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**Economic Commission for Europe****Inland Transport Committee****Eighty-second session**

Geneva, 25–28 February 2020

Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Strategic questions of partnerships and technical assistance:****Policy dialogue and technical assistance to countries with economies in transition and developing economies****Inland Transport Committee Capacity Development  
Action Plan****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The eighty-first session of ITC, held from 19 to 22 February 2019 in Geneva, adopted the “Inland Transport Committee Strategy until 2030” (hereafter the Strategy) as a basic document for future directions of ITC development.

As the first priority activity on capacity development mandated by the adopted ITC Strategy, a draft comprehensive action plan on capacity development is presented in this document. The Committee is **invited to consider and, possibly, adopt the draft comprehensive action plan on capacity development presented in this document.**

**I. Background**

1. The Inland Transport Committee (ITC) is a unique intergovernmental forum that was set up in 1947 to support the reconstruction of transport connections in post-war Europe. Over the years, the ITC has specialized in facilitating the harmonized and sustainable development of inland transport modes. ITC and its 20 working parties, the ECOSOC Committee and its sub-committees, as well as 12 Administrative Committees of treaties under the purview of ITC, are intergovernmental decision-making bodies that work to improve the daily lives of people and businesses globally, with concrete action to enhance connectivity, traffic safety, environmental performance, energy efficiency and the competitiveness of the inland transport sector.

2. The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal set of goals, targets and indicators that United Nations Member States will be expected to use to frame their agendas and policies until 2030. The 17 Global Goals with 169 targets are contained in United Nations Resolution: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1) of 25 September 2015. The ECE Secretariat has identified nine Goals where ECE has a

comparative advantage and provides the most value added, of which six (Goals 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 13) are directly connected with the Sustainable Transport Division activities.

3. Furthermore, to support member States in better implementation of the 2030 Agenda in a cross-sectoral, integrated manner, ECE identified<sup>1</sup> high-impact areas where multiple Goals converge – “nexus clusters”. Four nexuses were singled out: sustainable use of natural resources, sustainable and smart cities, sustainable mobility and smart connectivity and measuring and monitoring SDGs. In these high-impact areas ECE will address the multiple aspects of complex multifaceted issues, facilitate partnerships, promote cross-sectorial dialogue with external partners and increase visibility.

4. The ECE technical cooperation is an instrument to facilitate mutually beneficial economic relations to all member States.<sup>2</sup> Technical cooperation is devoted to support member States in achievement of the 2030 Agenda goals and to provide support to the national efforts of countries in transition and emerging market economies to integrate their economies into the European and global economy. Therefore, ECE technical cooperation concentrates on transboundary issues, such as trans-European transport connectivity and corridors, protection of environment, trade and transport facilitation, energy efficiency, etc.

5. The outcome of the ECE reform review and specifically decision A(65) of the Commission in 2013, acknowledged that “The Transport sub-programme is a unique United Nations centre providing a comprehensive regional and global platform for consideration of all aspects of inland transport development and cooperation”.

6. Number of United Nations General Assembly resolutions stressed the global role of the legal instruments under the purview of the ITC and encourage all Member States to accede to, including: Resolution 72/271 adopted in April 2018 on road safety; Resolution A/RES/72/212 on intermodality; and Resolution A/70/197 on connectivity and corridors.

7. The eighty-first session of ITC, held from 19 to 22 February 2019 in Geneva, adopted the “Inland Transport Committee Strategy until 2030” (hereafter the Strategy) as a basic document for future directions of ITC development. As the first priority activity on capacity development mandated by the adopted ITC Strategy, the Committee is **invited to consider and, possibly, adopt the draft comprehensive action plan on capacity development presented in this document.**

## II. The ITC Strategy vision and mission

8. The Strategy defines the ITC Vision as: “ITC is the United Nations platform for inland transport to help efficiently address global and regional needs in inland transport”.

9. The mission for ITC is defined as: to contribute to sustainable inland transport and mobility for achieving the sustainable development goals in the ECE and United Nations Member States through policy dialogue, harmonizing regulatory frameworks, as appropriate, promoting new technologies, assisting in enhancing connectivity and supporting the implementation of legal instruments.

10. According to the Strategy, in its future activities, ITC will act as:

- **The United Nations Platform for regional and global inland transport conventions.** By strengthening its role as the United Nations platform of inland transport conventions to all United Nations Member States and by remaining at the forefront of global efforts to curb the road safety crisis, cut emissions by setting and promoting its vehicle standards, and reduce influence of physical and non-physical barriers with its large set of border crossing facilitation conventions and infrastructure development agreements;
- **The United Nations Platform for supporting new technologies and innovations in inland transport.** By ensuring that (i) its regulatory functions are keeping pace with

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<sup>1</sup> Main directions of ECE ongoing work on further Sustainable Development Goals alignment, Informal document 2018/12, EXCOM, May 2018

<sup>2</sup> The ECE Technical Cooperation Strategy, Economic Commission for Europe, 2007.

cutting-edge technologies and transport innovation - especially in the areas of Intelligent Transport Systems, autonomous vehicles and digitalization, (ii) the different amendment processes for the different conventions do not cause fragmentation, and (iii) the dangers of stifling progress due to too early regulation are avoided;

- The **United Nations Platform for regional, interregional and global inland transport policy dialogues**. By providing a platform for policy dialogue to review emerging challenges in inland transport, as well as proposals for improving infrastructure and operation at its annual session;
- The **United Nations Platform for promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility**. By providing a comprehensive, harmonized regulatory framework, as appropriate, and institutional reference point supporting international connectivity, developing new or building on existing initiatives, agreements, or corridors, as needed.

11. The focus on these core added-value areas will provide solutions to Member States transport-related challenges and goes hand in hand with ECE functional strengths.

### III. Mandates on capacity development in the ITC Strategy

12. The Strategy mandated the Secretariat to develop new or adjust/update existing capacity-building programme, training manuals, guidelines, standards and competency criteria in cooperation with other organizations and institutions, to assist in enhancing capacity in the accession and implementation of the legal instruments and organize training courses [Timeline: Short-, Medium- and Long-term] and to develop indicators for Contracting parties to evaluate status and progress in the implementation of the legal instruments [Timeline: Short-, and Medium-term]<sup>3</sup> (Action Plan for achieving the ITC vision, A (c) and (d), Page 5).

13. The Strategy further specified the priority activities for capacity development until 2030 as shown in table 1.

Table 1

**List of Priority capacity development activities until 2030**

<i>Theme/ Related SDG</i>	<i>Long-term Action</i>	<i>Priority Actions until 2030</i>	<i>Indicative budget (RB/XB); Ways to manage; Partnerships</i>
The United Nations Platform for inland transport conventions RELEVANT Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 3, Goal 6, Goal 7, Goal 8, Goal 9, Goal 11, Goal 12, Goal 13	New or adjusted/updated existing capacity building programme, training manuals, guidelines, standards and competency criteria as well as training courses	- Comprehensive Plan on capacity building by 2020 - Adjustment/updating of existing training materials from 2020 - New training materials, standards and competency criteria from 2022 - Training courses from 2019	RB to support incorporation of training standards and competencies in legal instruments if necessary XB for training materials and courses through partnerships with training institutions
	Development of indicators	- From 2019	Non ECE-RB (e.g. UNDA) or XB

*Source:* ITC Strategy until 2030, Page 7.

<sup>3</sup> ITC Strategy until 2030, page 5, 2019.

14. As the first priority activity on capacity development mandated by the Strategy, a draft comprehensive action plan on capacity development is presented in this document for discussion and adoption by ITC at its eighty-second session.

15. Furthermore, the mandate for capacity development activities implemented under the ECE Technical Cooperation was given by the ECE Technical Cooperation Strategy adopted by Economic Commission for Europe at its sixty-second session held in Geneva in 2007. In this document (sub-chapter C, page 4) the main goals of ECE Technical Cooperation are defined as:

- To improve national capacities of economies in transition to implement ECE international legal instruments, norms, standards and regulations in the areas of transport, environment, trade, statistics, sustainable energy, timber, housing and land management, and economic cooperation and integration.
- To assist with the formation of institutional frameworks in support of subregional and regional integration in areas relevant to its programme of work.
- To assist economies in transition in elaborating and implementing technical assistance programmes/projects, focusing on those related to resolving transboundary problems, in the areas relevant to ECE's programme of work.
- To support economies in transition in their capacity-building efforts towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals in the ECE region.

16. ECE has a proven competitive advantage in inland transport normative production and the identification of best practices, which is relevant for all its member States, independently of the level of economic development. Alongside administering United Nations legal instruments – which shape the international legal framework for inland transport – and analytical work conducted by the working parties and the secretariat, technical assistance activities represent one of the three pillars of ITC and the Sustainable Transport Division's activities.

17. Technical assistance activities primarily focus on improving the capacities of member States to accede to United Nations inland transport legal instruments. As a high level of accession has been achieved in the ECE region, attention has shifted further towards supporting efficient implementation, both at national and subregional levels. Furthermore, in line with the 2030 Agenda, capacity development activities are also being pooled towards supporting achievement of transport-related Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, transport policy dialogue, targeted capacity-building activities to support the implementation of its normative outputs and related transport policy advisory work are the main forms of the technical assistance that the secretariat carries out. In ECE member States, these activities are focused, but not limited, to the countries of Eastern and South – Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Special attention is given to the landlocked countries.

18. To be in line with recent global trends, the Secretariat proposed an update in formulation of current technical assistance/ capacity-building activities, a process which started with embracing of updated definitions proposed by the World Bank (2009):

- Capacity for development is the availability of resources and the efficiency and effectiveness with which societies deploy those resources to identify and pursue their development goals on a sustainable basis.
- Capacity development is a locally driven process of learning by leaders, coalitions and other agents of change that brings about changes in socio-political, policy-related and organizational factors to enhance local ownership for and the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve a development goal.

19. It is obvious that the term capacity development defines much better activities implemented by the Secretariat in Member States, because activities were related to improving and strengthening of existing capacities and knowledge rather than building capacities which did not exist in that time.

20. Using new definitions, the Secretariat will implement a number of activities to support capacity development of Member States on transport-related United Nations legal instruments and its efficient implementation in years to come.

#### IV. General Principles of ITC capacity development

21. As a starting point in development of the ITC Capacity Development Action Plan, a general principles of capacity development were defined. They reflect the intention to do more for promotion of efficient implementation of United Nations transport-related legal instruments and to achieve tangible results in member States. The principles took into account support to the global coverage of United Nations transport legal instruments which was set-up in the Strategy and scarcity of the Secretariat's resources. The proposed general principles are the following:

(a) **Offer A-Z solutions to Member States** – Work hand-in-hand with Member State on efficient implementation of United Nations transport legal instruments through: (i) Start cooperation with sharing of basic information on benefits of accession to and efficient implementation of transport-related conventions and how they support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; (ii) Develop official and informal documents, presentations, leaflets, “road maps” and e-learning and knowledge sharing platform (iii) In cooperation with Member State prepare capacity development framework and action plan; (iv) Assist Member State to build national capacities for implementation; (v) Seek commitment from Member State for necessary legislative and organizational changes for efficient implementation of conventions and (vi) assist Member State to prepare necessary legal and organizational framework. Through this process deeper relations with Member State will be established – which will ensure the ownership in achieving goals of capacity development and request full engagement in implementation (including political support);

(b) **Recognize capacity development as a long-term relation and effort by Member State and ECE.** Usually, it takes several years for efficient implementation of one transport-related convention, therefore both Member State and ECE should prepare capacity development framework which will realistically depict road map for implementation of one legal instrument. Introduction of the capacity development framework which combines several technical assistance activities (workshops, conferences, peer missions, analytical work, policy dialogue, etc.) should give tangible results at the end with utilization of available resources. Timely provision of necessary assistance by ECE will support achievement of defined goals in a most efficient and effective manner;

(c) Taking into account principles set-up in the Sustainable Development Goal 17, **seek synergies with other international and regional institutions involved in development of sustainable transport system.** In mid-term, ECE will define modalities for involvement of qualified stakeholders (academia and training centres) in sharing of knowledge on United Nations inland transport conventions and agreements. In that sense it will be possible to create a network of “knowledge sharing/promotion” ambassadors (NGOs, academia, business sector) willing to provide assistance in capacity development activities;

(d) To reach optimal results with available resources, **capacity development activities should influence all three levels of capacity development** (individual, organizational and national), with special emphasize on a national level. This will support creation of a network of national experts in Member State which will spearhead transposition of transport conventions in national legislation and its efficient implementation. Furthermore, availability of number of national experts will be a mitigation measure for high fluctuation of staff in developing countries ministries/agencies in charge for United Nations transport legal instruments implementation;

(e) **Use capacity development action plan to mobilize XB funds** – Based on the clearly recognized needs and available capacities, the capacity development framework for Member State will serve for mobilization of additional XB funding for capacity development and, if necessary, allocation of RPTC fund, RB staff time, etc.

## V. ITC Capacity Development Action plan

22. Incorporating ITC capacity development general principles and activities defined in the action plan for achieving the Committee vision (Activities A: Enhance the role of ITC as the United Nations platform for inland transport conventions)<sup>4</sup>, a draft ITC capacity capacity development action plan was prepared. The strategic goal to “Enhance role of ITC as the United Nations platform for inland transport Conventions” will be achieved through implementation of activities grouped into four strategic areas:

(a) **Awareness-raising** - Inform Member States on United Nations transport legal instruments and on benefits of its efficient implementation;

(b) **Capacity enhancement** - Assist member States in developing capacities for efficient implementation of United Nations inland transport legal instruments;

(c) **Seek synergies** - Develop standards and competence criteria for accreditation of entities (academia, training centres, etc.) to promote United Nations inland transport legal instruments;

(d) **Monitor and evaluate results** and effectiveness of applied actions/methods.

23. Proposed strategic areas are further related to detailed actions and expected outcomes, fields of action, required resources (both human and financial) and beneficiaries. Presented in this way (table 2), the draft ITC Capacity Development Action Plan will be easy to follow and amend if ITC Strategy defined priorities will be updated.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, page 5.

Table 2

**The draft ITC Capacity Development Action Plan**

<i>Vision: ITC is the United Nations platform for inland transport to help efficiently address global and regional needs in inland transport.</i>							
<i>Strategic goal</i>	<i>Strategic area</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Outcomes/products</i>	<i>Fields of action</i>	<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Funding</i>
Enhance role of ITC as the United Nations platform for inland transport Conventions	<b>Awareness Raising:</b> Inform member States on United Nations transport legal instruments and on benefits of its efficient implementation	Develop and update web page and leaflets	ECE web-page, news and leaflets	e.g. Vehicle standards Road signs and signals	ECE staff; Consultants	Member States institutions and organizations; International organizations; General public; Media	RB including RPTC; UNDA; XB (National budgets, International and regional organizations, IFIs)
		Update Division's profile including all transport-related instruments	e-learning and knowledge sharing platform	Border Crossing Facilitation Transport of dangerous goods Intermodality			
		Develop and update sets of presentations	Sustainable Transport Division intranet  Missions and presentations (organized by other entities)				
		Develop "how to accede/road map for implementation" guides	How to accede/road map for implementation publication				
	<b>Capacity enhancement:</b> Assist member States in developing capacities for efficient implementation of	Prepare official and informal documents on capacity development	Presentations and discussion during ITC and its subsidiary bodies meetings				
		Develop comprehensive plan on capacity development	ITC Capacity Development Action Plan	All Sustainable Transport Division activities	ECE staff	Member States institutions and organizations; NGOs	RB including RPTC; XB (projects, member States and other

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<i>Strategic goal</i>	<i>Strategic area</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Outcomes/products</i>	<i>Fields of action</i>	<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Funding</i>
United Nations inland transport legal instruments (ECE - catalyst of changes)		Develop/update training manuals, and guidelines	Publications, training manuals, guidelines, webinars		ECE staff;		organization contribution); UNDA
		Develop web-based platform for e-learning and knowledge sharing	e-learning and knowledge sharing platform (including archive of national case studies, examples, etc.		International and regional organizations;		
		Develop a methodology for preparation of the national capacity development framework (NCDF)	Common methodology for preparation of the national capacity development framework		Academia and training centres;		
		Identify five beneficiary countries for preparation of the NCDF	Five beneficiary countries committed to implement NCDF		Experts and consultants;		
		Elaborate a NCDF/concrete action plan in cooperation with the beneficiary country that includes commonly agreed goals/objectives, time schedules, resources, etc.	National capacity development framework for beneficiary countries		Other United Nations agencies;		
		Establish a coalition for implementation of national capacity development framework	National coalition for implementation		NGOs		



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<i>Strategic goal</i>	<i>Strategic area</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Outcomes/products</i>	<i>Fields of action</i>	<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Funding</i>
		Organize capacity development events (seminars, workshops, etc.) and national capacity reviews	Capacity development workshops and events, training courses, peer learning missions, performance reviews (RSPR, EPR, etc.), advisory services and presentations and discussion during ITC and its subsidiary bodies meetings				
		Assist member State to update national legislation to efficiently implement United Nations inland transport legal instruments					
		Develop indicators to evaluate status in implementation of United Nations legal instruments	SITCIN indicators				
	<b>Seek synergies:</b> Develop standards and competence criteria for accreditation of entities (academia, training centres, etc.) to promote United Nations inland transport legal instruments	Develop standards and competence criteria	Training curricula, manuals, guidelines and accreditation criteria	All Sustainable Transport Division activities.	ECE staff;	International and regional organizations; Academia and training centres; Experts and consultants; NGOs	RB including RPTC; XB (National budgets, International and regional organizations, IFIs, PPP cooperation, accreditation fees, ...)
		Develop a network of “knowledge sharing/promotion” ambassadors (NGOs, academia, business sector)	MoU’s and cooperation agreements	In the phase I, the secretariat should identify and promote inland transport areas that are most suitable for cooperation.			
		Develop cooperation/synergies with transport stakeholders	MoU’s and cooperation agreements				
	<b>Monitor and evaluate results and effectiveness of</b>	Update of training materials and guidelines	Mid-term review of methodologies, web-based platform content and manuals		ECE staff; Experts and consultants	International and regional organizations;	RB including RPTC; XB (projects)



## VI. Funding

24. Following the regular tasks related to the development of United Nations transport-related legal instruments, the second largest funding area required for the implementation of the Strategy is capacity development and analytical work in connection with acceding to and efficient implementation of United Nations transport-related legal instruments.

25. Scarcity of the Secretariat resources and the Strategy's main recommendation to use RB resources mostly for the development of United Nations transport-related legal instruments, resulted with a fact that the majority of capacity development activities should be financed by XB or other funding options outside ECE Regular Budget.

26. As stated in the Strategy Chapter VI,<sup>5</sup> potential sources of financing for the specific capacity development strategic areas were identified:

(a) Awareness raising – Source of funding for development and update of dedicate web-page, leaflets and publications (e.g. road map) may be: (i) United Nations Development Account; (ii) earmarked funds from member States and international organizations; and (iii) the multi development bank grants;

(b) Capacity enhancement – This is the largest funding area required for the preparation of: e-learning and knowledge sharing platform (training manuals, webinars, etc.), methodology for preparation of national capacity development framework (NCDF), implementation of NCDF and capacity development activities. Part of the activities could be financed through UNDA project and RPTC blending, but availability of member States and international grants would considerably speed up platform deployment and implementation of activities in beneficiary countries. High added value capacity development activities in road safety could be a good candidate for United Nations Road Safety Fund financing, if related to a funded project. Activities related to development of the Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators (SITCIN) are already financed by the 11<sup>th</sup> UNDA Tranche project;

(c) Seek synergies - Knowledge on United Nations transport-related legal instruments should be imbedded into professional education and training, to support long-lasting national capacity development. The Secretariat, in collaboration with key universities, colleges and training centres, will develop curricula or minimum standards and competency criteria, financed through projects and in-kind contribution of academia and training centres. Operation of the online training courses can be partnered with some institutions (e.g. IRU Academy and UNITAR) as the on-the-job training. Project funds from other Regional Commissions, development banks and regional integration organizations, will help to enhance national capacity and further establish platforms of institutional cooperation and coordination.

27. To increase quality of outputs, in exceptional cases, RB staff will give substantive support to capacity development tasks. The support will be financed through the Regular Technical Programme for Cooperation (RPTC) and in-kind contribution for implementation of capacity development activities (e-learning platform including manuals, preparation of NCDF, events, etc.). The funding is mainly required for technical assistance to developing and least developed countries, including landlocked developing countries, where RPTC budget will be a regular source of funding.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, page 12.