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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Twenty-second meeting
Geneva, 20 March 2008

**DECISION ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE
COMMITTEE ON INLAND TRANSPORT**

Establishment of a Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links

Note by the secretariat

1. At its seventieth session (19-21 February 2008), the Inland Transport Committee adopted the establishment of a Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links and its Terms of Reference. The Committee requested its approval by the Executive Committee.
2. The Terms of Reference of the Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links have been prepared in line with the UNECE Guidelines for the Establishment and Functioning of Teams of Specialists within the UNECE (ECE/EX/2). The expert group is to ensure monitoring and coordination of the activities aimed at developing efficient, safe and secure Euro-Asian inland transport links. The group would function under the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) as an ad hoc Group of Experts for a period of two years (2008-2009) with possible further extension if necessary.

3. The expert group will be established without the need for additional resources. Support work will be provided within the existing capacity of the UNECE secretariat. The resources of the United Nations Office at Geneva will be used for translation and conference services.
4. The Executive Committee is invited to approve the establishment of the Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links according to the attached Terms of Reference.

ANNEX**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE
GROUP OF EXPERTS ON EURO-ASIAN TRANSPORT LINKS**

1. The Group of Experts will ensure monitoring and coordination of the activities aimed at developing efficient, safe and secure Euro-Asian inland transport links.
2. Based on existing resources of the secretariat, along with the additional financial support provided by participating countries, and by other international organizations and bodies concerned, and in close collaboration with the UNESCAP secretariat, the Group would ensure the continuation of efforts and promotion of cooperation along the lines, objectives and tasks reflected in the joint UNECE-UNESCAP proposal for a new Phase II of the Euro-Asian Transport Links Project and the recommendations contained in the relevant UNECE-UNESCAP study.
3. The Group will support the continuation and further strengthening of the UNECE-UNESCAP joint work on the establishment and maintenance of the information base containing information on initiatives, activities and projects related to the development of Euro-Asian transport links, as well as completing and updating the Euro-Asian Transport Links database on priority infrastructure investments.
4. The Group will support the implementation of identified priority projects and promote the inclusion of all identified Euro-Asian Transport Links routes in the respective international network agreements.
5. Together with national authorities and in consultation with the private sector, the Group will address obstacles to the smooth movement of goods across international borders, and continue further strengthening capacity of national officials from various agencies dealing with border-crossing formalities and procedures.
6. The Group will promote the accession to and the effective implementation of UNECE, UNESCAP and other relevant international legal instruments relating to transport facilitation; support the establishment/strengthening of appropriate national trade and transport facilitation mechanisms; share experience and best practices amongst concerned countries, and assess and monitor regularly the progress achieved at the major border-crossing points along the Euro-Asian transport routes.
7. It is proposed that the Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links should be composed of national focal points/experts nominated by the member States of the UNECE and UNESCAP involved in the UNECE-UNESCAP Project on developing Euro-Asian transport links, jointly elaborated by UNECE and UNESCAP in the course of 2003-2007, and funded through the United Nations Development Account, as well as experts from other UNECE-UNESCAP member countries interested in being associated with it, and of concerned international governmental and non-governmental organizations, having experience in various aspects relevant to its work.

8. The Group is expected to start its work in February 2008, pending approval by the UNECE Executive Committee and terminate by the end of 2009 with the submission of a report of its accomplishments. The results of the Group's work will be reported to the UNECE Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics and to the Inland Transport Committee.

9. The Group of Experts would work in conjunction with the implementation of Phase II of the Euro-Asian Transport Links Project.

10. The Group of Experts would be assisted in its work by the UNECE secretariat. The UNESCAP secretariat would be invited to join efforts and assist in the work.
