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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Combined Transport

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON COMBINED TRANSPORT
ON ITS THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION
(6-8 September 2000)**

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REPORT

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party held its thirty-fourth session from 4 to 6 September 2000 under the chairmanship of Mr. H. Maillard (Belgium).
2. The session was attended by representatives from the following countries: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Netherlands; Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine. A representative of the European Community (EC) was also present.
3. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was represented.
4. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Committee of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhD); European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT); Intergovernmental Organization for the International Carriage by Rail (OTIF).
5. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Container Bureau (ICB); European Intermodal Association (EIA); International Union of Railways (UIC); International Union of Combined Road/Rail Transport Companies (UIRR); International Road Transport Union (IRU); "Groupement Européen du Transport Combiné" (GETC); International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/88.

6. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda prepared by the UN/ECE secretariat (TRANS/WP.24/88).

ADOPTION OF THE DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/87 and Corr. 1 (French only).

7. The Working Party formally adopted the decisions taken at its thirty-third session on the basis of

a draft prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairman. The adopted report is contained in document TRANS/WP.24/87 and Corr.1.

ACTIVITIES OF UN/ECE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

(a) UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/133 and Add.1; TRANS/SC.2/192; TRANS/SC.2/2000/6; TRANS/SC.2/2000/8; TRANS/SC.3/151; TRANS/SC.3/AC.5/1999/21/Rev.1; TRANS/WP.30/190.

8. The Working Party was informed of the activities of the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2), the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30). It noted in particular that the Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterways (CMNI) was expected to be signed at a Diplomatic Conference, organized jointly by the Central Commission for the Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR), the Danube Commission and the UN/ECE (Budapest, 25 September to 3 October 2000). The Working Party was informed that the first session of the Administrative Committee for the Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport would be convened on 18 and 20 October 2000.

9. Detailed information on the activities of the UN/ECE and its subsidiary bodies, including the Working Party on Combined Transport, is available on the UN/ECE web site (www.unece.org/trans/Welcome.html).

(b) European Commission (EC)

Documentation: Informal Document No. 8 (2000).

10. The Working Party took note of the latest activities of the EC in the field of combined transport, particularly with regard to the continuation of the PACT programme and was informed that 21 projects have been chosen during the PACT 2000 selection procedure including five projects using several modes of transport for the long-distance leg of the journey. Furthermore, the Working Party noted the EC decision to amend Regulation (EEC) No. 1107/70 of 4 June 1970 on state aid and the launch of a periodical report on the application of Council Directive 92/106/EEC of 7 December 1992 on Combined Transport.

(c) European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)

11. The Working Party was informed that the ECMT Council meeting at Prague in May 2000 approved a report on short sea shipping as an alternative to European inland transport. The Working Party also noted that, as part of its triennial programme of work, the ECMT planned to undertake work on the identification of bottlenecks and of present weaknesses in combined transport operations in Europe.

(d) Other organizations

12. The representative of the Netherlands made a presentation on behalf of the OECD and summarized the results of a study on institutional aspects undertaken by the Intermodal Freight Transport Advisory Group in the framework of the OECD Programme of Co-operation in the Field of Research on Road Transport and Intermodal Linkages.

13. The representatives of UIC, OSZhD, EIA, ICB, UIRR and GETC informed the Working Party of recent activities of their organizations in the field of combined transport.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Documentation: JMTE/2000/8; ECE/RCTE/CONF./2/FINAL; ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL; ECE/RCTE/CONF./7/FINAL; ECE/RCTE/CONF./8/FINAL; TRANS/WP.24/R.85/Rev.1.; Informal Document Nos. 6 (2000) and 9 (2000).

14. The Working Party recalled the outcome of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12 to 14 November 1997) and, in particular, the adopted Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL). The Working Party also recalled that it had prepared two background documents for the Conference on the promotion of combined transport to foster a sustainable transport policy in Europe (TRANS/WP.24/R.85/Rev.1; TRANS/WP.24/R.80/Rev.1).

15. The Working Party was informed of the results of the third Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment (Geneva, 6 June 2000) as part of the follow-up process to the Conference (JMTE/2000/8). The Joint Meeting, composed of the Bureaux of the UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee and the UN/ECE Committee on Environmental Policy as well as of the Lead Actors implementing the Programme of Joint Action, reviewed national and international activities in the field of

transport and the environment, established an ad hoc group of experts to assist the Joint Meeting in the implementation of the Programme of Joint Action (POJA) and considered activities and modalities for the 2002 mid-term review of the POJA.

16. The Working Party was also informed of progress made by the UN/ECE secretariat in the review of international transport agreements, including the AGTC Agreement, as it relates to environmental and health aspects, as had been requested in the so-called London Charter adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (London, 16-18 June 1999).

17. As requested by the Working Party, the secretariat has issued a list of national focal points, which could be contacted with a view to obtaining relevant information (Informal Document No. 6 (2000)).

EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT LINES AND RELATED INSTALLATIONS (AGTC)

(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.1 and Corr.1.

18. The Working Party noted that the following 23 countries were Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland and Turkey. In view of the importance of the Agreement for efficient international combined transport in Europe, the Working Party urged once more the Governments of Finland, Poland, the Republic of Moldova and the Ukraine to consider becoming Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement as soon as possible.

19. The Working Party was informed that the secretariat would finalize within the next few weeks a revised map of the AGTC Agreement. The secretariat was requested to transmit the map to all delegations concerned for verification.

(b) Amendments proposed to the AGTC Agreement

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/88, annex 1, TRANS/WP.24/87.

20. Following preliminary considerations at its thirty-third session (TRANS/WP.24/87, para. 20), the Working Party considered amendment proposals transmitted by the Russian Federation as contained in document TRANS/WP.24/88, annex 1.

21. In this context, the Working Party noted that, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Articles 14, 15 and 16 of the AGTC Agreement, any amendment proposed by a Contracting Party to the Agreement should be considered by the UN/ECE Working Party on Combined Transport. If, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Articles 14, 15 and 16 of the AGTC Agreement, the amendment(s) is (are) adopted by the Contracting Parties present and voting, the secretariat would transmit the amendment proposal(s) to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity as depositary of the Agreement.

22. In order to formally notify the depositary of any amendment proposal adopted by the Working Party, it is necessary for countries to be Contracting Parties to the Agreement. At its nineteenth session, the Working Party had felt that, in case such amendments referred to annexes I and II to the Agreement, countries concerned, as defined in Article 15, paragraph 3 of the Agreement, should be consulted on an informal basis by the Contracting Parties proposing such amendments before any such amendment proposals were transmitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The secretariat had been requested to provide all necessary assistance to facilitate such consultation (TRANS/WP.24/95, para. 53).

23. In accordance with Article 15 of the AGTC Agreement, the Contracting Parties present (Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Netherlands; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland and Turkey) adopted the amendments to Annexes I and II to the AGTC Agreement as contained in annex 1 to this report, on the understanding that all countries directly concerned, as defined in Article 15, paragraph 3 of the Agreement, had been consulted and had agreed to these amendments.

24. The secretariat was requested to review the numbering of the proposed new combined transport lines taking also account of the numbering system used in the related AGC Agreement.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING AGTC STANDARDS AND PARAMETERS

Documentation: "Yellow Book"(UN/ECE publication); TRANS/WP.24/1998/2.

25. The Working Party noted with appreciation that the so-called "Yellow Book", an inventory of existing AGTC and AGC standards and parameters covering the year 1997, has been published by the UN/ECE secretariat providing detailed information on the implementation of the AGTC and AGC Agreements in 29 UN/ECE member countries.

26. The secretariat was requested to translate the short analysis on the implementation of the AGTC and AGC standards and parameters as contained in the "Yellow Book" into French and Russian.

27. A limited number of copies of the "Yellow Book" may be obtained free of charge from the secretariat.

28. The Working Party requested that the next edition of the "Yellow Book" should contain a map of all combined transport lines contained in the AGTC Agreement as well as a map covering each contracting State.

PROTOCOL ON COMBINED TRANSPORT ON INLAND WATERWAYS TO THE EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT LINES AND RELATED INSTALLATIONS (AGTC)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1 (F) and Corr.2 (R).

29. The Working Party noted that the Protocol has the following seven Contracting Parties: Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Romania and Switzerland. It will come into force following ratification by at least three States that are linked, in a continuous manner, by the waterways identified in the Protocol. Concerned UN/ECE member countries were invited to consider ratification of the Protocol as soon as possible.

30. The text of the Protocol to the AGTC Agreement (English, French and Russian) is contained in document ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1 (F) and Corr.2 (R).

POSSIBILITIES FOR RECONCILIATION AND HARMONIZATION OF CIVIL LIABILITY REGIMES GOVERNING COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/1999/1; TRANS/WP.24/1999/2; TRANS/WP.24/2000/2; TRANS/WP.24/2000/2/Corr. 1; TRANS/WP. 24/2000/3; Informal Document No. 4 (2000); Informal document prepared by the GETC.

31. At the request of the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/133, para. 70), the secretariat convened another informal meeting of experts (Geneva, 29 and 30 May 2000) to investigate further the possibilities of harmonizing civil liability regimes taking into account current activities in this field and to consult, in particular, with shippers and clients on the necessity of a new legal regime and on specific problems shippers encountered in this context.

32. The Working Party considered in detail the results of this meeting (TRANS/WP.24/2000/3) and welcomed in particular the participation of a large number of parties involved in modern transport chains which had not yet been consulted, such as express carriers and representatives of shippers and the manufacturing industry.

33. The Working Party took note that experts representing mainly maritime interests as well as freight forwarders and insurance companies generally did not favour the preparation of an international mandatory legal regime on civil liability covering multimodal transport operations. Experts, however, representing road and rail transport industries, combined transport operators, transport customers and shippers felt that work towards harmonization of the existing modal liability regimes should be pursued urgently and that a single international civil liability regime governing multimodal transport operations was required.

34. The Working Party noted that many trade and transport operators were in favour of a reliable, predictable and cost-effective civil liability system with simple and transparent provisions, covering also temporary storage and transshipment operations. Such a rupture would facilitate just-in-time delivery transport services and, above all, eliminate the present uncertainties in cases of loss, damage and delay in delivery, including cases of non-localized loss or damages.

35. The Working Party took also note of the appeal by some experts to make combined transport easier, to protect weak actors in commercial transactions and to facilitate trade and transport through the establishment of a balanced and clear legal framework in the field of civil liability.

36. The representatives of UNCTAD reported on the first results of a study comparing different regional, sub-regional and national legislations on civil liability governing multimodal transport. The Working Party expressed concern about the proliferation of different and incompatible regimes in this field, which might jeopardise the efficiency of combined and multimodal transport operation not only in Europe, but also on a world-wide level.

37. The Working Party reaffirmed the need for a global regime on civil liability in multimodal transport operations covering all modes of transport and repeated its willingness to cooperate closely with all other international organizations working on this issue.

38. Considering various options for possible follow-up actions, the Working Party decided to continue its work towards reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes governing multimodal transport taking account of the current work undertaken in other international fora.

39. In this context, the Working Party also considered the results of the forthcoming Diplomatic Conference on the adoption of a Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterways (CMNI) (Budapest, 25 September to 3 October 2000) as an additional element for further action by the Working Party in this field.

40. The Working Party expressed its appreciation for the excellent work undertaken by the ad hoc expert group at which eminent experts in the field of civil liability participated and which offered a flexible approach in tackling this complex matter. In order to be able to continue these activities, the Working Party recommended that the mandate of the ad hoc expert group be prolonged for the year 2001 and requested the secretariat to convene the expert group whenever required.

THE ROLE OF RAILWAYS IN THE PROMOTION OF COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: Informal Documents No. 11 and 12 (2000); TRANS/WP.30/87; TRANS/WP.30/85.

41. The Working Party continued its exchange of views on the role of railways, acting increasingly as commercial enterprises, in the promotion of competitive combined transport services. It noted that combined transport has stagnated or even declined in 1998 and 1999 in many countries in Europe compared to earlier often two-digit growth rates whereas overall freight transport, particularly by road, continued to increase. Preliminary figures for 2000 seem to indicate, however, that this negative trend has been stopped in the year 2000 and has even been reversed in some countries.

42. On the basis of a document prepared by the Chairman, the Working Party recalled that the main reasons that had led to the unsatisfactory performance of combined transport were linked to the inadequate service quality, particularly unreliability, on the part of railway operators and were only, in a second place a result of uncompetitive prices. While other service quality aspects, such as attractive time slots, speed, cargo monitoring facilities as well as flexibility in response to changing demands were also important, the provision of punctual and predictable transport services were the sine qua non for competitive combined transport operations (Informal document No. 12 (2000)).

43. The Working Party felt that the major railway operators in Europe, which, in addition to traction, often provide the necessary rolling stock and drivers as well as terminal services for combined transport operations and, thus, account for 60 to 70 per cent of total combined transport costs, today still act in most countries as quasi-monopolists in spite of considerable efforts in many countries to liberalize railway markets, particularly within the European Community. As railway operators increasingly acted outside the control of Governments, particularly in freight transport, a consistent and comprehensive legal and administrative framework guaranteeing fair access to national rail networks on a transparent and, possibly, internationally harmonized basis was indispensable.

44. The Working Party also noted that the conventional wisdom among rail freight managers seemed to indicate that profit margins for combined transport services, apart from full block or shuttle trains on a few high volume transport corridors, were considerably lower than those that could be achieved in traditional rail freight transport or passenger transport. Thus, any operational shortcomings, such as lack of tractive capacity (as a result of lack of locomotives or drivers, management deficiencies, etc.) or capacity constraints tended to lead overproportionally to difficulties for combined transport operations as those services enjoyed a relatively low priority for railway operators. Furthermore, since combined transport usually competed closely with pure road transport and thus required a comparably high level of service quality on the part of railways which, apparently, were often not covered by the profit margins railways felt could be achieved, combined transport continued to play a rather marginal role in overall railway freight operations. For these reasons, Governments still needed to review the legal and administrative framework conditions which provided for the politically wanted increase in combined transport operations.

45. The Working Party was of the view that true partnership arrangements, such as the recently concluded agreement between SNCF and three national combined and road transport associations in France, where all parties involved agreed to comply with clearly defined obligations, should be encouraged in the UN/ECE member countries and should also be extended to the international level.

The same held true for standing quality monitoring and assessment committees that have already been established covering some international combined transport services.

46. In order to be able to offer a single combined transport product to the customers who did not wish to deal with several operators or network providers, the Working Party felt that rail operators had to further improve cooperative arrangements with other rail and network providers with a view to offering one stop shops and had to assume also, as in the case of road transport, responsibilities for guaranteed delivery times and advance information in the case of capacity constraints.

47. The Working Party felt that, in addition to improved cooperation between the various railway operators to ensure competitive international combined transport services, border crossing problems due to technical, administrative and legal problems also accounted sometimes for unnecessary and unpredictable delays, particularly to and from Central and Eastern Europe. The activities undertaken in Poland and in the Russian Federation to resolve these problems were welcomed. Reports on these activities would be transmitted to the forthcoming session of the Working Party.

48. The Working Party was also of the view that future work on this issue should focus on the establishment of a checklist identifying problems related to punctuality and predictability of combined transport services, including border crossing problems. This work should be undertaken in cooperation with the UN/ECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) and other international organizations, such as UIRR. For this purpose, a joint meeting with the Working Party on Rail Transport should be envisaged.

TERMINOLOGY IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/2000/1 and Corr.1; Informal Document No. 7 (2000).

49. The Working Party considered the various provisions contained in the glossary of terms used in combined transport which had been prepared by an inter-secretariat working group composed of representatives of the European Commission (EC), the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and the UN/ECE secretariat.

50. The Working Party approved the glossary, subject to a number of minor modifications to be effected by the secretariat and requested its publication in English, French, German and Russian for free circulation to all interested parties.

51. The Working Party noted that the secretariat would place the glossary also on the relevant web site of the UN/ECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans).

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF COMBINED TRANSPORT IN UN/ECE MEMBER COUNTRIES

Documentation: Informal Document No. 10 (2000).

52. The Working Party was informed by the representatives of Belgium and Slovakia about new developments in the field of combined transport. It took note of test runs of a new combined transport train using pocket wagons operating between in Hungary, Slovakia and Poland.

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2001 TO 2005

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/88, annex 2.

53. The Working Party considered its programme of work for the years 2001 to 2005, taking due account of the present resource constraints of the UN/ECE secretariat in this field and adopted it as contained in annex 2 to this report for approval by the Inland Transport Committee.

54. In this context and in accordance with a request made by the Inland Transport Committee to assess the relationship with the business community, the Working Party stressed the very constructive and valuable role played by the non-governmental organizations which participated regularly in the sessions of the Working Party which represented the main private sector interests in the field of combined transport in Europe (EIA, GETC, ISO, ICB, IRU, UIC, UIRR) (ECE/TRANS/133, para. 7).

55. The Working Party also felt that all of its activities promoting the use of combined transport were relevant for the development of the Pan-European Transport Corridors (PETrCs) (ECE/TRANS/133, para. 20).

OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Tribute to Mr. H. Maillard

56. The Chairman of the Working Party, Mr. Henri Maillard informed the Working Party that he had assumed other duties in his Ministry and would therefore no longer be able to participate in its sessions

on a regular basis. Being a delegate in the Working Party since 1988, Mr. Maillard had chaired the sessions of the Working Party with great competence, dedication and a good sense for compromise solutions since April 1995. Mr. Maillard has also represented very effectively the Working Party at the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment, at the sessions of the Inland Transport Committee and at various international fora. The Working Party wished him every success in his new activities.

(b) Date of next session

57. The Working Party decided to convene its thirty-fifth session on 19 and 20 April 2001.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

58. The Working Party adopted the report on its thirty-fourth session.

Annex 1

EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL COMBINED TRANSPORT LINES AND RELATED INSTALLATIONS (AGTC Agreement)

Amendment proposals

**adopted by the Working Party
at its thirty-fourth session
on 6 September 2000**

Countries directly concerned, in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 3 of the AGTC Agreement, are marked with an asterix (*) if these countries are Contracting Parties to the Agreement as of 1 July 2000.

Proposed by the Russian Federation

AGTC Annex I

Add the following railway line:

“C-E 10 Moskva-Rostov-na-Donu-Novorossiysk”

Countries directly concerned: Belgium^(*), Finland, Germany^(*), Russian Federation^(*).

“C-E 102 Moskva-Volgograd-Astrakhan”

Country directly concerned: Russian Federation^(*).

“C-E 20 Moskva-Nizhniy Novgorod-Ekaterinburg”

Countries directly concerned: Belarus^(*), Belgium^(*), Germany^(*), Poland, Russian Federation^(*).

Modify on the existing line C-E 10 the station Luzhaika by: “Buslovskaya” and the city Leningrad by: “St.-Petersburg”.

Countries directly concerned: Belgium^(*), Finland, Germany^(*), Russian Federation^(*).

AGTC Annex II

Add the following terminals:

“Moskva-Tovarnaya - Paveletskaya
Kuntsevo II (Moskva)
Smolensk
Brjansk-Lgovskiy (Brjansk)
Kostarikha (Nizhniy Novgorod)
Kirov-Kotlasskiy (Kirov)
Blochnaya (Perm)
Sverdlovsk-Passagirskiy (Ekaterinburg)
Rostov-Tovarnyi (Rostov-na-Donu)
Volzhskiy (Volgograd)
Kutum (Astrakhan)
Novorossiysk-Port”

Replace in the existing list of terminals:

Leningrad-Tovarnyi-Vitebskiy by: “St.-Petersburg-Tovarnyi-Vitebskiy”
Leningrad-Port by: “St.-Petersburg-Port”

Replace in the existing list of border crossing points:

Luzhaika (RZhD) by: “Buslovskaya (RZhD)”

Countries directly concerned: Belarus^(*/), Belgium^(*/), Finland, Germany^(*/), Russian Federation^(*/).

Annex 2

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2001 TO 2005 *

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.9: COMBINED TRANSPORT

Promotion of combined and multimodal transport

Priority: 1

Description: Consideration of legal, administrative, documentary, technical, economic and environmental aspects of combined and multimodal transport with a view to the development of measures to promote combined and multimodal transport as well as the maximum utilization of equipment, infrastructure and terminals used for such transport.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Combined Transport will pursue the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Review and updating of the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) with a view to:
- Extending the AGTC network to all UN/ECE member countries concerned taking account of the work already undertaken by ESCAP and the OSZhD;
 - Taking into account new developments in transport markets (demands and requirements), including new east-west traffic flows;
 - Implementing and, whenever feasible, improving existing standards and operational parameters;
 - Raising environmental, energy and safety standards.

Priority: 1

* Text in [bold] characters indicates newly proposed text; text in square brackets [...] refers to text proposed for deletion.

Output expected in 2002:

Adoption of an extended AGTC network covering all ECE member countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Inclusion into the AGTC Agreement of new East-West combined transport lines.

Analysis of existing standards and operational parameters to be published by the ECE secretariat in an updated Yellow Book.

(a) bis Review and analysis of possibilities to develop inter-regional combined transport services, including the use of the Trans-Siberian railway **Priority: 2****Output expected in 2001:**

Report to be prepared as the basis of information provided by concerned UN/ECE member Governments and international organizations.

(b) Monitoring of the efficiency of various modes of transport of relevance for combined transport operations.

Priority: 1**Output expected in 2002:**

Review of the efficiency of various modes of transport of relevance for combined transport in the sessions of the Working Party and cooperation with other relevant subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee.

(c) Analysis of data requirements for transshipment and handling requirements, of marking, coding and identification systems for means of transport and loading units in combined transport, including the promotion of electronic data processing, with a view to improving the flow of information among the various operators and to allow for a better integration of production and distribution systems (logistics) using combined transport techniques.

Priority: 2**Output expected in 2002:**

Review and analysis of standardized data systems for combined transport operations with a view to possibly preparing international recommendations on this subject.

(d) Monitoring of weights and dimensions of loading units used in combined transport in accordance with resolution No. 241 adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on 5 February 1993. This includes consideration of possibilities for standardization of loading units and the compliance with safety regulations.

Priority: 1

Output expected in 2002:

Review of the issues based on one annual report to be prepared by the UN/ECE secretariat on latest developments in this field.

- (e) Monitoring of technical and organizational measures to optimize terminal and transshipment procedures allowing for more cost-effective handling procedures of loading units. Priority: 2

Output expected in 2002:

Report to be prepared on the basis of information provided by UN/ECE member Governments and international organizations.

- (f) Analysis of economic and environmental aspects of combined transport, including administrative measures and activities of the transport industry, with a view to promoting sustainable transport development. Priority: 1

Output expected in 2002:

Follow-up to the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12 to 14 November 1998) on the basis of the Programme of Joint Action adopted at the Conference, to be determined in accordance with the decisions taken by the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment and inter-secretariat consultations.

- (g) Monitoring by the secretariat on behalf of the Working Party of the following subjects for consideration by the Working Party upon specific request only:

- Harmonization of combined transport terminology in order to contribute to [a single international] **the joint ECMT, EC and UN/ECE** glossary of terms used in this field;
- Combined transport techniques and operations (including inland waterways and coastal shipping techniques) as a basis for a possible international compendium of measures for the safe handling and temporary storage of dangerous goods;
- National approval procedures for containers and swap-bodies in the framework of relevant conventions, such as the CSC Convention, with a view to better harmonizing such procedures;
- New services and technologies in combined and intermodal transport, including sea/inland waterways and sea/land interfaces, and the use of bimodal road/rail vehicles with a view to be able to analyze the potential of combined transport. Priority: 2

[Output expected in 2000:

Publication of the international glossary on combined transport in cooperation with the ECMT and the European Commission.]

Output expected in 2001:

Report(s) to be prepared by the secretariat as a basis for discussion by the Working Party, as appropriate.

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

(a) Analysis of possibilities for reconciliation and harmonization of liability regimes governing combined transport operations.

Priority: 1

Output expected in 2001:

[Preparation of an analysis on the reconciliation and harmonization of the existing liability regimes and establishment of an outline of a possible convention in this field.]

Review of relevant activities undertaken by international organizations and, if appropriate, preparation of further analytical and legal work in this field.

(b) Analysis of the consequences on the organization of combined transport in Europe resulting from the development of combined transport services on interregional rail links between Europe and Asia. This includes the organization of an inter-regional meeting harmonizing the legal and administrative work carried out by relevant international organizations in Europe and Asia (e.g. ESCAP, UNCTAD, EC, OSZhD).

Priority: 2

Output expected in 2001:

Based on work carried out by ESCAP, study on the feasibility of an intergovernmental meeting, jointly organized with ESCAP, in Central Asia or the Caucasus to agree on common measures to facilitate combined transport services along the interregional links.
