat undertook a study on the establishment and functioning of a multilateral permits system for international road transport on the Asian Highway Network, and developed a proposal which draws upon the best existing features and related best practices. The Regional Meeting reviewed the study, discussed current challenges related to road transport permits and traffic rights, and explored opportunities for launching a multilateral permit system for international road transport in the region. As requested by the Ministerial Conference on Transport held at Moscow in December 2016, the Regional Meeting also discussed a recent study report on the establishment of an International Road Organization to help ensure safe, efficient, affordable and environmentally sound use of road for sustainable development. Please see: <http://www.unescap.org/events/regional-meeting-handbook-cross-border-transport-along-asian-highway-multilateral-permit>

30. ESCAP is undertaking a study to identify infrastructure gaps and challenges, assess existing operational status, and propose mechanisms and measures to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and seamlessness of transport and logistics along three major corridors connecting Asia and Europe by road and railway under the project “Comprehensive planning of Eurasian Transport Corridors”. In this connection, two Expert Group Meetings were organized in Beijing, China on 5-6 July 2017 and in Istanbul, Turkey on 20-21 September 2017 with the representatives of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan participated.

- a. First meeting was organized to share preliminary findings of the study and review the quality of existing infrastructure network along major corridors; identify major economic centers along the corridors as well as short-term and long-term national transport

development plans and strategies; share experience in methodologies for investment prioritization of transport related projects; and assess operational status along the corridors.

- b. Second meeting was organized to share initial findings of the study on infrastructure network and the operationalization of the Eurasian Central Transport Corridor connecting Asia and Europe; share initial assessment of the operational status along the selected corridor, including border-crossing issues; identify remaining infrastructure gaps and facilitation challenges along the corridor and national/transnational initiatives to mitigate the challenges; consider requirements for setting up institutional mechanisms for the effective operationalization of the corridor. Please see: <http://www.unescap.org/events/expert-group-meeting-comprehensive-planning-eurasian-transport-corridors> and <http://www.unescap.org/events/2nd-expert-group-meeting-comprehensive-planning-eurasian-transport-corridors-eurasian-central>

31. ESCAP organized a Subregional Meeting on Rail-based Intermodal Transport in Northeast and Central Asia from 18 September 2017 to 19 September 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand under a project entitled “Development of seamless rail-based intermodal transport services in Northeast and Central Asia for enhancing Euro-Asian transport linkages”. The project is being implemented with the active participation of transport officials and railway managers of China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. Under the project, ESCAP has prepared study reports on “Documentation and Procedures for the Development of Seamless Rail-Based Intermodal Transport Services in Northeast and Central Asia”, including a proposed unified multimodal transport document, and on “Information Technology for Seamless Rail-Based Intermodal Transport Services in Northeast and Central Asia to Enhance Euro-Asian Transport Linkages”. The recommendations of these study reports were discussed by two expert group meetings held in Bangkok in August 2016, and in Incheon Republic of Korea, in April 2017. The meeting summarized the project, presented the final recommendations of the studies, discussed issues related to intermodal transport operations from the perspectives of governments, research institutes and private sector, and identified further steps towards streamlining rail-based intermodal transport operations in Northeast and Central Asia. Please see: <http://www.unescap.org/events/subregional-meeting-rail-based-intermodal-transport-northeast-and-central-asia>

Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport

32. Keeping in view the need to provide a strategic vision and common approach to address challenges to international road transport in the region, member states adopted the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport (RSF) at the ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Bangkok in March 2012.

33. The RSF identifies six fundamental issues for the facilitation of international road transport and provides long-term targets along with the process to achieve them. It also provides for seven modalities for addressing the challenges to smooth and efficient transport by road in the region.

34. The RSF serves as a primary policy document on transport facilitation initiatives for member countries and their development partners to increase coordination among different facilitation agreements, projects and measures to avoid inconsistency and conflicts in planning, formulation and implementation, and thereby increase the effectiveness of facilitation efforts. This will provide synergistic effect of facilitation measures benefiting member countries and their development partners.

Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport

35. Development of international railway transport in the region is confronted with numerous challenges. Typical non-physical barriers include regulatory issues that relate to control measures by various agencies, such as Customs, which take significant time of train operations. There are also legal issues that underlie the legal and contractual basis among countries and various stakeholders in railway transport. The different legal regimes need to be unified or at least harmonized. Technical and operational issues involving standards and specifications for the rolling stock, signaling systems, data exchange, repair, maintenance and use of railway infrastructure, and break of gauge also need to be addressed to promote cross-border railway transport operations.

36. ESCAP at its seventy-first session, held in Bangkok, Thailand from 25 to 29 May 2015, adopted the Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport (RCF). RCF identifies four fundamental issues and eleven potential areas for cooperation to promote international railway transport aimed to:

- Increase effectiveness of facilitation measures/projects
- Increase coordination among different facilitation measures/projects
- Avoid inconsistency in facilitation efforts
- Avoid conflict between different facilitation agreements/measures

- Provide direction of future possible development
- Serve as reference and guide

Transport Facilitation Tools

37. Many countries in the region and their development partners have been trying various ways to improve efficiency of cross-border transport by road and rail. However, overall progress is slow. The eight models developed by ESCAP as a complete package can help address non-physical barriers through more flexible and practical arrangements for transport movement en-route and at border crossings, and also for identification and monitoring of bottlenecks. The models together provide a comprehensive package of solutions for cross-border and transit transport among countries. The brief introduction of the models is presented in the following sections.

38. The **Model Subregional Agreement on Transport Facilitation**³ has been elaborated on the basis of comparative studies between major sub-regional agreements on transport facilitation to which various ESCAP member States are parties. The Model Subregional Agreement is intended to serve as a common framework for agreements on transport facilitation. The Model can be used for drafting and negotiating new agreements as well as for bringing amendments to existing ones, which will help to expedite the negotiation process of a subregional agreement and to facilitate its subsequent practical implementation. The Model Subregional Agreement provides a checklist of issues typically addressed in sub-regional agreements on transport facilitation. The focus of the model has been on international road transport; hence the checklist of issues is related to a large extent to road transport rather than other modes. It proposes a structure and a brief description of the main elements and specific substantive issues that would be covered by a sub-regional agreement but does not contain uniform wording to be used for all issues. The Model includes a list of recommendations for issues to be settled through additional sub-regional agreements, due to their complexity or specific nature.

39. The **Model Bilateral Agreement on International Road Transport**⁴ has been elaborated based on comparative studies of existing bilateral agreements concluded between the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. The Model proposes ways to harmonize the provisions of existing bilateral agreements which ESCAP member States could follow while negotiating new bilateral agreements or amending the existing ones. Due to different approaches to arranging international road transport operations, it would be hardly possible to propose a uniform model bilateral agreement

³ <http://www.unescap.org/resources/model-subregional-agreement-transport-facilitation>

⁴ <http://www.unescap.org/resources/model-bilateral-agreement-international-road-transport>

which all countries of the region would be prepared to follow in respect of traffic rights, at least within a short-term perspective. Keeping in mind both the long-term target and currently existing differences in approaches to traffic rights and permit system, the Model Bilateral Agreement on International Road Transport provides three options.

40. The **first option** of the Model is addressed toward countries which are not yet prepared to grant general access to their territories for international road transport operations and still prefer to limit the scope of such operations to designated routes and border crossings. This option of the Model also provides for permits being required for most types of transport operations.

41. The **second option** of the Model has no reference to designated routes and border crossings, but provides for permits with quantitative restrictions (quotas) in respect of most types of international transport operations. This approach is common in the region.

42. The **third option** of the Model provides for a permit-free legal regime for occasional transport of passengers and for bilateral and transit transport of goods. The permits are required only for regular transport of passengers and for third-country transport of goods. Several countries in the region currently follow a similar approach in their bilateral agreements on international road transport.

43. The wording of other provisions of the Model is uniform in all the three options, to provide the countries with a reference guide that could be followed during negotiations of new bilateral agreements.

44. The **Model Multilateral Permit for International Road Transport**⁵ is recommended at a time when insufficient transport facilitation measures are still a serious issue in the region. Implementing Multilateral Permit for International Road Transport will help to eliminate the existing inefficient trans-loading practices at borders, which currently increases transport and logistics costs. Transport operations would be accomplished directly which would contribute equally to an uninterrupted and clear line of contractual responsibility for the final delivery of the cargo in time and in an undamaged state. The driver of the originally contracted carrier remains in full control from the point of loading to the point of unloading at final destination. On this basis, transport security increases and the relationship of trust between business partners is considerably improved.

⁵ <http://www.unescap.org/resources/model-multilateral-permit-international-road-transport>

45. Well-functioning multilateral permits will create a virtuous circle: solving the traffic rights problems translates into enhanced access to international road freight transport markets along the Asian Highway Network and beyond. Permits as transport facilitation measures may give impetus to vehicle fleet modernization, improved vehicle technical, environmental and safety standards, reduced exposure to border crossing bureaucracy and possible illegal activities (rent-seeking, bribes, etc.), and increased physical cargo security.

46. While facilitating road transport by exchanging permits, governments will continue to keep full control of issuing permits to domestic and foreign transport operators; they have the right to carry out regular checks of permit use and apply specific disciplinary action against non-complying operators.

47. The **Standard Model of Logistics Information Systems**⁶ provides a comprehensive list of relevant technical standards, proposes common technical standards for the establishment of logistics information systems that would enhance operational connectivity across the ESCAP region, and outlines practical guidance in the overall architecture of logistics information systems. It was developed as part of the “Regional Study: The use of Logistics Information Systems for increased efficiency and effectiveness” which aimed at promoting good practices on the use of logistics information systems and to support capacity building in member countries to increase the efficiency and effectiveness in the movement of goods. The study reviews the technical aspects of selected existing national and transnational logistics information systems and identifies good practices, proposes a Standard Model of Logistics Information Systems and provides recommendations on technical standards in the establishment and operation of such systems. The study is available at <http://www.unescap.org/resources/regional-study-use-logistics-information-systems-increased-efficiency-and-effectiveness>

48. The **Secure Cross-Border Transport Model**⁷ provides a conceptual and standard basis for design of a cross-border vehicle monitoring system using new technologies, including ICT, satellite positioning and electronic seals. The model prescribes standardized components, their interaction and institutional requirements for its application in the cross-border transport.

49. It demonstrates how the use of these technologies can secure and facilitate the trade and transport, while taking care of the concerns of control authorities, giving the control authorities the

⁶ <http://www.unescap.org/resources/standard-model-logistics-information-system>

⁷ Available at <http://www.unescap.org/resources/secure-cross-border-transport-model>

confidence they need, to open up more international land routes for international trade and transport. It also allows transport operators to manage safe and efficient operation.

50. **The Efficient Cross-Border Transport Models**⁸ provide practical solutions to the difficulties in cross-border operations of land transport. With limited requirements of inter-governmental arrangements or absence of such arrangement, goods and passengers can be more efficiently moved across borders and for onward carriage based on the models.

51. With recent developments of trucking industry and technologies, the models use prime mover-trailer system and commercial cooperation to overcome institutional barriers and conflicts of commercial interests in international land transport. It can also largely reduce concerns on safety and security with entry of foreign vehicles in the region. It can also minimize the need for difficult cross-border arrangements, such as visa for driver, driving license, vehicle insurance, temporary importation of vehicles, standards of vehicles and transport permits. Similarly, the models also provide good practices for efficient inter-country railway operations.

52. **The Model on Integrated Control at Border Crossing**⁹ provides more efficient information flow and sharing among various agencies at border crossings by application of modern technologies (including ICT as a centre) and streamlined process of documentation and procedures. It can help minimize interventions in the process of crossing borders by various border agencies while maintaining good controls.

53. The model promotes optimized use of modern equipment by different agencies and multiple usage of the results of inspections. It also helps streamline and simplify formalities and procedures for crossing border with re-aligned integrated scheme for a border crossing rather than different schemes for different agencies at the same border crossing.

54. **The Time/Cost-Distance Methodology**¹⁰ is based on the graphical representation of data collected with respect to the cost and time associated with the transport process. The methodology enables easy comparison and evaluation of competing modes of transport operating on the same route and comparison of alternate transport routes. The methodology is based on the premise that the unit costs of transport may vary between modes, with the steepness of the cost/time curves reflecting the actual cost, price or time. At border crossings, ports and inland terminals, delays occur and freight/document-handling charges and other fees are usually levied without any material progress or movement of the goods being made along the transport route. This is

8. Available at <http://www.unescap.org/resources/efficient-cross-border-transport-models>

9. Available at <http://www.unescap.org/resources/model-integrated-controls-border-crossings>

10. Available at <http://www.unescap.org/resources/timecost-distance-methodology>

represented by a vertical step in the cost curve. The height of the step is proportional to the level of the charge or time delay.

The Thematic Working Group may wish to:

- Support and encourage Member countries to actively participate in the abovementioned activities of the ECE secretariat, as far as border crossing facilitation is concerned, particularly by engaging actively in the TIR computerization process;
- Invite SPECA countries to think about introducing new technologies in the implementation of the UN transport legal instruments by joining those electronically processed (Additional Protocol to CMR (e-CMR), e-TIR);
- Encourage SPECA countries to take actions to support the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including a Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021)
- Increase the effectiveness of facilitation programmes and projects and accelerate the development of international road transport through long-term targets in SPECA countries as stipulated in the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport;
- Support the implementation of the Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport to tackle challenges and strengthen cooperation to promote international railway transport;
- Encourage the SPECA countries to apply the ESCAP transport facilitation tools.