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Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics****Thirtieth session**

Geneva, 4-6 September 2017

Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda

Monitoring of the developments in pan-European transport networks:**Trans-European Motorway and Trans-European Railway projects****Information on the Trans-European Railway project
development*.******Submitted by the TER Project Manager****I. Objectives of the Project**

1. The main target of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project is to improve the quality and efficiency of transport operations, to assist the integration process of European transport infrastructure systems and to develop a coherent and efficient international railway and combined transport system in accordance with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Pan-European infrastructure agreements.
2. Among the various goals of the TER project, the following may be emphasized: facilitation and development of coherent and efficient international railway and combined transport system among the Central and Eastern European countries (through the territories of the TER countries and between them and other European countries), contribution in absorbing of an important part of congestion in Central and Eastern Europe and reduction of environmental and safety problems on major international railways of those countries.

* The document was submitted late due to delayed inputs from other sources.

** The present document was not edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

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II. Trans-European Railway development and activities in 2016

3. The TER Steering Committee at the thirty-ninth TER Steering Committee session (Geneva, 24 and 25 November 2015) adopted the following activities for implementation in the TER Programme of Work 2016:

(a) Connectivity

- integration into the Pan-European and Asian networks and corridors in full;
- cooperation with European Union (EU), Committee of the Organization for Co-operation between Railways (OSJD) and the Euro-Asian Transport Links project;
- cooperation in corridor management beyond the EU-borders;
- starting the activities on High Speed Master Plan project.

(b) Visibility

- new TER web homepage should be developed with revised information;
- increasing the number of TER members; finalising the process of joining the Project by Belarus and Kazakhstan;
- printing and circulating the TER Project brochure.

(c) Capacity-Building

- There are studies conducted within the Coordinating Council on Trans-Siberian Railway Transportation: e.g. Annual Transsib Digest. There are agreements reached with Korean and Chinese research centres, which can also provide the Project with that kind of information.

(d) Safety

- cooperation with UNECE in preparing a questionnaire to get an overview about all level crossings on the TER network and including risk levels assessment.

(e) Development

- implementation of the TER Master Plan revision and reporting on its implementation;
- TER data collection will be extended to non-TER participating countries (future prospects).

(f) Management

- opening the TER Project Central Office (PCO) in Belgrade;
- finalization of Project Management contracts;
- organization of two sessions of TER Steering Committee;
- organization of a TER technical workshop.

4. During the fortieth TER Steering Committee session (Vienna, 17 May 2016) the following were discussed and agreed:

(a) The management focused its efforts on discussing and negotiating with the Governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Ukraine in order for these countries to become members of the project;

(b) Works on the High Speed Rail Master Plan started and consultant reported the first results of his study based on methodology agreed;

(c) The content of the TER brochure as part of project's promotion activities as well as its technical specifications and vendor selection that would finalize and print the brochure was discussed and decided;

(d) The TER backbone network is being revised and draft maps were prepared by the consultant that reflect the status of the network in 2016;

(e) The TER Host Country Agreement with the Government of Serbia was finalised and the TER office in Belgrade was prepared by the Serbian authorities;

(f) The contract of TER project manager was finalized and this of the deputy project manager is under the final phase of finalization.

III. Activities in 2017

5. The TER Steering Committee at the forty-first TER Steering Committee session (Geneva, 21 and 22 November 2016) adopted the following activities for implementation in the TER Programme of Work 2017:

(a) Connectivity

- Participation of international Steering Group Sessions (European Commission (EC), OSJD, European Union Agency for Railways (EUAR) etc.);
- Comprehensive study on possible High Speed Lines for a High Speed Master Plan.

(b) Visibility

- Activities aimed increasing number of TER member countries;
- Redesign and update of TER webpage;
- Finalization, printing and distribution of TER info brochure.

(c) Capacity-Building

- Identification of infrastructure bottlenecks and lobbying for their removal;
- Initiation of an international Infrastructure Service Comparison;
- Organization of a TER Workshop.

(d) Development

- Implementation of 2011 TER Master Plan Follow-up monitoring;
- Progress reports on results of Master Plan Revision monitoring and TER backbone network status 2017;
- Data collection and processing, possible extension of TER system to non-TER countries;
- Presentation of results of the Master Plan Revision implementation on the UNECE/TER website.

(e) Management

- Functioning PCO;
- Activities aimed for a new Host Country Agreement;
- Activities for new contracts for the TER Management;
- Organization of 2 TER Steering Committee Sessions;

- Draft a TER Budget and Programme of Work 2018.
6. During the forty-second TER Steering Committee session (Belgrade, 3 and 4 April, 2017) the following were discussed and agreed:
- (a) The management focused its efforts on discussing and negotiating with the Governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Georgia in order for these countries to become members of the project;
 - (b) A draft Report on the High Speed Rail Master Plan Phase 1 was presented and is subject to approval upon receiving and incorporating comments from the Steering Committee members;
 - (c) The draft version of the TER brochure, introduced to the session, was approved as amended for printing and distribution. This brochure will be available also on TER homepage;
 - (d) The TER backbone network is being revised and draft maps were prepared by the consultant that reflect the status of the network in 2016-2017;
 - (e) The TER office in Belgrade was officially opened and started its operation;
 - (f) The contract of the Deputy TER Project Manager was finalized and officially signed;
 - (g) The TER Workshop on International Cargo Transport - Obstacles and Chances will be held in Karlovy Vary (Czech Republic) in October 2017.
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