



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
18 December 2012

Original: English

---

## Economic Commission for Europe

### Inland Transport Committee

#### Seventy-fifth session

Geneva, 26–28 February 2013

Item 14 of the provisional agenda

#### Developments related to the work of the International Transport Forum

### Developments related to the work of the International Transport Forum

#### Note by the secretariat

##### *Summary*

The note provides the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) (i) with a brief review of some of the main activities and results of the International Transport Forum (ITF) in the course of 2012 relevant for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE); and (ii) with information about the cooperation between ITF and UNECE. It is intended to supplement the oral information provided by the representative of ITF at the seventy-fifth session of the Committee.

1. The 2012 ITF's annual summit "Seamless Transport: Making Connections" was yet another opportunity for transport Ministers from 52 member countries to engage in a global conversation on the road map for twenty-first century transport. Together with business decision makers, civil society leaders and top academics, Ministers exchanged views, inter alia, on the future of passengers and freight transport, urban connectivity, seamless logistics, connectivity across borders and ways to create seamless logistics and freight travel, as well as the use of new technologies for seamless passenger travel. In a series of round tables, Ministers tackled questions such as: the automotive future, safety of cruise ships, piracy at sea and connections between air, road, shipping and rail. Session summaries, special reports, discussion papers as well as key messages from Ministers and other material can be downloaded from the ITF web site: <http://2012.internationaltransportforum.org/>

2. The UNECE presence at the 2012 summit was marked by a round table on E-documents for Co-modal Transport of Goods, organized by the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA) and the European Liaison Committee

(CLECAT). The director of the UNECE Transport Division moderated the first session; UNECE also participated in the debate on the role of and challenges for the simplification and digitalization of transport documents. The new joint UNECE and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) publication “Best Practice at Border Crossings: A Trade and Transport Facilitation Perspective” was presented at a very well attended side event, jointly organized by OSCE and UNECE. The views on border crossing challenges in member countries as well as assessing the relevance and usefulness of the new publication was highlighted by Ms. Didem Dirlik, Head of Department, Ministry of Customs and Trade, Turkey and Mr. Igor Makhovikov, Head of Department, State Customs Committee, Belarus. UNECE had an exhibition stand where the latest publications (Transport for Sustainable Development, Handbook on Best Practice at Border Crossings: A Trade and Transport Facilitation Perspective, White Book on Inland Navigation, Road Safety Spectrum, etc.) attracted considerable attention. In addition, presence at the summit offered the opportunity for bilateral discussions with representatives from UNECE and ITF member countries, international organizations, private sector representatives and civil society organizations.

3. The quality of the ITF Summit was again very high in terms of visibility and public relations. ITF as an organization has continued to deliver excellent publications. The new ITF strategy presents the organization as an international intergovernmental organization at the level of ministers and at the same time a think tank on transport policy. In summary, ITF is an annual event where UNECE can scale up its transport policy work as well as its technical regulations to political attention, can reach out to the transport industry and partly to leading transport policy thinkers.

4. Mr. José Viegas (Portugal) took office as the new Secretary-General of the International Transport Forum in August 2012. Mr. Viegas had been elected by ministers from Forum member countries at their Summit in May 2012. As a professor of civil engineering at the University of Lisbon and Chair of TIS.pt, a transport consultancy firm, he has ample experience in working in the transport sector and in collaborative work across countries and economic sectors.

5. In 2013, the annual Forum will take place from 22–24 May and the focus will be on “Funding Transport”. Preparations are underway. In preparing for the summit, the Forum will draw upon the Research Centre, special ad hoc project groups and policy networks, as well as on consultations with stakeholders.

6. UNECE plans to actively participate in the forthcoming 2013 Summit. Although the details are not yet finalized, a number of ideas are under consideration that will highlight the UNECE transport work. Among the most likely options to be presented are not only our latest studies “Transport Development Index”, “Cultural differences and road safety”, “The United Nations Motorcycle Helmet Study”, but also the results of the Euro-Asian Transport Links Project, results of the work on the Almaty Program of Action for landlocked countries, the work on unified railway law and the result of the recent activities of The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) related to urban transport and sustainable mobility.

7. In May 2012, ITF published “Transport Outlook 2012 – Seamless Transport for Greener Growth”. The Transport Outlook examines a number of plausible policy scenarios including the potential effects of prices and mobility policies that are less car-oriented in urban settings. Also in May 2012, the ITF published “Seamless Transport: Case Study Compendium” in which member countries and international organizations working in the field of transport presented examples of good practice in seamless transport as an input to the 2012 Summit. Case studies submitted by countries covered all modes of transport and contain various types of policy approaches including infrastructure investment, cross-sectoral arrangements, regulatory initiatives, technological innovations, and intermodal

connections. In addition, in September 2012, the ITF published “Trends in the Transport Sector 1970–2010”. This publication presents data on global trends in the transport sector with up-to-date figures on the impact of the recent economic crisis.

8. In the course of 2012, ITF published several policy briefs. “Electric Cars: Ready for prime time?” highlights evidence on the costs to consumers and society of purchasing battery electric cars instead of equivalent fossil-fuelled cars and assesses the justification for purchase subsidies. It is based on a detailed cost comparison for vehicles currently on sale in the French market and discusses the impact of the €5,000 “prime” for electric cars. “Smart Grids and Electric Vehicles: Made for each other?” looks at the potential of Smart Grids and electric vehicles to change and improve electricity systems worldwide. Finally, Policy Brief “Towards Seamless Public”, following the seminar organized with the Korean Transport Institute, examines considerations from the user, operator, and governmental point of view and suggests several policy-relevant conclusions.

9. The issues regarding the Multilateral Quota System are the core responsibility of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) Working Group on Road Transport. The Group also deals with the regional aspects of road transport. In 2012, the Group continued its regular work on the management of the Multilateral Quota of freight transport licences. It oversees distribution of licences by the member countries and monitors compliance with the rules of Quota functioning. The latest guide on the ECMT Multilateral Quota 2009 features new model certificates: Certificate of Compliance with Technical Provisions Concerning Exhaust and Noise Emissions and Safety Requirements for EURO III safe, EURO IV safe or EURO V safe Motor Vehicle, Certificate of Safety for a Trailer and Certificate of Roadworthiness Test for Motor Vehicles and Trailers. In addition, the guide briefly describes the aims of the Multilateral Quota System and outlines the main rules of its functioning. The guide will be revised following the introduction of EURO VI vehicle category into the system in 2014. As mandated by Ministers, the Group is also studying options for the future development of the Multilateral Quota System and its restructuring with a view to adopting a new distribution of the Multilateral Quota of licences to member countries from 2013 and onwards. The Group is also developing a long-term strategic vision, based on the 2005 agreed guidelines, as well as earlier statements, made by Ministers. The Group on Road Transport renewed its work on social aspects in road transport, with a focus on four specific areas: (i) admission to the occupation; (ii) driving and rest times; (iii) categorization of infringements; and, (iv) driver training. A subgroup, with the help of the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the European Commission (EC), is currently developing a framework for this activity over the next two years. The aim is to promote the highest quality transport on a social level, as one of the main pillars of the Multilateral Quota System development.

10. In this connection, it is worth remembering that the terms of reference of the UNECE Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) call on member countries (i) to promote the facilitation and development of international transport by road (goods and passengers) through the harmonization and simplification of the rules and requirements relating to it and the administrative procedures and documentation to which such transport is subject, and (ii) to promote the harmonization of taxation and other measures in order to prevent discriminatory practices in international road transport. A recent UNECE study on the openness of international road freight transport markets in the ECE region is a useful contribution to promote the policy dialogue also in this context. Special attention will need to be paid to ensure the possible synergies between the ongoing work of (SC.1) and the planned new activities of the ECMT Working Group on Road Transport.

11. In the area of road safety, a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a new database covering road safety data for the 20 countries participating in the Ibero-American Road Safety Observatory (OISEVI) was signed in June 2012 during the third Ibero-

American Road Safety Congress (CISEV). The database, to be known as IRTAD-LAC (for Latin America and the Caribbean) will be an extension of the International Transport Forum's IRTAD database. It will be developed for the region with the support of the World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility, with data being fed into IRTAD-LAC by road safety agencies from South and Central America and the Caribbean. The database will make indicators for monitoring and comparing progress in reducing traffic-related deaths and serious injuries from this region publicly available. The project will facilitate cooperation between the participating countries and serve as an important step to progressively improve the collection and analysis of data in the region. IRTAD-LAC is part of the region's contribution to meet the targets of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety declared by the United Nations in May 2011.

12. In April 2012, the IRTAD Annual report 2011 was published providing an overview of road safety indicators for 2010 in 32 countries, with preliminary data for 2011. The report outlines recent safety measures adopted nationally, with detailed safety data by road user, location and age. This edition highlights contributions to the development of road safety policies by the IRTAD Group in 2011, with detailed reports for all member countries on targets and national strategies, including new strategies being developed for the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety.

13. A Report on Cycling Safety reviews recent research findings and presents evidence derived from surveys of International Transport Forum-OECD countries relating to bicycle safety. The report addresses the key issues relating to cycling safety and links them to a greater discussion of health, safety and cycling. It examines the full range of health impacts and discusses critical elements necessary for cycling policy evaluation. It also suggests a way forward for framing cycling and road safety policy such that health benefits are maximized. The report further looks at how countries and regional/local authorities are developing, facilitating or guiding cycling policy. Furthermore, the report presents a detailed analysis of bicycle crash characteristics across a range of countries, and provides an up-to-date comparison of factors relating to bicycle crashes among responding countries and discusses the policy implications that emerge. Finally, the report recommends a number of safety-improving measures on the design of streets, intersections and crossings.

14. Governments experts, academia, international finance institutions and project developers met in September 2012 for a round table on Public Private Partnerships (PPP) for Funding Transport Infrastructure, to discuss risk management and alternative funding and financing models. The round table's objective was to contribute to the evidence base for policy-making by investigating what funding sources and financing mechanisms fit best specific circumstances, how to allocate various types of risk, how to minimize distortions and strategic behaviour. Discussions included consideration of the potential for alternative financing methods to improve on PPPs. The round table aimed to contribute to the evidence base for policy-making in the build-up to the 2013 Summit on "Funding Transport".

15. The Forum also coorganized the conference "Infrastructures de transports 2012", held in Paris in November 2012. The Conference debated new transport infrastructure priorities of governments and criteria for prioritization among numerous competing projects and effects of these decisions on different actors. Furthermore, participants discussed how the future development of transport systems could be ensured in a situation of severe budgetary constraints.

16. The joint OECD/ITF Transport Research Committee considered establishment of the Working Group on assessment of policies for long term transition to sustainable transport. The intention is to establish a group of experts working on the assessment of climate change and sustainable transport policies in member governments to exchange information on current assessment practices, the latest methodological advances, and changes in policy priorities that have resulted from recent research results. The working group should provide

an opportunity for intensive exchange of international experience on national policy development for CO<sub>2</sub> mitigation and the assumptions underlying assessment practices. In this regard, it needs to be borne in mind that the UNDA funded global project, led by UNECE and named For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS), is about — and has already made progress — to develop the methodology to measure CO<sub>2</sub>, generated by inland transport modes and connect it with a so called transport policy converter in order to see the possible impacts of policy interventions and other transport policy measures. Thus, it will be advisable that ITF focuses on other modes than inland transport, in order to ensure synergies and avoid duplication.

17. The International Transport Forum Statistics Unit continues to improve statistical processes, data collection and dissemination on different fronts. Actions have been taken to extend the data coverage, improve timeliness, relevance and coherence of data and improve data accessibility and user-friendliness. An aim is also to strengthen international cooperation with other statistics providers. The focus of recent activities is on developments to improve statistics on transport infrastructure spending, update of road charges and taxes database, and development of transport performance indicators. Statistics on investment and maintenance in transport infrastructure are based on an annual survey which covers total gross investment in road, rail, inland waterways, maritime ports and airports, including all sources of financing, as well as maintenance expenditures, financed by public administrations. A report with the 2011 figures will be published in May 2013. Another area of interest to be developed is transport performance indicators. The purpose of this project is to carry out a scoping study to develop transport performance indicators that can be shared with the international community for transport policy developments and comparisons.

18. The ITF roundtable on Long-Run trends in travel demand held (Paris, November 2012) was organized with the aim to further the emerging understanding of the drivers of changes in passenger travel and to discuss policy implications. Designing good transport policies, including but not limited to planning infrastructure development, requires insight into the likely development of the demand for transport. There are strong signs that the close connection between aggregate demand for passenger travel and per capita GDP and population growth is weakening in advanced economies. The round table looked at these phenomena, tried to look at all possible causes and find out whether such development is transitory or permanent.

19. The Plan of Action 2012–2015 of the Global Fuel Economy Initiative was released in April 2012. This document lays out ITF plans as partners in the Global Fuel Economy Initiative to drive forward improvements in fuel economy. ITF continues to raise awareness, plug gaps in the data and understanding of the issue, in partnership with governments, industry producers and civil society. More focus will be placed on practical in-country support and training programme. This document lays out a path towards that objective for the next three years.

20. UNECE and ITF, and previously ECMT, have had a long and fruitful working collaboration in many areas of transport sector development. Both parties benefited from this close collaboration and duplication and overlap has been avoided. It seems, however, that the latest developments call for closer consultations and more efforts from both sides, as well as from participating governments, to build on synergies developed in the past. For example, the ITF Working Group on assessment of policies for long term transition to sustainable transport could very much benefit from the work of the results achieved by the UNECE Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics and in particular the Group of Experts on Climate Change impacts and adaptation for international transport networks as well as from the ongoing ForFITS project which is developing a method for assessment of CO<sub>2</sub> emission from inland transport with a policy converter which offers alternative policy

measures to curb emissions. In spite of a very close and good collaboration between UNECE (Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) and the Working Party on Road Safety WP.1)) and ITF, closer coordination in development of road safety related statistics (with IRTAD) and databases seems to be warranted. Also, the planned development of transport performance indicators by ITF may benefit from learning about the UNECE project on the Transport Development Index which has just been completed.

21. In a similar fashion, preparations for the forthcoming ITF summit may also benefit from the work carried out by UNECE on various aspects of financing transport infrastructure. In this context it is worth mentioning the publication TEM and TER revised Master Plan – Final report, which has useful methodological references on financing road and rail infrastructure; the outcome of the Conference on financing rail and road infrastructure, held together with OSCE in Vienna in 2010; methodological studies such as the Set of Guidelines for Socio-Economic Cost Benefit Analysis of Transport Infrastructure Project Appraisal, Methodological basis for the definition of common criteria regarding bottlenecks, missing links and quality of service of infrastructure networks, etc. Also, further ITF work on cycling and related policies could benefit from closer collaboration with the work of THE PEP, the joint UNECE-World Health Organization (WHO) Europe programme on different aspects of cycling and recommendations developed to promote this mode of transportation in urban areas as a healthy and environmentally friendly alternative to private motorized transportation.

22. Consideration of these possibilities for closer synergies between ITC and its Working Parties, on the one hand, and the ITF expert groups, on the other hand, is even more important, bearing in mind that, since the dissolution of the ECMT relevant Working Groups in 2006/2007, UNECE member countries transferred a number of activities to the relevant Working Parties under the auspices of UNECE.

---