



Economic and Social Council

Distr.

GENERAL

TRANS/WP.24/1998/3
16 January 1998

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Combined Transport

(Twenty-ninth session, 30 and 31 March 1998,
agenda item 8)

INTERREGIONAL LINKS IN COMBINED TRANSPORT

Note by the secretariat

A. INTRODUCTION

1. At its twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions, the Working Party felt that efforts had to continue to promote combined transport between an extended AGTC network, covering the Trans-Siberian railway and the railways of the newly independent Central Asian countries on the one hand, and the Trans-Asian Railway system on the other. Such railway land bridges between Europe and Asia might become viable container transport alternatives to sea transport for certain regions in Europe and Asia (TRANS/WP.24/75, paras. 32-36; TRANS/WP.24/77, paras 24-27).

PLEASE NOTE: The distribution of documents of the Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies is no longer "restricted". Accordingly, the secretariat has adopted a new numbering system whereby all documents other than reports and agenda will be numbered as follows: TRANS/WP.24/year/serial number. Reports and agenda will retain their previous numbering system (e.g., TRANS/WP.24/78).

2. With view to establishing a single coherent international combined transport network covering Europe and Asia, as considered by the Working Party at its twenty-eighth session, the Working Party may wish to review the following international rail and combined transport networks and identify appropriate links between them:

(a) the rail network contained in the AGTC Agreement prepared under the auspices of the ECE (ECE/TRANS 88 and Corr.1; TRANS/WP.24/71, annex 1);

(b) the rail network contained in the Agreement on Organizational and Operational Aspects of Combined Transport Lines between Europe and Asia prepared under the auspices of the Committee of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhD) (TRANS/WP.24/1997/2);

(c) the Asia-Europe land bridges contained in the Trans-Asian Railway network prepared under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). These rail land bridges are briefly described below.

B. ASIA-EUROPE LAND BRIDGES OF THE TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

3. The Trans-Asian Railway Network provides for three major interregional rail routes between Europe and Asia:

(a) Northern corridor: North-East Asia via China or the Russian Federation to Europe

4. This corridor connects the Korean peninsula and China directly via the Russian Federation or alternatively via Mongolia or Kazakhstan with Europe. It links the Pacific seaboard of the Asian continent to the main cities in Europe over a distance of between 10,500 km and 12,000 km. Most of the railway lines on this corridor are electrified and have double tracks.

(b) Central corridor: North-East Asia via Central Asia, Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey to Europe

5. This corridor connects China via Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) and the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey with Europe.

(c) Southern corridor: South-East Asia via South Asia to Europe

6. This corridor connects Bangladesh, India and Pakistan via the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey with Europe. It should be noted that this link of around 7,200 km has at present a missing section in the Islamic Republic of Iran (between Kerman and Zahedan) of around 550 km.

7. The routes on these corridors have been identified by ESCAP through Governmental expert groups. The ESCAP secretariat has carried out extensive studies on these routes with a view to establishing minimum infrastructure and operational requirements that must be met by combined transport services using these routes in order to become competitive with maritime shipping.

C. Consolidated interregional network of combined transport

8. Taking account of the above networks established under the auspices of ECE, ESCAP and OSZhD, it seems to be possible to find agreement on the following three main rail routes that could be utilized for interregional combined transport between Europe and Asia (described in the direction Asia-Europe):

NORTHERN ROUTE

- (a) A-207(OSZhD) from the Korean peninsula - A-20 (Transsib) via Baranovksy, Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Moscow (Russian Federation) -
 - (i) C-E 10(AGTC) to Finland
 - (ii) C-E 20(AGTC) to Poland
 - (iii) C-E 50(AGTC) to Hungary

- (b) A-205(OSZhD) from Beijing (China) - A-20 (Transsib) via Karymskaya, Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Moscow (Russian Federation) -
 - (i) C-E 10(AGTC) to Finland
 - (ii) C-E 20(AGTC) to Poland
 - (iii) C-E 50(AGTC) to Hungary

- (c) A-204(OSZhD) from Tianjin, Beijing (China) - Ulanbaatar (Mongolia) - A 20 via Zaudinsky, Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Moscow (Russian Federation) -
 - (i) C-E 10(AGTC) to Finland
 - (ii) C-E 20(AGTC) to Poland
 - (iii) C-E 50(AGTC) to Hungary

- (d) A-50(OSZhD) from Lianyungang, Xian (China) -
 - (i) Almaty (Kazakhstan) - Astrakhan (Russian Federation) - Dnipropetrovsk, Fastov (Ukraine) - C-E 50(AGTC) to Hungary
 - (ii) A-203 via Aqmola (Kazakhstan) - Sverdlovsk (Russian Federation) - A-20 via Moscow (Russian Federation) -
 - (-) C-E 10(AGTC) to Finland
 - (-) C-E 20(AGTC) to Poland
 - (-) C-E 50(AGTC) to Hungary

CENTRAL ROUTE (Silk route)

- A-50(OSZhD) from Linayungang, Xian (China) - Almaty (Kazakstan) - A-500/1 via Tashkent, Buchara (Uzbekistan) -
 - (i) A-503 via Ashgabad (Turkmenistan) - ferry line - A-701 via Baku (Azerbaijan) -
 - (-) Tbilisi - A-701/1 or A-701/2 via Batumi or Poti (Georgia) - ferry line - C-E 562(AGTC) to Constanta (Romania) -
 - (-) Erevan (Armenia) or Tbilisi (Georgia) - C-E 97(AGTC) via
 - (-) C-E 70 via Istanbul (Turkey) to Europe
 - (-) C-E 70 and C-E 74 via Izmir (Turkey) to Europe
 - (-) C-E 70, C-E 97 and C-E 562 via Samsun (Turkey), ferry line to Constanta (Romania)

- (ii) A-503 via Sarakhs, Mashad, Tehran (Islamic Republic of Iran) -
C-E 70(AGTC) via
 - (-) C-E 70 via Istanbul (Turkey) to Europe
 - (-) C-E 70 and C-E 74 via Izmir (Turkey) to Europe
 - (-) C-E 70, C-E 97 and C-E 562 via Samsun (Turkey), ferry line to
Constanta (Romania)

SOUTHERN ROUTE

Chittagong/Dhaka (Bangladesh) - Dehli (India) - Lahore (Pakistan) -
Tehran, Razi (Islamic Republic of Iran) -

- (i) C-E 70(AGTC) via Istanbul (Turkey) to Europe
- (ii) C-E 70 and C-E 74 via Izmir (Turkey) to Europe
- (iii) C-E 70, C-E 97 or C-E 562 via Samsun (Turkey), ferry line to
Constanta (Romania)

D. CONCLUSIONS

9. The Working Party may wish to have a first exchange of views on the above corridors and routes to be considered as the main interregional combined transport lines between Europe and Asia. The Working Party may also consider to which extent the AGTC Agreement should be extended to cover the above or any other proposed combined transport lines.

10. To facilitate this work, the secretariat has prepared, for information only, a map showing the above interregional routes. This map is contained in TRANS/WP.24/1998/Add.1.
