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**Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing (PWG-TBC)**

14<sup>th</sup> Session  
17 - 18 March 2009  
Almaty, Kazakhstan

**UNECE/UNESCAP REGIONAL AND INTERREGIONAL TRANSPORT  
ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO SPECA COUNTRIES**

(Item 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 of the Agenda)

*Note by UNECE/UNESCAP*

**I. TRANS-EUROPEAN NORTH-SOUTH MOTORWAY (TEM) AND TRANS-EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER) PROJECTS**

1. The UNECE, as the Executing Agency of the TEM and TER, continued to provide technical and administrative backstopping to the Projects. The TEM and TER Projects work in the reporting period focused on monitoring the implementation of the Master Plan and its revision
2. The revision of the TEM and TER Master Plan in 2008–2009 is among the main future targets of the projects. This work will extend the geographical coverage of the Master Plan to 25 ECE member countries, including four new countries, namely Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Montenegro. Moreover, the revision will embrace new challenges, such as intermodality, funding, operational performance, motorways of the sea, connections to Freight Villages and Logistics Centres. In addition, the TEM Master Plan component will include the additional task to study the funding solutions for road infrastructure priority projects, which will be elaborated with a CHF 20,000 co-funding already provided by the International Road Transport Union (IRU). The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the TEM and TER Master Plan Revision have been endorsed by the Projects' Steering Committees. The Master Plan Revision Coordination Group, consisting of the Project Managers, UNECE representatives and external consultants, met in Prague, Czech Republic, on 21 April 2008 to finalize the preparatory work.
3. The first joint meeting of the two TEM and TER Expert Groups on Revision of the Master Plan took place on 2-3 September 2008 in Hallstatt, Austria. Representatives of 30 countries, including Azerbaijan, participated in the meeting. The work is ongoing and is expected to be finalized by the end of 2009.
4. The elaboration of this work is heavily based on country contributions through designated national coordinators and the focal points. The coordination responsibility is with the TEM and TER Project Managers, assisted by external consultants. International organizations involved in planning and development of the European transport infrastructure have been invited to cooperate and contribute to the work. UNECE staff is also supporting this work.
5. The activities of the Transport Division were concentrated on providing advisory services to strengthen the capacity of countries with economies in transition to implement UNECE legal

instruments on transport, facilitate international transport in the UNECE region and promote inter-country cooperation towards the development of pan-European transport networks and Euro-Asian transport links.

6. UNECE has also made substantive contribution to the development of international transport, including in SPECA region, by cooperating with other international organizations. Of particular interest is novel cooperation of UNECE with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to promote transport and border crossing facilitation particularly in the context of the APA. In this context, the staff of the Transport Division of UNECE have recently co-organized and/or significantly participated in OSCE events in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine. Currently, the UNECE is working with the OSCE to publish a “Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings”.

## **II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BUSAN DECLARATION ON TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC INCLUDING REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME, PHASE I (2007-2011).**

7. Reiterating the importance of effective implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme, phase I (2007-2011), the first session of the Committee on Transport, held on 29-31 October 2008 in Bangkok, requested the secretariat to focus its work on key elements of the Declaration, notably the development of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway and the formation of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system in the region.

8. The Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, which entered into force on 4 July 2005, has been so far signed by 28 member States, of which 23, including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, are Parties. In 2009, the fiftieth anniversary of the Asian Highway initiative, launched at the fifteenth session of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East in Australia in 1959, is planned to be marked by the organization of the Asian Highway Truck Caravan from Tokyo to Istanbul.

9. As of January 2009, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network has now been signed by 22 States, of which seven, including Tajikistan, ratified or accepted the Agreement. With one more ratification, the Trans-Asian Railway Agreement is expected to enter into force in 2009.

10. In 2006, an ESCAP study estimated that US\$ 3 billion were required to improve 10,000 km of Asian Highways, linkages to the AH and related intermodal connections in SPECA countries. Similarly, secretariat now undertakes an exercise to identify investment needs and development priorities for the Trans-Asian Railway Network, for which subregional workshops were organized with participation of representatives from SPECA countries on 18 February 2008 in Tehran and on 14-15 May 2008 in Ulaanbaatar. The secretariat is consolidating inputs from member countries and finalizing the study that will include profiles of priority projects.

11. With 141,000 kilometres of road and 81,000 km of rail connections forming the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks in place, ESCAP continues its efforts towards the vision contained in the Busan Declaration, by focusing on intermodal integration and corridor development.

12. Under the project on “Promotion of Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway: intermodal interfaces as focus for development”, ESCAP organized a subregional workshop on the development of intermodal interfaces for countries of Caucasus and Central Asia and Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey on 16-17 February 2008 in Tehran, and a regional meeting on 16-17 June 2008 in Bangkok, with the objectives to review intermodal facilities and operational practices at selected intermodal interfaces. The study, including policy guidelines for landlocked developing countries to develop their own intermodal interfaces is being prepared and will be available soon at ESCAP’s website.

13. Under the project on “Operationalization of international intermodal transport corridors in North-East and Central Asia”, six intermodal corridors that have been identified and analyzed for review by representatives from 10 project participating countries at a policy-level expert group meeting scheduled for 4-5 March 2009 in Tashkent. The EGM will also agree on 2 or 3 corridors for further in-depth study and organization of demonstration runs during 2009, and will consider possible mechanisms for formalization of the corridors.

14. To receive further strategic guidance towards the regional development of transport and transit and the improvement of transport capacity, the first session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport is planned to be convened in October 2009 with the venue to be confirmed soon, in line with the ESCAP resolution 64/5 of 30 April 2008.

### **III. UNECE-UNESCAP JOINT PROJECT ON DEVELOPING EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS (EATL)**

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

16. The first phase of the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) project ended in 2008 with the Ministerial Meeting in Geneva where high level representatives of 19 countries issued and signed a Joint Statement in support of the second Phase of the project (2008-2011). The Ministers have endorsed the identified Euro-Asian routes and their priority development as well as promoted the creation of a mechanism to ensure co-ordination and monitoring of future EATL-related activities.

17. EATL work continued in 2008 through the activities of UNECE WP.5 and its subsidiary ad hoc Group of Experts on EATL. The Government of Russia has provided extra-budgetary funding to support among others Phase II of EATL project. EATL Phase II aims at assisting participating countries to develop efficient, safe and secure Euro-Asian land and land-cum-sea transport links and to foster co-operation in the field of transport to facilitate international trade and tourism. EATL II builds upon the successfully implemented 2003-2007 project. The project's ownership – by participating countries – will be ensured through the Expert Group consisting of designated national focal points from countries involved. In addition to the 18 countries involved during 2003-2007, Mongolia has also expressed interest in participating. The project will continue involving stakeholders from the private sector, NGOs and academia. At its first meeting in Geneva on 8 September 2008, the Group of Experts on EATL discussed its programme of work, objectives, tasks and deliverables. The Group is planning to meet again in Shanghai, in the first half of 2009, upon the invitation of the Government of China.

18. Four areas of work have been identified:

- (a) Appropriate mechanism for co-ordination and monitoring of the development of the Euro-Asian transport links established to enhance co-operation in the field of transport in the Euro-Asian region;
- (b) Better coordinated planning and gradual development of efficient, safe and secure land and land-cum-sea Euro-Asian transport links, and closely evaluated and prioritized infrastructure projects along main Euro-Asian transport routes;
- (c) Strengthened national capacities to deal with international transit, including border crossing along the Euro-Asian transport routes, and internationally harmonized national transport legislation developed on the basis of UN conventions and agreements;

- (d) Further developed and updated Geographic Information System (GIS) database.

19. The successful implementation of the project would contribute to sustainable economic development of participating countries by enabling them to reap benefits of trade. This could help reduce poverty, especially in the landlocked low-income economies of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

#### **IV. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT PROJECT ON IMPROVING GLOBAL ROAD SAFETY: SETTING REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ROAD TRAFFIC CASUALTY REDUCTION TARGETS**

20. To continue its efforts in implementing the recommendations made in the General Assembly resolution A/RES/60/5 on Improving global road safety, the five United Nations Regional Commissions in cooperation with other international organizations and NGOs active in the field of road safety, initiated the project "Improving Global Road Safety: Setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets.

21. The overarching objective of the project is to assist low and middle income countries to develop regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets and to provide them with examples of good road safety practice that could help them to achieve the targets selected by 2015.

22. The process of setting road safety targets has been shown as an effective means to highlight the extent of the road safety problem and to provide a goal that countries and regions can work towards. The project is innovative in that, although widely used by developed countries, not many developing countries have so far been able to set targets. By the end of the project, it is expected that many more low and middle income countries will have adopted road safety targets and will understand what they have to do to reach those targets by 2015.

23. In particular, the project will inform low and middle income countries about interventions and road safety practices that have been shown to bring significant reductions in road traffic injuries and fatalities. These include programmes to address drinking and driving, wearing helmets and seatbelts and speeding.

24. It is planned to present the results of the project at the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety to be held in Moscow, Russian Federation, in November 2009.

#### **Issues for consideration**

25. The Project Working Group may wish to:

- (a) Encourage those SPECA member States that have yet done so to take measures towards acceptance, approval or ratification of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

- (b) Encourage SPECA member States to actively participate in the ad hoc Group of Experts on EATL as well as secretariat's activities related to the implementation of the Busan Declaration and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011), including the first session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport.

- (c) Encourage SPECA member States to promote the corridor-based approach to the operationalization of SPECA road and rail networks through establishment of collaborative mechanism such as planning and organizing of demonstration runs along specific transport corridors.

- (d) Encourage SPECA member States to continue their efforts in improving road safety.

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