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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Rail Transport

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON RAIL TRANSPORT
ON ITS FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION
(21-23 October 2003)**

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REPORT¹

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Rail Transport held its fifty-seventh session from 21 to 23 October 2003. Mr. G. Szabo (Hungary) was Chairman of the session. Representatives of the following UNECE member States participated: Austria; Bulgaria; Croatia; Finland; Germany; Hungary; Italy; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia and Montenegro; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland; Turkey and the United Kingdom. The representative of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT); Organization for Co-operation between Railways (OSZhD); and Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) were also present. A representative of the United Nations Conference on Development (UNCTAD) and a representative of the UNECE Trans-European Railway Project (TER) also attended the session. The following non-governmental organizations were present: International Union of Railways (UIC); and European Transport Workers Federation (ETF). At the invitation of the secretariat, a representative of the Galileo Joint Undertaking (Brussels) also attended the session.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/199.

2. The provisional agenda (TRANS/SC.2/199) was amended to include item 9 bis – Harmonization of conditions of different legal rail transport systems, and adopted with this amendment.

ACTIVITIES OF ECE BODIES OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

(a) Economic Commission for Europe

Documentation: E/2003/37-E/ECE/1406.

3. The Working Party was informed about the decisions taken by the Commission at its fifty-eighth session (Geneva, 4-6 March 2003), concerning such questions as the UNECE reform, major policy directions of UNECE's work, UNECE technical assistance, and cooperation and coordination with other organizations.

(b) Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/152.

4. The Working Party was informed about the results of the sixty-fifth session of the Inland Transport Committee (18-20 February 2003) and its discussions to the extent that they were related to the area of work of interest to the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/152, paras. 69-80).

¹ Text underlined indicates a decision taken during the session and adopted by the Working Party.

(i) Safety and security in railway transport

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/19.

5. The Working Party recalled that, following the suggestion by the Inland Transport Committee's sixty-fourth session which requested its subsidiary bodies to identify (i) the differences between "security" and "safety" concepts and (ii) the relevant concrete questions that could be addressed in this respect, it continued to follow-up on issues of safety and security. The Working Party noted, with appreciation, the information by the International Union of Railways (UIC) on the work in the field of transport and security. It further noted that, although some international organizations are focusing only on security or safety issues, the practical considerations of the two issues have not yet been clearly delineated. Therefore, the Working Party reiterated that it was necessary to maintain the distinction between concepts of security and safety in railway transport and agreed to continue to follow-up developments related to security and safety in railway transport. To this end, it asked the UIC, European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and the European Union (EU) to inform the Working Party about their activities related to safety and security in railway transport at its future sessions.

(ii) Census of rail traffic (E-rail traffic) in 2005

6. The Working Party learned, with great interest, of the results arrived at by the Ad hoc meeting on the E-rail traffic census 2005 and Recommendations to Governments as adopted by the UNECE Working Party on Transport Statistics. The Working Party was informed that the recommendations on the census are available from the UNECE web site: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp6/wp6.html>. The Working Party discussed the methodology, reporting mechanisms, coverage, scope and the purpose of the census that will cover the AGC E-rail lines in Europe. Noting that a significant amount of the data on the work of railways are being collected by various international bodies, in particular by the UIC and the Organization for Co-operation between Railways (OSZhd), the Working Party asked the UIC and the OSZhd to transmit to the secretariat the detailed information on their data collection activity by 1 January 2004. The Working Party also asked the Inland Transport Committee to call on the Working Party on Transport Statistics to consider in detail all the aspects of the use of the census data and the costs and benefits of the forthcoming census, in order to carry it out effectively and to enable a fair comparison with the results of the E-road traffic census.

COOPERATION WITH THE ECMT GROUP ON RAILWAYS

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/18.

7. The Working Party was informed that, due to UN budgetary restraints, the number of its annual sessions has been reduced in the next biennium. Some delegations questioned the reasons why the Working Party on Rail Transport and the Working Party on Combined Transport had been selected for this operation, and requested the secretariat to ensure that, in planning for the next biennium budget, adequate funds are provided to ensure the holding of an annual session of the Working Party on Rail Transport.

8. At the beginning of the discussion on cooperation with the ECMT Group on Railways, the Working Party was reminded of the agreement among the ECMT Ministers reached on the occasion of the 50th ECMT Council of Ministers meeting. The Ministers agreed on the need for closer cooperation between the ECMT and UNECE respective bodies dealing with railway transport, and the Working Party, after thoroughly discussing the proposal by the two secretariats on closer working collaboration, agreed on the following:

- The joint meeting of the ECMT Group on Railways and the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport will be organized as a back-to-back meeting by UNECE in 2004 in Geneva and by ECMT in 2005 in Paris;
- Such arrangement will be carried out on a trial basis for two years (2004 and 2005), and the experience gained will be analysed by the two groups thereafter;
- This decision will be communicated to the ECMT Group of Deputies meeting, the ECMT Group on Railways meeting and the UNECE Inland Transport Committee;
- The two secretariats, together with Chairpersons of the two respective groups, will work out the organizational details of the meeting, duration and scheduling and inform the member Governments accordingly.

ORGANIZATION OF DEMONSTRATION RUNS OF CONTAINER BLOCK TRAINS ON EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/2003/3-TRANS/SC.2/2003/3; TRANS/WP.5/2003/4-TRANS/SC.2/2003/4; TRANS/WP.5/2003/5-TRANS/SC.2/2003/5; TRANS/SC.2/2003/20; TRANS/WP.5/2001/14.

9. The Working Party took note of information from the Russian Federation, Turkey and Romania on their experiences with demonstration runs of block trains through their respective territories. The Working Party also appreciated the detailed information on the activity of OSZhD in further promoting Euro-Asian rail transport corridors and related activities. The representative of the UIC informed the Working Party about the development of the UIC project the "N.E.W." intercontinental corridor intended to link North-eastern America, Northern Europe, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and China/the Far East.

10. The Working Party asked the representatives of the Russian Federation, Romania, Turkey and other member countries to inform the Working Party about the results of the demonstration runs of block trains and other activities related to further promotion of Euro-Asian railway corridors at its next session. Furthermore, the Working Party asked the representative of the OSZhD to provide information on the development of a rail transport database for all OSZhD rail corridors and other related activities at its next session.

STUDY OF THE SITUATION OF THE RAILWAYS IN MEMBER COUNTRIES

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/6 and Adds. 1-4; Informal document No.4.

11. The Working Party noted, with appreciation, the information on the situation of the railways in member countries as reported by Belarus, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary,

Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States of America, as well as the information on long-term developments in railway passenger and freight traffic presented by the representative of the UIC. It noted that rail freight and passenger transport trends have differed from one country to another in the past few years with more pronounced growth in some and slower growth or stagnation recorded in other countries. However, the Working Party noted that in almost all countries reporting on future trends, expectations were high in favour of more robust growth of freight and passenger transport. Following the restructuring of the rail sector in a number of countries, the Working Party noted the growing need to analyse various aspects and available experiences of those countries where the infrastructure management and transport operations were separated earlier.

12. To this end, the Working Party agreed to ask Governments to provide information for its session in 2005 on the following questions:

- (a) data on past and future developments of rail passenger and goods traffic;
- (b) new developments to be observed subsequent to the reorganization of the rail sector with special attention to the setting-up of new railway companies; and,
- (c) investments in (i) rail infrastructure and (ii) railway rolling stock.

13. The Working Party also recalled its decision at the fifty-sixth session, to collect from member Governments, the EC, UIC and OSZhD, for its 2004 session, the information on: (a) safety in railway transport; (b) environmental questions related to railway operations; and (c) introduction of new transport technologies and application of modern techniques to railway operations, in particular regarding the interface between rail transport and other transport modes.

DETERMINATION OF RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY INCLUDING ASPECTS RELATED TO THE FEE FOR THE USE OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/7.

14. The Working Party appreciated the report from the European Commission on the implementation of the Directive 2001/14/EC on the allocation of railway infrastructure capacity and the levying of charges for the use of railway infrastructure. The Working Party considered the information on progress with the implementation of the Directive in EU Member States and noted that the task force composed of representatives from eight EU Member States attempted to identify (between December 2001 and April 2002) the best practice concerning the implementation of the provisions on infrastructure charging that other Member States, yet to implement the Directive, could follow. The Working Party asked the secretariat to request from the European Commission the report of the above-mentioned task force and to make it available to the Working Party at its next session.

15. In addition, the Working Party asked the secretariat, in collaboration with EC DGTREN, to continue providing information on the progress made in the application of EC Directive 2001/14/EC and report thereon to its next session.

PRODUCTIVITY IN RAIL TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/8 and Add.1; Informal document No. 7.

16. The Working Party examined the replies to the secretariat's questionnaire on qualitative indicators of rail productivity. It noted that a number of member countries had provided the data and that, in spite of discrepancies in international comparisons, the available data provided, to a certain extent, a useful indicator on the performance of member countries' railways. The Working Party further noted that the search for simple and easy to interpret qualitative productivity indicators should continue. From now on, in searching for appropriate indicators, it will be important to make a distinction between the productivity of railway infrastructure and the productivity of railway operations.

17. The Working Party agreed that the usefulness of the data for international comparisons could further be enhanced by streamlining the definitions of indicators used. To that end, the Working Party asked the secretariat to organize an ad hoc informal meeting in collaboration with the UIC, the TER PCO, representatives of the EC and other interested parties and to inform the Working Party about the outcome of such a meeting at its next session. The objective of the meeting will be to identify which of the qualitative indicators used for productivity data collection could be used for future benchmarking of railway sector productivity on the European level. The Working Party further asked the secretariat to prepare and circulate a revised version of the questionnaire and asked member Governments, which have not yet done so, to reply to the questionnaire on railway productivity for passenger and freight transport with the data for 2003.

FACILITATION OF BORDER CROSSING IN INTERNATIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT

- (a) Monitoring of progress made in the facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/9.

18. The Working Party took note of the results of the third round of the annual monitoring of the border crossing in international rail transport on selected border stations. It emphasized that the focus of monitoring should not only be on finding ways to shorten and eliminate the excess time spent on border crossing procedures, but also on possibilities for shortening the scheduled stopping time for border controls. The Working Party further emphasized the relevance of the collection of this information for the related work in ECMT and OSZhD. The Working Party asked the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) to reiterate its request to member countries to make efforts to comply with the Committee's resolution No. 248 of 1999 which calls for the reduction of the border stopping-time of shuttle trains in international traffic and to limit their overall waiting time at borders to 60 minutes (30 minutes for each of the neighbouring countries). The Working Party also asked the secretariat to prepare a report summarizing results of the data collection and to request the feedback information from involved countries. It also asked the Governments of all member countries to provide the information on reduction of actual stopping-time and compliance with the Inland Transport Committee resolution No. 248 for all border crossing stations on the AGC lines on their respective territories.

19. The Working Party noted that the 6th Intergovernmental Meeting of representatives of border, customs, railway and other official bodies of the OSZhD member countries took place from 21-23 October 2003. It also took note that the Meeting adopted the Declaration, which among other decisions, called for the convening of an international meeting on facilitation of border crossing in international railway transport in 2005 under the auspices of the UNECE. This meeting will also have a bearing on further development of Euro-Asian railway links.

20 Reiterating its decision from the fifty-sixth session on the need to convene such an international meeting to deal with the railway border crossing facilitation issues involving all relevant authorities (railways, customs, police and other involved authorities), the Working Party underlined that such a meeting would need to be thoroughly prepared and carefully planned. In order to advance planning of such a meeting, the Working Party asked the OSZhD to transmit the conclusions of the 6th Intergovernmental Meeting of representatives of border, customs, railway and other official bodies of the OSZhD member countries meeting to the secretariat.

(b) Border-crossing facilitation project in the SECI (South-east European Co-operative Initiative) region

21. The Working Party took note of the report from the secretariat on the progress made by the SECI Ad hoc Working Group on the facilitation of border stopping-times of shuttle trains, and asked the secretariat to report on new developments also at its next session.

THE ROLE OF RAILWAYS IN PROMOTION OF COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/10; TRANS/SC.2/2003/11 and Add.1; Informal document No.6.

22. The Working Party took note of the European Community report on the status of implementation of its Directive 2001/16/EC on the interoperability of the trans-European conventional rail system. It further noted reports by Belarus, Finland, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom on the provision of the high-quality services offered by railways to combined transport operators, and the report by the delegate from Romania on the development of combined transport in her country.

23. Noting also the importance of the expected adoption of the EC Technical specifications for interoperability (TSI) of conventional railways in spring 2004 for non-EU member countries, the Working Party invited the European Commission to report again on the status of application of Directive 2001/16/EC at its next session.

HARMONIZATION OF CONDITIONS OF DIFFERENT LEGAL RAIL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

Documentation: Informal document No. 3.

24. The Working Party also took note of the work of OTIF and OSZhD on further harmonization of conditions of different legal rail transport systems. Emphasizing the importance of their work towards fuller harmonization of different legal rail systems, the

Working Party asked OTIF and OSZhD to report on their activities at its next session. The Working Party further decided to consider the aspects related to interoperability under the new agenda item: “Interoperability and Harmonization of conditions of different rail transport systems” at its future sessions.

25. The Working Party also noted the information by the representative of OTIF about the Conference on International Railway Law (21-22 October 2003, Kiev) organized jointly with the European Community (EC) and the Government of Ukraine. The objective of the Conference was to promote the international railway transport governed by two different railway legal systems. In addition, the Working Party was informed that Ukraine will become the forty-second member country of the OTIF. Also, the adhesion of the EC to COTIF is now expected to come into force in 2005, as well as the Protocol of the Convention on acquisition and financing of railway rolling stock and mobile equipment, being jointly prepared by the OTIF and UNIDROIT.

EUROPEAN AGREEMENT ON MAIN INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY LINES (AGC)

(a) Situation regarding the application of the AGC

26. The Working Party recalled decision F (43) adopted at the forty-third session of the Commission inviting "the Governments of ECE member States to consider taking all necessary steps in order to become Parties to the AGC" (E/1988/36-E/ECE/1170, chapter IV) and noted that the following countries were at present Parties to the AGC, bringing the total number of Contracting Parties to 24: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bosnia and Herzegovina (succession); Bulgaria; Croatia (succession); Czech Republic (succession); France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Poland; Republic of Moldova (succession); Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia and Montenegro; Slovakia (succession); Slovenia (succession); The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (succession); Turkey; Ukraine.

27. The Working Party noted the situation with respect to the application of the AGC Agreement in member countries and invited those Governments which had not yet acceded to the Agreement to examine the possibility of doing so.

(b) Amendments proposed to Annex I of the AGC Agreement

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/12.

28. The Working Party took note of the amendments by the Republic of Moldova and proposals by Austria and Slovakia and approved, with amendments, the updated version of Annex I of the AGC (TRANS/SC.2/2003/12), and asked the secretariat to reproduce a consolidated version of the Agreement.

(c) Data collecting efforts on the AGC network

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/13.

29. The Working Party took note of the data on total train traffic on the AGC network in 2000 and, further noting their potential use for transport planning and similar purposes, asked

Governments, which had not yet done so, to provide for its next session data on total passenger, goods and service train traffic on the AGC network on their respective territories in 2000. It also asked the secretariat to provide a summary document on total traffic on the AGC network in 2000 for all reporting countries for its next session.

30. Further recalling the ECE resolution No. 66, Revision 2 - Recommendations concerning the system of marshalling yards of major European importance (TRANS/SC.2/165/Rev.2), which requests the periodical inclusion of the question of the implementation of this resolution in the agenda of the Working Party on Rail Transport, the Working Party agreed to include this question in the agenda of its 2005 session. To this end, the secretariat was asked to circulate the above-mentioned resolution No. 66, Revision 2 to all member countries, including the Caucasus and Central Asian member countries, whose railway network had not been included in the AGC at the time of the adoption of the resolution and whose marshalling yards had, therefore, not been incorporated in annex 1 of resolution 66, Revision 2.

(d) Safety provisions in long rail tunnels

Documentation: TRANS/AC.9/8.

31. The Working Party took note of the information from the secretariat on progress in the work of the Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group of Experts on Safety in Tunnels (rail) and emphasized the importance of a timely-presentation of the Guidelines for Safety in Railway Tunnels. Noting that the Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group will complete the final draft of their Recommendations and submit it to the 2004 session of the Inland Transport Committee, the Working Party decided not to revert to this issue at its next session.

TRANS-EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER) PROJECT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/14.

32. The Working Party took note of the annual TER report introduced by the UNECE/TER Project Manager. It asked to be kept informed of new developments also at its forthcoming session.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF RAILWAY TRANSPORT

33. The Working Party appreciated information on research activities in the field of railway transport provided by member Governments and the UIC, as well as the information on the Rail Research Work Programme of the European Commission and related work of the European Rail Research Advisory Council (ERRAC). It noted that a considerable share of railway-related research activities still focused on technical and technological aspects of railway operations, including new technologies, environmental features, safety, etc. The Working Party suggested that the future research should also consider examining the consequences and effects of restructuring, privatization and other organizational and management changes in the sector. The Working Party invited member Governments and international organizations to report again on research activities in the field of railway transport at its session in 2005.

RAILWAY SAFETY: RISK ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

34. The Working Party considered the information on risk assessment techniques provided by member Governments. It noted that development of adequate methodologies for risk assessment techniques represents an important contribution to ensuring better safety in railway transport, which, in turn, constitutes one of the essential aspects of the quality of service in railway transport. Bearing in mind the importance of these considerations, the Working Party asked the secretariat to again collect this information from Governments for its 2005 session.

USE OF GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS) IN THE RAILWAY SECTOR

35. The Working Party welcomed the presentation of the Galileo satellite radio navigation system by the representative of the Galileo Joint Undertaking (Brussels). It appreciated the detailed information on various aspects of its development and, in particular, possible areas of application of Galileo in the railway sector. The Working Party also noted information from several member countries on national experiences with the use of the global positioning system in their railway sector, and agreed to consider this item again in 2005.

APPLICATION OF SUMMER TIME

36. In order to continue the monitoring of summer time arrangements, the Working Party asked Governments to provide the secretariat with information on this item, only if any changes to the EU's Directive 2000/84/EC (summer time starts at 1 a.m. UT on the last Sunday of March and ends at 1 a.m. UT on the last Sunday of October) are made, or if they do not comply with the Directive.

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2004-2008

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/2003/2.

37. The Working Party amended and adopted its draft programme of work as reproduced in the annex to this report.

OTHER BUSINESS

38. The Working Party agreed that, pending approval by the Inland Transport Committee, the first Joint meeting of the ECMT Group on Railways and the UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport would be hosted by the UNECE and held in Geneva, tentatively from 27-29 October 2004. The UNECE segment would be held from 27-28 October 2004 and the ECMT segment on 29 October 2004.

39. It was also recalled that the SC.2 website could be consulted at <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/sc2/sc2.html> . The website contains the reports, agenda of forthcoming session, major publications and working documents. To facilitate and accelerate the publication by the secretariat of working documents for the SC.2 sessions, delegates were invited, whenever possible, to send their submissions for SC.2 sessions by e-mail: helmut.lehmacher@unece.org or miodrag.pesut@unece.org .

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE SESSIONS OF THE WORKING PARTY IN 2004 AND 2005

40. The Working Party elected Mr. F. Croccolo (Italy) as the Chairman and Mr. M. Radl (Austria) as the Vice-Chairman for its sessions in 2004 and 2005.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

41. In accordance with the decision taken by the Working Party at its fifty-second session (TRANS/SC.2/190, para. 6), a list of decisions taken during the session will be adopted at the end of the session and the report will be established by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman with the assistance of the secretariat.

42. The decisions adopted by the Working Party during the session are contained in the following paragraphs of this report: 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40 and 41.

Annex**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK 2004-2008****PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.5: RAIL TRANSPORT****02.5.1 RAIL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE**Priority: 1

I. Review of the situation concerning the implementation and possible amendments to the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC)

Description: Study of possibilities for the improvement of international rail transport.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Rail Transport will carry out the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Consideration of the AGC Agreement with a view to possibly: implementing and, whenever feasible, improving existing standards and operational parameters; taking into account new east-west traffic flows; raising environmental, energy and safety standards; taking into account the ECE Conventions on the Environment.
Output expected: Report on amendment of the AGC network; Report on the development of a European conventional and high-speed railway network. ~~(2003)~~(2004)
Priority: 1
- (b) Consideration of the influence of intermodal transport techniques, especially those concerning investment, as well as the harmonization of rolling stock and speed on railways to facilitate the integration of these techniques into the railway system and to create general interoperability.
Output expected: Report on investment in rail infrastructure and railway rolling stock in member countries. ~~(2003)~~(2005)
Priority: 2
- (c) Periodic review of the list of marshalling yards of international importance with a view to cutting down their numbers.
Output expected: Updated report on the location of important marshalling yards within the European railway network. (2005)
Priority: 2
- (d) As a follow-up to the Conference on Transport and the Environment, development and implementation of programmes to build up an efficient European Rail Freight Network by improving and promoting the:
- modernization and extension of rail and combined transport infrastructure;
 - interoperability and coordination between rail systems;
 - upgrade and wider use of environment-friendly rolling stock;
 - logistics and services;
 - establishment of international rail freight companies.

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (e) Periodically survey passenger and goods traffic on the various sections of lines of the AGC network in order to provide support for transport planning; the third survey is based on data for 2000.
Output expected: Report on total train traffic on the AGC network in 2000. ~~(2003)~~**(2004)**.
Rail census in 2005. Priority: 2
- (f) Consideration of questions concerning safety in railways tunnels.
Output expected: Report on the current situation and prospects for the development of new standards. ~~(2003)~~**(2004)** Priority: 2
- (g) Consideration of developments regarding new railway initiatives on Euro-Asian transport links (e.g. organization of demonstration trains).
Output expected: Report on the current and new initiatives. ~~(2003)~~**(2004)** Priority: 2

II. *Special project: Trans-European Railway (TER)*

Description: Within the framework of the UNECE, the TER countries have established an appropriate administrative and financial framework, with the aim of developing a rail network as part of an integrated European international rail system.

Work to be undertaken

- (a) Consideration of specific project developments to promote international rail traffic. (Continuing)
Output expected: Annual progress report on activities carried out within the TER project. Priority: 1
- (b) Consideration of possibilities for financing of TER in order to promote the upgrading and construction of internationally important rail lines. (Continuing) Priority: ~~3~~ 2
- (c) Consideration of possible utilization of the results achieved under the project in other UNECE activities in the field of rail infrastructure including the implementation of AGC and AGTC in order to benefit from mutual experiences. (Continuing) Priority: 2

III. *Interregional Cooperation*

Description: Cooperation with other regional commissions and international bodies involved in the development of interregional links.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party will be kept informed of exchanges of information between the secretariats of the regional commissions and other international bodies in order to benefit from experiences gained in other regions of the world. (Continuing) Priority: 3

**02.5.2 HARMONIZATION OF REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY TRANSPORT INCLUDING
RAIL SAFETY AND FACILITATION OF ITS OPERATIONS**

Priority: 1

Description:

- (i) Simplification and harmonization of administrative formalities, particularly, for documents and procedures at border crossing.
- (ii) Harmonization of and search for standardized requirements concerning the utilization of railway infrastructure including computerization aspects.
- (iii) Elaboration of proposals and preparation of studies aimed at strengthening, consolidating and extending the position of rail transport on international transport markets.
- (iv) Analysis of problems relating to the harmonization and improvement of rail safety.
- (v) Consideration of prospects for the adoption of legal regulations applicable to the contract for the transport of goods and passengers by rail so as to establish a standard legal system (harmonization of the SMGS/SMPS and CIM/CIV systems).

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Rail Transport will carry out the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Consideration of specific difficulties encountered at border crossings in the transport of passengers and goods by rail with a view to accelerating border crossing operations and establishing a programme to deal with problems common to several routes.
Output expected: Report on bi- and multilateral contacts of Governments and railways to improve the crossing of borders in international rail traffic. ~~(2003)~~**(2004)** Priority: 1
- (b) Consideration of follow-up of the implementation of recommendations and preparation of new texts or amendments to existing texts, if necessary, notably concerning the facilitation of border crossing with the aim to improve international rail traffic.
Priority: 1
- (c) Review of requirements concerning railway operations and regulations, reduction of transport time and improvement in the precision of movements in the international carriage of goods, new operative developments in rail transport, the integration of services of different railways.
Priority: 2
- (d) The study of the possibilities for harmonizing the application and periods of summer time with a view to upgrading transport quality in rail transport.
Output expected: Report on the application of summer time. ~~(2003)~~**(2004)** Priority: 3

- (e) Analysis of Government policies concerning rail safety to contribute to an improvement of safety in international transport.

Output expected: Report on safety and implementation of risk assessment techniques in rail transport in the ECE region. (~~2003~~) (2005) Priority: 1

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (f) Analysis of the various elements of productivity in rail transport and the possibilities to increase rail productivity in particular for international transport.

Output expected: Bi-annual report on the development of productivity in rail transport in member countries. (2004) Priority: 2

- (g) Consideration on the basis of reports by the international organizations concerned of the progress accomplished on the harmonization of legal regulations applicable to the contract for the transport of goods and passengers by rail to examine whether the compatibility of the regulation concerned can be ensured.

Output expected: Report by international organizations concerned on the progress made in the elimination of difficulties arising from different legal systems in international rail transport. (2004) Priority: 3
