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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

(Sixty-eighth session, 7-9 February 2006
agenda item 2)

RESULTS OF THE COMMITTEE'S BUREAU MEETINGS

In accordance with the decision taken by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) at its sixty-seventh session (ECE/TRANS/162, para. 135), its Bureau met on 18 February 2005, 3 June 2005, and 29-30 November 2005. The reports of the Bureau's meetings are reproduced below for consideration by the Committee. The Committee may wish to discuss the questions in greater detail under the respective items of the agenda.

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Annex 3

LIST OF DECISIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU HELD ON 29 - 30 NOVEMBER 2005

ATTENDANCE

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee was chaired by Mr. Peter Päßgen (Germany) and was attended by the following members: Mrs. Konstantina Kosmidou (Greece), Mr. José Alberto Franco (Portugal), Ms. Gabriela Constantinescu (Romania), Mr. Evgeny Mokeev (Russian Federation), Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly (Switzerland), Mr. Vehbi Esgel Etensel (Turkey), and Mr. Christian Dufour (European Commission). The representatives of Belarus, France, Poland and Ukraine were unable to attend.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda TRANS/BUR.2005/5 as prepared by the secretariat without modifications.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

a) Comprehensive evaluation of the UNECE

3. The Bureau:

- was informed about the status of the UNECE reform process and had an exchange of views on its implications for the work of the Committee;
- noted the requests made to the Committee as specified in document E/ECE/1434, in paras. 22 to 28 and more specifically paras. 35 to 39 and 53;
- welcomed the redeployment of two additional posts to the Transport Division, as reflected in para. 105 of document E/ECE/1434, expecting the approval of the UNECE biennial budget by the Administrative and Budgetary Committee, 5th Committee, of the UN General Assembly;
- decided to ask the Committee members to ensure that their respective capitals and Permanent Missions in New York lend full support, in the budget negotiations in the 5th Committee, to the UNECE reform as adopted by member Governments in Geneva and, in particular, to the above-mentioned redeployment of posts to the Transport Division;
- recommended to the Committee to have a discussion at its next session on the implications of the reform process on its future work.

b) Biennial evaluation by PSB's

4. The Bureau:

- recalled the recommendation of the Commission that Principal Subsidiary Bodies review biennially their intergovernmental structure, including related advisory groups, and considered that this request had apparently been superseded by the ongoing UNECE reform;
- decided to draw the attention of the Committee to the request to revise of the UNECE reform work plan its intergovernmental structure at its session in February 2007;
- bearing in mind that guidelines to this end are forthcoming, the Bureau recommended to the Committee that upon their completion, it mandates the Bureau with the cooperation of the secretariat to undertake such evaluation for consideration by the Committee in 2007.

c) UNECE cooperation with OSCE and contribution to the Fourteenth OSCE Economic Forum

5. The Bureau:

- was informed about the decision of the OSCE Permanent Council to designate Transport as the central theme of the 14th OSCE Economic Forum to be held in 2006;
- noting the cooperation between the UNECE and OSCE so far, as well as the MOU signed between the UNECE and OSCE, and emphasizing the importance of such cooperation, the Bureau encouraged the secretariat to take part in the forthcoming OSCE Economic Forum and contribute a document on substantive transport issues within the competences of the Committee, with a view to both having substantive statements on transport under control and providing political visibility to the Committee's work and promoting its implementation.

ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY

6. The Bureau:

- welcomed UN General Assembly resolution of 26 October 2005 on improving global road traffic safety and expressed satisfaction at the recognition of the work of WP.1 continued in that resolution;
- recommended to the Committee to support the First UN Global Road Safety Week in 2007, to be jointly organized with other UN Regional Commissions and the WHO;

- recommended to the WP.1 to intensify its activity on updating and completing its Consolidated Resolutions with a view to issuing them during the First UN Global Road Safety Week which will be held in 2007;
- also recommended to the Committee to invite member Governments to actively participate in activities during the Global Road Safety Week, and launch national road safety campaigns on that occasion;
- asked the secretariat to prepare a draft resolution for the First UN Global Road Safety Week for consideration and adoption by the Committee;
- emphasized the need for sending common messages on the various road safety issues and therefore the closest possible cooperation with WHO;
- recommended to the Committee to support organization of the Film Festival scheduled to take place in March 2006 back-to-back with the next session of the WP.1.

CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS OF THE AGENDA OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

7. The Bureau commented upon the following items of the agenda:

a) Transport and Security

8. The Bureau:

- recommended to the Committee to take into account the conclusions from the Round Table on Transport Security when discussing the agenda item of transport and security.

b) Road traffic safety

9. The Bureau:

- considered an invitation made orally by ESCAP to the WP.1 to hold its autumn 2006 session at the ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok and requested the secretariat to inquire about the current state of such an invitation;
- recognizing the global scope of the WP.1 activities and emphasizing the importance of involving ESCAP in these activities, but aware also of the logistic implications of holding the WP.1 session in Bangkok, the Bureau requested the Committee to take a position on this matter at its next session.

c) Facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport

10. The Bureau:

- recommended to the Committee to strongly support any appropriate action, including the International Conference scheduled to be jointly organized by UNECE and OSJD.

d) European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)

11. The Bureau:

- agreed to a proposal of the Chairman of WP.15 to resume the seventy-ninth session of WP.15 on 26 and 27 January 2006 in order to finalize work on the transport of dangerous goods in road tunnels, so that it can be incorporated in the newly adopted amendments to Annexes A and B of ADR.

e) Draft Programme of Work for 2006-2010

12. The Bureau:

- decided to postpone discussion on the Programme of Work until its next session on 6 February 2006, as several Working Parties had not yet finalized their Programmes of Work.

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION**a) TEM and TER Master Plan**

13. The Bureau:

- welcomed the completion of the TEM and TER Master Plan;
- noted that it identified the backbone road and rail networks in 21 Central, Eastern and South Eastern European countries and outlined an investment strategy to develop them;
- welcomed its presentation by the secretariat to the EU High Level Group at its 7th Plenary session on 25 October 2006;
- recommended to the Committee that it encourages the TEM and TER Projects to promote the follow up to the Master Plan, including monitoring its implementation and regular updating.

b) UN Development Account Project on developing Euro-Asian Links

14. The Bureau:

- welcomed the progress made in the joint implementation of the Project by UNECE and UNESCAP, in particular, in the identification of the main Euro-Asian road, rail and inland water links to be considered for priority development, as well as of the main trans-shipment points;
- expressed gratitude to the Government of Turkey for hosting the Third Expert Group Meeting in Istanbul in June 2005;
- encouraged the secretariat to continue the further development of the Project, including the identification of border crossing difficulties and measures to address them;
- asked the secretariat to explore all possibilities for ensuring the continuation of the project beyond 2006;
- emphasized once more the need for seeking close cooperation with the EU and ECMT.

c) Creation of a project similar to TEM and TER Project in the Caucasus and Central Asian region

15. The Bureau:

- was informed about the consultations of the secretariat with the countries concerned on a hitherto more informal level and noted the financial and other difficulties pointed out by some countries as obstacles to the creation of such a project;
- noted that all three Caucasus countries are now TEM and TER members, therefore the new sub-regional project should consider the Central Asian region only;
- asked the secretariat to pursue its consultations both with countries concerned, especially those of Central Asia, and with potential donors for the possible creation of the project.

d) Facilitation of participation of Caucasus and Central Asian countries in meetings of the ITC and selected subsidiary bodies

16. The Bureau:

- noted that altogether 52 national delegates from Caucasus and Central Asian countries had participated to date in a total of 10 meetings of the ITC and Subsidiary bodies, and that several more delegates will be attending the next ITC meeting under this project;

- recommended to the Committee to express gratitude to the European Union for having co-funded this project;
- stressed the importance of participation of Caucasus and Central Asian countries in the work of the Committee and recommended to the Committee to invite the European Union to continue co-funding this project in future.

e) **Advisory Workshop in the SEE sub-region**

17. The Bureau:

- supported the holding of the Advisory Workshop to be held in Thessaloniki on 19-20 December 2005 to the intention of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro and thanked the Government of Greece for hosting it.

f) **Digital tachograph**

18. The Bureau:

- Noted the information provided by the Russian Federation, according to which the Seminar on this issue is scheduled for 2 and 3 March 2006 in Moscow.

g) **Facilitation of international rail border crossing procedures**

19. The Bureau:

- recommended to the Committee to endorse the proposed strategy devised as follow-up to the ECMT Council of Ministers, Moscow 05, while underscoring the importance of any effort aimed at improving border crossing facilitation;
- stressed the importance of the unification of pan-European railway law and of the development of a common pan-European Customs rail transit system.

TRANSPORT AND SECURITY

20. The Bureau:

- approved the programme of the Round Table on transport and security to be held during the 68th session of the Committee;
- asked the secretariat to actively publicize the forthcoming Round Table and to invite Member countries to ensure the most adequate representation at the Round Table, both in terms of the level and the profile of participants;
- discussed arrangements with a view to giving more time for discussion.

TRANSPORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

21. The Bureau:

- noted the progress made by UNECE, ESCWA, ESCAP and ECA in the development of other interregional transport links, including Mediterranean transport links, under the UNDA Project.

OTHER BUSINESS

22. The Bureau:

- expressed its discontent with the length of the procedure for filling the post of secretary of the Bureau and of the Committee, following the retirement of the previous incumbent in July 2005;
 - was informed by the Romanian delegate of the forthcoming meeting of BSEC Ministers of Transport on 15 March 2006 and of the preparations for the Pan-European Conference on inland navigation to be held on 13-14 September 2006 in Romania;
 - aware that elections for the Bureau will be held at the ITC session in February 2006, and bearing in mind the future need for frequent attendance to meetings of the UNECE Executive Committee, noted with appreciation the readiness of Switzerland to assist the future chairman of ITC in the special tasks mentioned above, and recommended to the Committee to consider favourably this proposal;
 - noted that its next meeting will be held on 6 February 2006.
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