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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Inland Transport Committee

#### Seventy-seventh session

Geneva, 24–26 February 2015

Item 5 (f) of the provisional agenda

**Strategic questions of a modal and thematic nature:**

**Intermodal transport and logistics**

## IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)

### Note by the secretariat

#### *Summary*

The Committee endorsed the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) at its seventy-sixth session in February 2014. The CTU Code has been endorsed by the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO in July 2014 and by the Governing Body of the ILO in November 2014.

The Committee may wish to underline the opinion of WP.24 that the new CTU Code would enhance the safety of workers and the general public during handling and transportation of containers at sea and on land. The Committee may wish to support the wide dissemination and application of the new non-mandatory CTU Code, and express the hope that it would soon be extensively used and referred to by key stakeholders, including Governments and the transport industry.

## I. Background and mandate

1. At its previous session, the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) endorsed the new non-mandatory CTU Code, a new global Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) developed in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Furthermore, the Committee requested its wide dissemination and application, including translation into the official UNECE languages and the setting-up of a specific website.

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2. This document has been prepared in accordance with the programme of work of the ITC (ECE/TRANS/208, para. 106; ECE/TRANS/2010/8 and Corr.1, programme activity 02.9: Intermodal transport and logistics, item (k)). It provides background information on the preparation of the new CTU Code and summarizes the achievements of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) in the safe handling of containers and other cargo transport units.

## **II. Revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units**

3. In 1997, the ITC approved the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units. The Guidelines were finalized by WP.24, IMO and ILO, and provide guidance for the safe packing of cargo in freight containers and vehicles in transport operations on land and in water transport, as well as along the entire intermodal transport chain. The Committee expressed the hope that the Guidelines would contribute to reducing personnel injury in the handling containers and would minimize physical hazard to which cargoes were exposed in combined transport operations (ECE/TRANS/119, paras. 124–126).

4. In 2009, WP.24 agreed to an IMO initiative to review and update the Guidelines and requested the secretariat to coordinate with ILO and IMO to this end. The need to follow a holistic approach in revising the Guidelines in close cooperation with concerned industry groups (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, paras. 56–60) was acknowledged.

5. In 2011, WP.24 adopted the terms of reference for a joint group of experts with the mandate to prepare a revised version of the guidelines in the form of a non-mandatory code of practice and recommend endorsement by IMO, ILO and UNECE. The code of practice would reflect the latest information, best practices and requirements on the subject (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2011/5).

6. The Group of Experts for the revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units was comprised of experts from the transport, shipping and insurance sectors with a balanced representation of United Nations member States and employer's and worker's organizations. Four sessions were held from 2011 to 2013 in Geneva in cooperation with the Working Group on Container Safety that met in parallel to the IMO Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (IMO DSC) in September 2013.

## **III. Finalization of the CTU Code**

7. In November 2013, after more than two years of intensive efforts, the Group of Experts completed a comprehensive and globally applicable CTU Code that would improve the safety, quality and efficiency of international transport.

8. The CTU Code, which is more detailed than the previous guidelines, outlines theoretical information for the packing and securing of cargo and gives practical measures to ensure safe transport. It provides guidance to all parties in the supply chain, not only packers, but also those who receive and unpack CTUs. Moreover, it addresses the issues of training packers and the packing of dangerous goods.

9. WP.24 approved the CTU Code in October 2013, subject to minor amendments subsequently agreed to by the Group of Experts at its November 2013 session. The Committee endorsed the CTU Code at its February 2014 session.

10. Since then, the CTU Code has been endorsed by the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO in July 2014 and by the Governing Body of the ILO in November 2014.

#### **IV. Follow-up**

11. The Code is currently available electronically in its original English version. The Spanish and French translations by IMO will soon be available electronically and IMO continues work on the translations in German and Russian.

12. Following a suggestion by the Group of Experts and a recommendation by the IMO former Sub-Committee On Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes And Containers (DSC) that the CTU Code should be made more user-friendly and be available on the web, free of charge to facilitate its wide dissemination and usage, the UNECE developed a preliminary website for the Code. Finalization will be in consultation with IMO and ILO.

13. The three organizations had agreed that they will continue to discuss how the Code can be further promoted. Further information on the activities of the Group of Experts can be found at [www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/intro.html](http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/intro.html).

#### **V. Conclusion**

14. In light of the above, the Committee may wish to:

- Assist in the wide dissemination and application of the new non-mandatory CTU Code.
  - Express the hope that the CTU Code would soon be extensively used and referred to by Governments, the transport industry and other stakeholders in international container transport and might become an important element in transport and cargo insurance contracts.
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