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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE ON ITS
SIXTIETH SESSION
(12-16 January 1998)

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ATTENDANCE

1. The Inland Transport Committee held its sixtieth session from 12 to 16 January 1998. The duties of Chairman of the session were performed by the Vice-Chairman, Mr. H. Courtois (Belgium).

2. Representatives of the following countries participated: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Israel; Italy; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; United States of America. The European Commission (EC) was also represented. A representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) attended the session. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also took part in the session: Danube Commission (DC); European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT); Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR); Organization for Co-operation between Railways (OSZhd). The following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Road Federation (IRF); International Road Transport Union (IRU); International Organization for Standardization (ISO); International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF); International Touring Alliance (AIT); International Union of Railways (UIC).

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda (ECE/TRANS/124).

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

4. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe addressed the Committee, commended the work accomplished and stressed the main aspects of the reform process initiated by the Committee. In this connection, he underlined that, in spite of the rationalization measures decided which had led to reductions in the number of ECE's Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSBs) from 14 to 7, in the work programme elements from 268 to 110 and in the number of posts of the ECE secretariat from 216 to 199, the Inland Transport Committee had not been affected. The transport sector had even gained 2 professional posts and 1 general service post. He also recalled the provision of the Plan of Action concerning all PSBs and highlighted the recommendations thereof concerning the status of the subsidiary bodies, the duration of meetings, the enlargement of the PSBs' Bureaux and the reduction of the length of the reports of meetings. Additionally, the Executive Secretary recalled the results of the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment, with particular emphasis on its follow-up to which the Committee was to contribute. He finally stressed the importance, not only of the development of legal instruments in the field of transport, but also of their implementation and monitoring.

RESULTS OF THE COORDINATION MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

Documentation: TRANS/1998/9.

5. In accordance with a decision taken by the Committee at its fifty-ninth session, a Coordination Meeting was convened twice in 1997 (9 June and 27-28 November) in order to prepare the forthcoming session of the Committee. The Committee considered the results achieved by its Coordination Meeting, as contained in document TRANS/1998/9, and agreed to discuss further the various questions raised in more detail under the respective items of the agenda.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE AND THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION IN 1997 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Documentation: TRANS/1998/7.

6. The Committee took note of the above document containing the results of the transport programme review undertaken by the Economic Commission for Europe and reflected in its Plan of Action, as well as the results of the discussion in the Coordination Meeting concerning the implications of the ECE reform process for the Inland Transport Committee.

7. The Committee noted that, during its fifty-second Jubilee session (21-24 April 1997), the Economic Commission for Europe adopted its **Plan of Action** (E/ECE/1347) which defines the strategic directions of future activities of the Commission. In this connection, the Committee noted that the work of the Inland Transport Committee and its Subsidiary Bodies was evaluated very favourably. The reform has resulted in a slight increase in the resources allocated to the transport sector. The Committee also noted the provisions of the Plan of Action which apply to all PSBs of the ECE and which are related to their methods of work. These provisions are summarized below, together with the decisions to be taken by the Committee in this respect.

(a) Review of the Committee's subsidiary bodies

8. The Committee noted that, in accordance with the Plan of Action, all PSBs had been invited to review the status of their related bodies and to limit them to two categories: Working Parties which are of a standing nature, and ad hoc groups of experts which are established for a two-year period, with a precise programme of work and sunset clauses.

9. In reviewing the status of its subsidiary bodies, the Committee agreed with the recommendations of the Coordination Meeting (TRANS/1998/7, paras. 4-29) and took the following decisions:

- The Principal Working Parties on Road, Rail and Inland Water Transport, respectively (SC.1, SC.2 and SC.3) shall maintain their permanent character and be renamed Working Parties;
- The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (SC.1/WP.1) shall in future maintain its permanent status and report directly to the Committee, thus becoming WP.1;
- The Meetings of Experts under the Working Party on the Construction of Vehicles (WP.29) shall continue to work on a permanent basis and be renamed Working Parties. These Meetings of Experts shall continue to report to WP.29 which will also be a permanent body. The symbols of their documents may remain unchanged;
- The Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) shall remain permanent and its programme of work will be more centred on issues related to the follow-up of the Third Pan-European Transport Conference (Helsinki, 23-25 June 1997);
- The Working Party on Combined Transport (WP.24) shall remain permanent;
- The Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) shall remain permanent;
- The Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) shall remain permanent. An Ad hoc Group of Experts on the revision of the TIR Convention shall be established under WP.30.
- The Working Parties on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15), Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11) and Transport Statistics (WP.6) shall maintain their permanent basis.

10. With regard to the Ad hoc Meetings/Groups of Experts which have been convened under the auspices of the Inland Transport Committee and which might continue to be convened as the needs arise, the Committee decided that the following bodies should be deleted from the list (TRANS/1998/7, annex 3):

- Group of Rapporteurs on the Economic Aspects of Danube-Aegean Sea Water Link.
- Group of Rapporteurs for Economic Study of Danube-Oder (Elbe) Connection.
- Ad hoc Meeting of Experts on Classification of Inland Waterways.

(b) Length of meetings

11. In accordance with the ECE Plan of Action, the annual meetings of PSBs will be limited to three days as of April 1999. If, for specific reasons, the session should need to be extended beyond the three-day limit, it should be informal.

12. The Committee decided in this respect that, as of its forthcoming session in 1999, the normal duration of its annual session should be three days. To this end, the Committee felt that a number of practical arrangements would be necessary. For example, written reports should not be read out but be used as a basis for discussion and delegates should make succinct statements and limit themselves to salient points in their interventions. Furthermore, Chairpersons of Working Parties should report at the Committee's session only on those items which they consider must be brought forward to the ITC. Subsidiary bodies should review the format of their reports, not only taking into account the type of activity but also the orientation given by the Plan of Action in this respect. In this context, the Committee also referred to the relevant part of the Plan of Action (chapter III; A; 2(b); 5th indent in document E/ECE/1347).

13. Although the Plan of Action does not contain a particular remark in respect of the length of meetings of the Committee's subsidiary bodies, the Committee concurred that those bodies should make every effort to reduce the length of their respective meetings.

(c) Reform of the Committee's Bureau

14. The Committee noted that the Plan of Action requests all PSBs to enlarge and strengthen, as soon as possible, the responsibility of their respective Bureaux in order to enable them to fulfil the functions related to the organization of their annual sessions that were delineated in the Plan of Action: (i) the preparation of a well-focused agenda with the definition of objectives and the setting of time-allocation for each item; (ii) indication of principal topics where decisions are needed; (iii) delineation of themes of discussion of the session; (iv) monitoring and evaluation of the work since the previous session; (v) monitoring and coordination of activities in order to avoid duplication with the work of other relevant organizations; and (vi) proposing of priorities in the programme of work, listing, where possible, various options. In view of this increased responsibility, PSBs are also invited to enlarge the composition of their respective Bureaux. The enlarged Bureaux will meet as often as necessary to perform their new role.

15. In view of the enlarged and strengthened responsibilities of its Bureau, as determined in the Plan of Action, the Committee agreed on the following procedures regarding the election of its officials:

- Any member of the Committee is eligible for membership in the Bureau of the Committee; the members of the Bureau undertake to devote the time needed to an adequate discharge of their duties.
- The Committee shall elect its Bureau for a period of two years starting with the sixtieth session.
- The Bureau will, in principle hold three sessions a year. The first session of the Bureau will be convened immediately after the session of the Committee, the second one will be the joint meeting with the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the third one will be to prepare the forthcoming session of the Committee.
- The members of the Bureau can be re-elected. However, a certain rotation should be ensured to allow delegates from countries which are not represented to put forward their candidature.
- The Bureau should comprise not more than 10 members, including the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, who will continue to be elected in a personal capacity; the other members of the Bureau will also be elected in a personal capacity but the members who are unable to attend should appoint a replacement.
- The Bureau may invite to its meetings anyone who may facilitate its work.
- Standing invitations will be extended to the European Commission to attend meetings of the Bureau as observer, normally being represented by the Directorate-General of Transport.
- The meetings of the Bureau, which are of an informal nature, will be convened according to the needs of the Committee's programme of work.
- With a view to facilitating the active participation of each member of the Bureau, the secretariat is invited to provide for interpretation at the Bureau's meeting depending on the members present and taking into account the secretariat's possibilities.

After a period of two years, the Committee will review the function of its Bureau.

RESULTS OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Documentation: ECE/RCTE/CONF./2/FINAL; ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL;
ECE/RCTE/CONF./5; ECE/RCTE/CONF./6 and Corr.1; ECE/RCTE/CONF./7/FINAL;
ECE/RCTE/CONF./8/FINAL.

16. The Committee noted that the Conference, held from 12 to 14 November 1997 in Vienna, had been attended by 300 delegates from 40 ECE member countries.

17. The Committee took note of the results achieved by the Conference, including the Vienna Declaration (ECE/RCTE/CONF./2/FINAL) and its Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL) which was signed by 35 countries. The Committee also noted that, on the occasion of the Conference, a Protocol to the AGTC Agreement (ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1) and an Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections (ECE/RCTE/CONF./4) were respectively signed by 12 and 22 countries. It also noted with appreciation that a draft Addendum 1 to the above Agreement (ECE/RCTE/CONF./5) as well as Draft Amendments to the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic (ECE/RCTE/CONF./6 and Corr.1) had been endorsed by the Conference as stipulated in the Resolution adopted by the Conference (ECE/RCTE/CONF./7/FINAL).

18. The Committee mandated the Working Party on Combined Transport (WP.24) to ensure the further development and implementation of the above-mentioned Protocol. It also mandated the Working Party on the Construction of Vehicles (WP.29) to further develop the above-mentioned Agreement.

19. Recalling that the Swiss delegation to the Conference had found that the text of the Draft Amendments to the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic (ECE/RCTE/CONF./6 and Corr.1) still needed a few minor editorial improvements and adjustments for consistency with the texts of the European Agreement and the Convention, the Committee requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Swiss delegation, to introduce such editorial improvements and adjustments and to issue the final text under the symbol ECE/RCTE/CONF./6/FINAL. The Committee noted that the Austrian Government had offered to transmit this final version to the Secretary-General for initiation of the appropriate legal procedures.

20. In line with Chapter VIII of the Programme of Joint Action, the Committee urged all ECE member countries and international organizations to designate by March 1998 Focal Points as well as volunteering Lead Actors to take responsibilities for the implementation of programme elements and to inform the ECE secretariat accordingly.

21. The Committee charged its Bureau to coordinate all activities related to the follow-up of the Conference, particularly the implementation and monitoring of the Programme of Joint Action. The Committee felt that, as far as possible, the first joint meeting of its Bureau with the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy should be convened by May/June 1998.

22. The Committee decided to review the progress achieved in the follow-up to the Conference at its next session. It also requested its subsidiary bodies to include this item in their agenda and to consider how they could contribute to the follow-up to the Conference. The Committee also examined the creation of an Ad hoc Group of Experts to consider, if it should be necessary, the development of international criteria to define "sensitive areas" as contained in Chapter IV of the Programme of Joint Action, taking account of the experience gained elsewhere, inter alia in the EU.

23. The Committee complimented the Government of Austria and the city of Vienna for having hosted the Conference and expressed its appreciation for the excellent preparation of the Conference.

24. Finally, the Committee supported the secretariat's intention to prepare a publication containing the proceedings of the Conference.

THIRD PAN-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

Documentation: Informal papers by the European Commission.

25. The Committee was informed about the results which had been achieved at the Third Pan-European Transport Conference (23-25 June 1997, Helsinki). In this context, reference was made to the Declaration "Towards a European-Wide Transport Policy" and a Report on "Adjustments to Crete Corridors" which had been adopted by the Conference and of which copies had been made available to delegations during the session of the Committee.

26. The Committee also recognized that there was now a political commitment, to consider the need to monitor implementation of the Declaration and periodically evaluate the degree of achievement of the agreed transport policy objectives. This task was assigned to the EU, the ECMT and the UN/ECE working in cooperation.

27. The Committee noted that, as regards both infrastructure and intelligent use of transport systems, the European Commission intended to continue to play a leading role and would, naturally, ensure appropriate involvement of UN/ECE and ECMT.

28. Recalling the work under way within ECE in the area of transport infrastructure and regulations, including also the considerations being given to the connections between Europe and Asia, the Committee underlined the

importance of the implementation of the ECE transport Agreements and Conventions. In order to have an overview of the application of ECE international instruments and the problems encountered in this respect, the Committee invited their subsidiary bodies to explore the possibility to undertake a monitoring of the ECE legal instruments under their responsibility and an inventory of the main problems encountered by countries in such implementation.

29. The Committee also noted that a number of infrastructure- and regulatory-related questions are being dealt with in Working Party WP.5 which may be considered a direct follow-up to the Conference.

30. The Committee also learned about the activities under way in the Russian Federation to develop transport corridors between Europe and Asia, thereby facilitating transit traffic between the two continents. In this connection, reference was made to the organization of the international transport conference on Euro-Asian links which will be convened in St. Petersburg from 12 to 13 May 1998.

ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSPORT SITUATION IN ECE MEMBER COUNTRIES AND OF EMERGING DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Documentation: TRANS/1998/10; Informal paper by the EC.

31. The Committee took note of document TRANS/1998/10 which analysed transport developments and trends as well as regulatory and infrastructural developments in the ECE region in 1997. In this connection, it decided to keep this item in the agenda of the next session and not to discuss it in the Working Party WP.5. The Committee pointed out that, as in the past, the annual document on transport trends should be prepared by the secretariat on the basis of national contributions and other unofficial sources.

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/1997/12; TRANS/WP.6/1997/1.

32. The Committee took note of document TRANS/WP.5/1997/12, reflecting the summary of activities aimed at assisting countries in transition, and noted with appreciation that two more workshops had been organized in 1997 for countries in transition: (i) on Urban Passenger Transport and Environmental Statistics (Washington, 12-15 May 1997) and (ii) on the Improvement of Rail Safety in Connection with the Increasing of Speed (Paris, 22-24 September 1997).

33. The Inland Transport Committee was informed by a member of the secretariat that the post of the second Regional Adviser would shortly be filled again.

34. Referring to the list of activities for assistance to countries in transition appearing in appendix 1 to its draft Programme of Work (TRANS/1998/3), the Committee invited Governments to consider possibilities for organizing further workshops in their countries in 1998 and 1999.

35. In order to support transport in transition countries, the Committee, referring also to Commission Decision B(51), invited Governments and relevant international organizations and institutions to contribute to the UN/ECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT) and to inform the secretariat of the type of assistance which might be expected.

STATUS OF APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL UN/ECE TRANSPORT AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS

Documentation: TRANS/1998/6; Informal paper by the secretariat.

36. The Committee took note of the information contained in the above document showing the situation as at 24 October 1997 with regard to signatures, ratifications, accessions, reservations and declarations, as well as of the information that, in the period from October 1996 to date, 41 accessions or ratifications had been registered of which 22 from Newly Independent States.

37. The Committee invited member Governments to become Contracting Parties to the existing legal instruments developed under its auspices and to take all necessary measures to implement them.

ACTIVITIES OF OTHER ECE PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND OF OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DEALING WITH PROBLEMS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMITTEE

Documentation: TRANS/1998/2; TRANS/1998/11.

38. The Committee noted the Joint Statement by Ministers of Transport of the ECMT and welcomed it as an important European transport policy statement, containing useful policy guidance elements for the Committee.

39. The Committee was informed of the report on the activities of the Committee presented by the Director of the Transport Division of the ECE secretariat to the 1997 session of the ECMT Council of Ministers in Berlin, considered it important to bring the work of the Committee to the political level and requested the secretariat to continue in future to present such report to the forthcoming ECMT Councils of Ministers.

40. In accordance with its wish expressed at its fifty-ninth session, the Committee was also informed on the activities of the Working Party on Facilitation of International Trade Procedures and the implementation of UN/EDIFACT during 1997.

TRANSPORT TRENDS AND POLICY AND TRANSPORT ECONOMICS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/22.

41. The Committee approved the report on the tenth session of the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (TRANS/WP.5/22). The attention of the Committee was drawn to the following items:

- (a) Implementation of the Pan-European transport corridors in the New Independent States (NIS)

42. The Committee agreed that the Working Party WP.5 should, in future, increasingly focus its activities on aspects of transport infrastructure and, in particular, on those related to the Pan-European Transport Corridors and Pan-European Transport Areas, including also the Euro-Asian links. In this connection, special emphasis should be put on questions of development of harmonized methodologies for appropriate transport and infrastructure planning. The impact of the application of ECE Agreements and Conventions on the above-mentioned transport infrastructure connections should also be considered.

43. In addition to the above area, the Committee felt that the concerns of countries in transition and of Mediterranean transport should also be duly reflected in the activities of the Working Party.

44. The Committee noted that the work envisaged by the Working Party WP.5 regarding the assessment of regulatory measures and requirements in accordance with the transport situation in the NIS, the collection of transport-related information on the physical characteristics of road and rail infrastructures, as well as volumes of passenger and goods traffic by link, might be taken up by an ad hoc joint meeting of the EC and the ECE, which should be of an informal nature (TRANS/WP.5/22, paras. 33 and 42).

45. The ad hoc joint meeting should also analyse and appraise projects on the sections of the following Pan-European Transport Corridors: No.2 Polish/Belarus border-Minsk-Moscow; No.9 (branch b) Minsk-Kaunas-Klaipeda and No.9 (branch d) Minsk-Kaunas-Kaliningrad (TRANS/WP.5/22, paras. 40-41).

46. The representative of the EC stated that his institution was examining the possibilities for financial assistance to the carrying out of the analyses as well as the participation of representatives of countries in transition in the above-mentioned joint meeting.

47. Bearing in mind the work under way within the TINA project (Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment) of the EC, which also covers the Pan-European Transport Corridors in the EU associated countries, the Committee asked the EC to submit to the forthcoming session of the Working Party WP.5 a report on progress realized in the implementation of the Pan-European Transport Corridors.

48. Furthermore, the Committee was acquainted with the organization of a major conference to be held on Euro-Asian links in St. Petersburg (12-13 May 1998). The findings of this conference should be reported to the next session of the Working Party WP.5 and be taken as an input in the investigations foreseen in follow-up work (TRANS/WP.5/22, paras. 60-63).

49. Subsequent to the forthcoming session of WP.5 a joint ad hoc meeting of the EC and ECE as proposed by the Working Party should continue to examine transport questions related to Euro-Asian links, taking into account, inter alia, the results of the St. Petersburg conference.

50. In view of the activities carried out and the experience gained with the Agreement on combined transport lines between Europe and Asia set up by OSZhd, it was felt appropriate to invite this organization to participate in the above-mentioned meetings.

51. The Committee recommended that the secretariats of ECMT and ECE should meet informally to discuss the division of labour between the two organizations in the areas covered by WP.5.

(b) General trends in national transport policies: replies to the questionnaire on transport development

Documentation: TRANS/WP.5/1997/1 and Adds. 1-14.

52. The Committee took note of the replies to the questionnaire on transport development circulated in 1997 and recalled the decision taken at its fifty-ninth session to circulate the questionnaire in future every five years, so that the subsequent circulation would be in 2002 (ECE/TRANS/119, para. 52).

(c) Questions related to transport in the Mediterranean

(i) Work of the transport study and training centres in the Mediterranean

Documentation: TRANS/1998/13.

53. The Director of CETMO outlined the work of the Centre performed in 1997 and that to be done in 1998, specially underlining the development of the transport infrastructures in the Mediterranean area according to the needs of the countries, the decisions of the Group of Transport Ministers of the Western Mediterranean (GTMO) and the Helsinki Conference. This would be essential for the success of cooperation on Euromediterranean Transport. He informed the Committee of the seminar to be organized in 1998 on the financing of the transport infrastructure in the Mediterranean area and mentioned some activities in the field of information technology developed in CETMO.

54. The representative of Greece explained the role of his country in the Eastern Mediterranean region and reported on a number of activities carried out in certain cases in collaboration with the Transport Training Centre in Volos.

55. The representative of the European Commission evaluated positively the work of the Mediterranean Transport Centres and said that similar activities as in the Western Mediterranean could be envisaged for the Eastern Mediterranean.

56. The Committee was informed of the project of the creation of a Mediterranean Transport Training School in Naples (Italy). It welcomed such development and encouraged the Centre to promote transport training in the Mediterranean region.

57. The representative of IRU informed the Committee that a study on the perspectives of road transport in the Western Mediterranean and the Magreb was being prepared by his Organization.

58. The Committee noted the work carried out by the Centres, expressed its support to them and requested that the Centres continue reporting to the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics.

(ii) Europe/Africa permanent link through the Strait of Gibraltar

Documentation: E/1997/51.

59. The Committee noted that the ECOSOC resolution on the project mandated a report on the studies related to the period 1998-1999, which would be prepared

for the substantive session of 1999, as in the past by the secretariats of the ECE and the ECA, and subsequently be reported to the Inland Transport Committee.

- (d) Studies on transport economics and track costs undertaken by other organizations

Documentation: TRANS/1998/4 and Add.1.

60. The Committee took note of the information received from the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) (TRANS/1998/4) and the European Commission (EC) (TRANS/1998/4/Add.1).

ROAD TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/361.

61. The Committee approved the report of the Principal Working Party on Road Transport on its ninety-first session (TRANS/SC.1/361). The attention of the Committee was drawn to the following items:

- (a) Road transport infrastructure

- (i) European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR)

62. The Committee took note of the continued work on the extension of the E Road network to the Caucasus and Central Asian States, including the proposals submitted from 10 countries in the region. Noting that insufficient information on the proposals had been available at the last session of SC.1, and taking into account the necessity to fulfil the provisions of the AGR Agreement and its annexes, the Committee recognized the importance of convening an Ad hoc Meeting on the implementation of the AGR in order to verify the proposals before submitting them for adoption to SC.1.

63. The Committee took note of the declaration of the representative of Hungary regarding the decision taken by his Government not to delete the E66 as an international main itinerary which also extends to the Italian territory.

64. In this context, the representative of Italy also announced the intention of his Government to extend the E25 to the island of Sardinia from Genova to Porto Torres and Cagliari.

(ii) Activities of the Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) Project

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/1997/3, TRANS/SC.1/361, paras. 20-21.

65. The Committee took note of the progress report of the TEM Project contained in document TRANS/SC.1/1997/3. It noted, in particular, the present membership of TEM to be: Austria (associated country), Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey.

66. A number of representatives of TEM Governments expressed their continued interest in and support for the project. The representative of the Czech Republic declared that, as part of the active participation of his Government in TEM activities, it was going to finance the post of the Project Manager who had taken up his function as Project Manager from 1 January 1998.

67. The Committee took note of the statement of the representative of the European Commission regarding cooperation with the TEM, underlined the importance of the project for the development of road transport infrastructure in the region and requested to continue to be informed of TEM developments.

(b) Road transport facilitation and harmonization

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/1997/4; E/ECE/811-E/ECE/TRANS/564 and Amends. 1-3.

68. The Committee endorsed the work of the informal group on the effective implementation of the European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR). Pursuant to the reservations on the part of certain delegations regarding the proposed revisions to the AETR, the Committee asked the Working Party on Road Transport to reconsider the proposals at its next session.

69. The Committee was informed, moreover, that the European Community was in the process of amending Directive 3821/85 in order to introduce digital tachographs and asked the secretariat to contact non-EU countries Contracting Parties to the AETR in order to clarify the applicability of article 10 of the AETR also to the revised Directive.

70. The Committee noted, moreover, that the Working Party was undertaking the preparation of a new legal instrument on the facilitation of international road transport to replace the former R.E.4 and expressed the hope that further progress might be made on the basis of the draft to be prepared by the IRU and the Government of Romania.

71. The Committee underlined the importance of eliminating obstacles to effective border crossing between Eastern and Western Europe and endorsed the

convening of a half-day joint meeting between SC.1 and the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) as a first step to draw on common experiences of both groups toward the identification of solutions to border-crossing problems.

72. Concerning the revision of the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Passengers and Luggage by Road (CVR), the Committee noted that the Working Party had asked the secretariat to contact the Permanent Missions in Geneva of countries Contracting Parties to the CVR, as well as the Permanent Missions of Greece, Romania and Finland, in order to determine the level of interest of those Governments in the possible revision of the Convention.

73. With regard to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR), the Committee endorsed the efforts under way in SC.1 to develop a new protocol incorporating electronic data interchange (EDI) techniques into the Convention.

(c) Road traffic safety

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/56; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/58.

74. The Committee was briefed by the Chairman of the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety on the main activities carried out by the Working Party in 1997. It commended the efforts of WP.1 aimed at improving the efficiency of its sessions and adopted the resolution on the Third Road Safety Week in the UN/ECE Region appearing in annex 1 to this report. The Committee invited Governments, international governmental and non-governmental organizations to give their full support to the organization of the road safety campaign within the framework of the Third Road Safety Week scheduled to be held from 1 to 7 May 2000.

REGULATIONS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF VEHICLES

Documentation: TRANS/WP.29/78/Rev.1; TRANS/WP.29/534; TRANS/WP.29/566; TRANS/WP.29/599.

(a) Development of new Regulations and Recommendations and updating of those existing

75. The Chairman of the Working Party on the Construction of Vehicles (WP.29) gave a concise report of the activities of the Working Party and its Meetings of Experts during 1997. Considering the 1958 Agreement, he noted that the Working Party had been exceptionally productive in 1997: seven new draft Regulations had been adopted in addition to sixty-one draft amendments to the existing one-hundred-and-four UN/ECE Regulations, annexed to this Agreement.

76. He acknowledged the results of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment, and stated the preparedness of the Working Party to administer the Agreement Concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections, together with the draft Rule No. 1, to be established and annexed to this new Agreement.

77. The Committee approved the reports of the Working Party on its one-hundred-and-eleventh (TRANS/WP.29/534), one-hundred-and-twelfth (TRANS/WP.29/566) and one-hundred-and-thirteenth (TRANS/WP.29/599) sessions. It encouraged the WP.29 to continue effectively its work and invited the Governments to follow the recommendations contained in the revised issue of the Consolidated Resolution on the Construction of Vehicles (R.E.3) (TRANS/WP.29/78/Rev.1).

78. The Chairman thanked the Committee for its recognition of the work accomplished by WP.29 and appreciated its decision to grant the status of permanent Working Parties to the current six Meetings of Experts reporting to WP.29. The Chairman of WP.29 confirmed that a priori no modifications of the structure of these bodies and of the periodicity of their sessions were foreseen for administering the two new draft Agreements (Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Global Agreement which should be established as parallel to the 1958 Agreement).

(b) Alignment of UN/ECE Regulations with the EU Directives and harmonization of technical work between the respective bodies of ECE and of the European Commission

79. The Committee noted that the voluntary technical cooperation between the ECE and the EC allowed continuing alignment of legal requirements applied to the construction of road vehicles within both organizations. The Chairman of WP.29 confirmed that this cooperation should soon become statutory, because in November 1997 the European Community decided to accede to the 1958 Agreement and its instrument of accession should soon be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

(c) Development of a Global Agreement

80. The Committee was informed of the progress made in considering the proposal for a draft Agreement Concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Vehicles, Engines and Components. The Chairman affirmed the commitment of WP.29 to conclude without delay this draft Agreement, envisaged to become parallel to the 1958 Agreement. He reported the vivid interest in the work of WP.29 by countries outside of Europe, with a particular reference to the Transportation Working Group of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

81. The Chairman conveyed to the Committee the request of WP.29 for extension of its mandate also to non-road applications of engines and components (TRANS/WP.29/599, para. 32). This request was backed by the representative of the United States of America, who explained that WP.29 should also be allowed to consider the relevant requirements to engines which are used not only in road vehicles but also in e.g. construction and agricultural machinery and would in no way duplicate the work done by other international organizations. Support for this extension of the mandate of WP.29 was also expressed by the representatives of the European Commission, Greece, Italy and the Russian Federation.

82. The Committee noted the progress made by the WP.29 in the preparation of the Global Agreement and agreed for the purpose of this Agreement to extend the mandate of the Working Party to consider the non-road applications of engines and components, provided that no duplication is made with the engines developed by other international organizations (e.g. for aircraft, ships and vessels).

RAIL TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/188.

83. The Committee approved the report of the fifty-first session of the Principal Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) (TRANS/SC.2/188). The Committee took note of the report given by the Chairman of the Principal Working Party on the progress achieved since its last session and considered in particular the following questions.

(a) Rail transport infrastructure

(i) European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC)

84. The Committee learned that at present 20 Governments were Contracting Parties to the AGC Agreement.

85. Recalling Commission decisions H (50) and G (51) and in accordance with the position of the Principal Working Party, the Committee endorsed the Principal Working Party's invitation to Central Asian and Caucasus countries to become Contracting Parties to the AGC Agreement. It asked the secretariat to continue work, through its Regional Advisers, on the establishment of a coherent international railway network in those countries and present a draft to the next session of the Principal Working Party, as foreseen by this body (TRANS/SC.2/188, paras. 44 and 45).

(ii) Activities of the Trans-European Railway (TER) Project

Documentation: TRANS/SC.2/1997/11, TRANS/SC.2/188, paras. 56-59.

86. The Committee took note, with appreciation, of the progress report of the TER Project contained in document TRANS/SC.2/1997/11. It noted in particular the present membership of TER to be: Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

87. The representative of the Czech Republic declared that, as part of the active participation of his Government in TER activities, it was going to continue financing the post of an Assistant Project Manager to TER also in 1998.

88. The representative of Hungary informed the Committee that, in view of the extensive work carried out by the project, his Government had undertaken to continue hosting the PCO to operate in Hungary and provide the technical and administrative personnel to assist TER. The representative of OSZhD underlined the importance of simplifying border crossing operations which had a great influence on the competitiveness of railway transport.

89. The Committee underlined the importance of the project for the development of the railway infrastructure network in the region, and requested to continue to be informed of TER developments.

(b) Facilitation of border crossing in international rail transport

90. The Committee endorsed the request of the Principal Working Party to Governments to take all necessary measures to determine a maximum time limit of 60 minutes (30 minutes for each of the neighbouring countries) for the border delay of shuttle trains (TRANS/SC.2/188, para. 27) in order to raise the quality profile of train traffic and increase the overall competitiveness of the rail transport sector. To this end, the Committee noted the intention of the Principal Working Party to prepare an official document which would be submitted to the Committee at its next session.

(c) Application of summer time

Documentation: TRANS/1998/5.

91. The representative of the EC informed the Committee that, according to the Eighth Directive of the European Parliament (EP) and of the EU Council (22 July 1997), a harmonized beginning and end of summer time had been determined in the European Union for the years 1998 to 2001, i.e. the last Sunday in March and the last Sunday in October.

92. In view of the advantages of common dates for the application of summer time for ECE member countries, the Committee, supporting the position of the Principal Working Party, urged Governments to ensure also in future a harmonized beginning and end of summer time in Europe. Furthermore, the Committee requested Governments to continue studying the possibility of extending summer time for a longer period and to provide that a medium-term period be applied for the same years in all European ECE countries.

INLAND WATER TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.3/143; ECE/TRANS/120; TRANS/SC.3/1997/2; TRANS/SC.3/AC.5/3; TRANS/SC.3/1997/1; TRANS/SC.3/1997/3.

93. The Committee approved the report of the Principal Working Party on Inland Water Transport on its forty-first session (TRANS/SC.3/143).

(a) Inland waterway infrastructure

(i) European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN)

94. The Committee took note of the present status of the AGN Agreement and was informed by the representatives of the Governments of Romania, the Netherlands and Ukraine that internal procedures were under way in their respective countries with a view to becoming Parties to the Agreement.

(ii) Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network ("Blue Book")

95. The Committee endorsed the decision of the Principal Working Party to proceed with the publication in 1998 of the Blue Book, considering that it might become in the future a useful instrument for monitoring the implementation by Governments of AGN and drawing their attention to existing missing links and bottlenecks in the network of E waterways on their territories.

(b) Technical and legal questions concerning the development and facilitation of international inland water transport

96. The Committee noted the main activities undertaken by the Principal Working Party and its subsidiary body - the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation - related to the above-mentioned questions. It endorsed the adoption by the Principal Working Party of resolutions Nos. 36 and 37 concerning the amendment of the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI) and the amendment of the Recommendations on Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels, respectively.

97. The Committee also noted the progress made by the Preparatory Committee established jointly by CCNR, the Danube Commission and ECE for the Drafting of the Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterways (CMNI) in the course of its third session (Geneva, 25-29 August 1997). The Committee emphasized the importance of the work carried out by the Preparatory Committee and encouraged it to complete the project as soon as possible. As to the adoption and signing of the final text of the CMNI, it was felt that it would be most advantageous if the new international instrument could be adopted and signed at a high-level intergovernmental conference in order, on the one hand, to highlight the importance of the inland water transport sector as a whole and, on the other, to give good publicity to the future Convention. The secretariats of the CCNR, Danube Commission and ECE were, therefore, requested to consider the possibility for the Convention to be adopted and signed either at the diplomatic conference envisaged for the adoption of the Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN)(see paras. 120-122 below) or on the occasion of any other high-level all-European transport conference.

COMBINED TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/77; TRANS/WP.24/75.

98. The Committee approved the reports of the Working Party on Combined Transport (WP.24) on its twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions.

Combined transport infrastructure

- (a) European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC Agreement)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88 and Corr.1.

99. The Committee, noting that the AGTC Agreement had at present 21 Contracting Parties, recommended all ECE member countries, that had not yet done so, to become Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement as soon as possible with a view to establishing a fully comprehensive Pan-European combined transport network.

100. The Committee took note that the package of amendment proposals adopted by the Working Party in 1996 was issued by the Secretary-General on 16 September 1997 as Depositary Notification C.N.345.1997.TREATIES-2. These amendments will come into force on 16 June 1998 unless a sufficient number of objections are registered by 16 March 1998.

101. The Committee underlined once more the usefulness of an extension of the AGTC network to all countries in Central Asia and the Transcaucasus and welcomed the activities of the Working Party towards the establishment of interregional links between Europe and Asia. The Committee also endorsed the decision of the Working Party to undertake a second inventory of technical and operational parameters of the AGTC for the year 1997. In view of the decision of the Principal Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) that an inventory should, in future, be made for the AGTC and the AGC at the same time, the Committee asked for the inclusion of the data of AGC in the inventory.

- (b) Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corr.1.

102. The Committee noted that, following the adoption of the Protocol by the Committee at its fifty-ninth session in January 1997, the Protocol has been opened for signature from 1 November 1997 to 31 October 1998 by States which are Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement. On the occasion of the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12-14 November 1997), the Protocol was signed by Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, and Switzerland. The Committee recommended all member countries concerned to sign the Protocol and to become Contracting Parties to it as soon as possible.

CUSTOMS QUESTIONS AFFECTING TRANSPORT

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/178; TRANS/WP.30/176; TRANS/WP.30/174.

103. The Committee approved the reports of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) on its eighty-seventh, eighty-eighth and eighty-ninth sessions.

- (a) Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975)

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/47; TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/45.

104. The Committee took note of the reports of the Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention, 1975 on its twenty-second and twenty-third sessions and was informed that the twenty-fourth session had been scheduled to be held on 26 and 27 February 1998.

(i) Difficulties in the application of the Convention

105. The Committee noted with satisfaction that, as a result of the various short-term measures taken by the Working Party, the ECE secretariat, national Customs authorities and the IRU, the amount of fiscal fraud no longer seemed to threaten immediately the functioning of the TIR transit regime and its central insurance system. The Committee urged all Contracting Parties to fully apply the TIR Convention in a harmonized manner and to refrain from unilateral action contrary to its provisions and spirit. The Working Party was requested to continue its efforts to safeguard the TIR transit system, to accord high priority to the establishment of a well-functioning international guarantee system and to take all necessary steps allowing for the transport of all categories of goods under the TIR regime.

(ii) Conclusion of phase I of the revision process of the Convention

106. The Committee welcomed the conclusion of phase I of the TIR revision process and noted that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in Depositary Notification C.N.433.1997.TREATIES-1 issued on 17 November 1997, has notified all 61 Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention of the amendment proposals adopted by consensus in the Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/47). These amendments will come into force on 17 February 1999, unless an objection is raised by one of the Contracting Parties to the Convention. The Committee urged all Contracting Parties, the ECE secretariat and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) to make all efforts to ensure the rapid implementation of the adopted amendments and to complete work on phase II of the TIR revision process by early 1999.

(b) UN/ECE Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport (Container Pool Convention)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/106; UN publication on the Container Pool Convention.

107. The Committee was informed that the Container Pool Convention would come into force on 17 January 1998 and had been ratified so far by Austria, Cuba, Italy, Malta, Sweden, Uzbekistan and the European Community. The Committee urged the Working Party to study the practical implications of the Convention, providing for a new Customs concept of "equivalent compensation", in order to ensure its smooth implementation in ECE member countries.

108. In this context, the Committee took note of the comment made by the Chairman of the Principal Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) that the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) should take the necessary steps to resume in its activities issues dealing with passenger and goods transport.

TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS

- (a) Report on work on the establishment and updating of recommendations for the transport of dangerous goods within the framework of the Economic and Social Council's Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

109. The Committee took note of the publication of the tenth revised addition of the United Nations Recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods, which contained Model Regulations on the transport of dangerous goods. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/3, the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15) was asked to take full account of the provisions and the structure of the Model Regulations in its work on restructuring RID, ADR and ADN.

- (b) Activities of the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15)

- (i) Work of the RID/ADR Joint Meeting

Documentation: TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/68; and Add.1-3; TRANS/WP.15/AC.1/70 and Add.1.

- (ii) European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)

Documentation: TRANS/WP.15/147; TRANS/WP.15/150.

110. The Committee approved the reports of the RID/ADR Joint Meeting on its 1997 spring and autumn sessions and of the Working Party WP.15 on its sixty-second and sixty-third sessions.

111. The Committee strongly urged the Contracting Parties to ADR which had not yet deposited the instruments necessary for the entry into force of the Protocol of 28 October 1993 amending articles 1 (a), 14 (1) and 14 (3) (b) of ADR (Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Romania and Yugoslavia) to initiate the necessary procedures without delay as the amendments were intended mainly to make the management of the Agreement more efficient.

112. The Committee noted with regret that some States, which had recently become Contracting Parties to ADR, had introduced unilateral measures making the international carriage of dangerous goods by road within their territory subject to the issue of costly special permits, thereby hindering the free movement of goods, contrary to the spirit of ADR and to the provisions of the Committee's resolution No. 217 of 4 February 1971. This resolution recommended that, in order to avoid any difficulties which might arise because of differing national requirements for international transport, the

Governments concerned should apply the provisions of marginal 10 599 only when it was considered essential and should endeavour in such cases to avoid introducing any requirement which would mean applying for an authorization for each transport operation. Moreover, marginal 10 599 had since been amended to stipulate the cases in which supplementary national requirements could be imposed and requested Contracting Parties to inform the secretariat of such requirements. The Committee thus reiterated its recommendation.

113. The Committee asked WP.15 to speed up its work on the restructuring of RID/ADR so that the restructured version could enter into force on 1 January 2001 and all the States concerned could have the text translated in time. Accordingly, the Committee invited WP.15 and the Joint Meeting to concentrate their efforts on the restructuring and to avoid discussing proposed amendments which were not strictly necessary for the restructuring or for harmonization with the United Nations Model Regulations, except where it was imperative to do so for reasons of safety or protection of the environment.

114. The Committee approved the allocation of an additional week for the Joint Meeting in September 1998, so that progress could be made on the restructuring.

115. The representative of the Russian Federation asked the secretariat to have WP.15 documents, in particular the amendments to ADR and the consolidated version of ADR as amended, translated into Russian.

(iii) European provisions concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN)

Documentation: TRANS/WP.15/148.

116. The Committee welcomed the publication of the ADN provisions in English, French and Russian. The version in question corresponded to the 1997 version of ADNR.

117. The Committee noted that the provisions should be annexed to the future ADN and should therefore be re-updated, in particular on the basis of new amendments to ADNR scheduled to enter into force in 1999. In that connection, the Committee shared the view of the representative of the Netherlands that the one-day meeting scheduled for June in the provisional programme of work was not enough and that it would be better to allocate that working day to the preparation of a draft ADN. The amendments to the ADN provisions would then be discussed in January 1999 in accordance with the WP.15 schedule contained in document TRANS/WP.15/147.

(c) Work towards the elaboration of a Draft Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN)

Documentation: TRANS/AC.6/6 and Add.1; TRANS/AC.6/8 and Add.1;
and TRANS/AC.6/10.

118. The Committee approved the reports of the Ad hoc Working Group on its third, fourth and fifth sessions. The representative of the European Commission informed the Committee that the Commission had prepared a draft ADN directive for the application of European requirements to national and intra-Community traffic within the European Union. However, the Council of the European Union had preferred to wait for the results of the work on the elaboration of a draft agreement. It was to be hoped, therefore, that an agreement would be adopted as quickly as possible.

119. The Committee invited the Ad hoc Working Group to make every effort to speed up their work by seeking pragmatic solutions to the various specific problems which might arise in the various river basins.

120. The representative of CCNR recalled that this work was being carried out jointly with CCNR and said that the signing of ADN should be under the joint auspices of ECE and CCNR and that his organization was prepared to help with the organization of a diplomatic conference by, for example, providing services for translation and interpretation into German.

121. The Committee adopted the principle of convening a diplomatic conference in 1999 or, if insufficient progress was made in 1998, in 2000, for the adoption of the Agreement.

122. It was suggested that the adoption of ADN and CMNI should take place, if possible, at the same conference so that the two instruments could be signed simultaneously. (See also paragraph 97)

123. Recalling the priority which it attached to work on the transport of dangerous goods and aware of the extra workload placed on the secretariat since 1996 in connection with the preparation of the draft agreement, the Committee expressed its concern that the P-2 post allocated to the Transport Division on 1 January 1996 had still not been filled. The Committee also stressed that the secretariat's assistance in preparing the texts of the restructured RID/ADR would be indispensable and essential if targets were to be achieved and that 1998 and 1999 would be crucial years in that regard. The Committee therefore requested the secretariat to ensure that the post was filled immediately by a competent candidate.

TRANSPORT OF PERISHABLE FOODSTUFFS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.11/196.

Implementation of the Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used for such Carriage (ATP)

124. The Committee approved the report of the Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs on its fifty-eighth session (TRANS/WP.11/196).

125. The Committee took note of the status of work on the transport of perishable foodstuffs, particularly regarding the scope of ATP and the procedures for the approval of multi-compartment, multi-temperature vehicles. It congratulated the Working Party on the adoption of an amendment to article 18 of ATP to improve the procedure for revision of the Agreement.

126. The Committee also urged the Working Party to prepare a draft annex on the transport of perishable foodstuffs, in coordination with the Administrative Committee of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (ECE/TRANS/55), so as to further facilitate the transport of such foodstuffs.

TRANSPORT STATISTICS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.6/133; TRANS/WP.6/1997/1; TRANS/WP.6/1997/11; TRANS/WP.6/1997/17; TRANS/WP.6/R.77/Rev.2; UN Publication: Proceedings of Berlin Workshop on Transport Statistics.

127. The Committee approved the report of the Working Party on Transport Statistics on its forty-eighth session (TRANS/WP.6/133). The attention of the Committee was drawn to the following items:

(a) Automation and geographic application of the E Road Census

128. The Committee noted with appreciation the results of the Project on the Automation and Geographic Application of the E Road Census, in which the Census of Road Traffic on the E Road Network was developed into a Geographic Information System (GIS). The Committee noted the importance of the 1995 Census in reflecting the evolution in traffic flows on the AGR network since the political and economic changes in Central and Eastern Europe. The GIS system would contribute to effective spatial analysis for transport infrastructure planning, facilitating the process of updating census data in future, and allowing for higher quality data and maps.

(b) Transport database and information systems development

129. The Committee was informed about the ongoing progress made in the development of a transport database system in the framework of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Transport Statistics (ECE/ECMT/Eurostat) and endorsed the concept of a single electronic publication of transport data among the three organizations, in order to enhance the speed, quality and comprehensiveness of available transport data, as well as to reduce the response burden of member countries.

(c) Harmonization of transport and road traffic accident statistics

130. The Committee was informed that the two transport publications (Annual Bulletin of Transport Statistics for Europe and North America (ABTS) and Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents in Europe and North America)(RAS), formerly published by the Statistical Division of the ECE, were now under the purview of the Transport Division, and noted the intention of WP.6 to consider possible changes to the format and content of the publications, including introductory texts, graphs, charts and network maps in the coming years, while ensuring the continuing timely publication of the ABTS.

DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Documentation: Informal paper by the secretariat.

131. The Committee was informed of the new EDP facilities made available to the Transport Division and of the system of the electronic storage and interchange of documents through telecommunication, which the division has developed and is continuously improving in cooperation with ITU and also with UN/ICC. The possibility was mentioned of exchanging messages and documents through E/Mail. A member of the secretariat drew up the possibilities given by the use of the World Wide Web, with particular emphasis on the publications stored in HTML format, and to the facilitation given by the access to the Division Home Page and by the classification of documents into agendas, reports, working and final documents.

132. The problem of slow distribution of documents through the regular mail was raised and the secretariat was requested to explore the possibilities to introduce an electronic distribution of documents.

133. The Committee requested the secretariat to store all new working documents in the system, possibly in PDF format, and invited the delegations to use the system for receiving the documents as well as for sending their contributions.

134. The Committee noted that the Web location of the Transport Division is:

www.unece.org (then click on Transport Division Logo).

135. It also noted the present Internet addresses of Transport Division staff members are:

jose.capel.ferrer@unece.org	olivier.kervella@unece.org
umit.armangil@unece.org	dominique.leger@unece.org
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PROGRAMME OF WORK

(a) Programme of work for 1998-2002

Documentation: TRANS/1998/3.

136. The Committee considered the Draft Programme of Work for the period 1998-2002 contained in the above document, prepared on the basis of the decisions taken by the Inland Transport Committee at its fifty-ninth session and by its subsidiary bodies in the course of 1997 and taking into account the Plan of Action developed by the Ad hoc Working Group on Strategic Directions and Efficiency.

137. The Committee adopted its programme of work as contained in annex 2 to this report and decided to review it annually in the light of possible future requirements and resource allocations.

(b) Further Guidelines for the presentation of activities of the Inland Transport Committee's programme of work

138. In accordance with the recommendation of the Coordination Meeting, the Committee convened an informal group of experts, during its current session to consider the Committee's programme of work (TRANS/1998/3). Under the chairmanship of Mr. H. Courtois, Vice-Chairman of the Committee,

representatives from the following Governments and institution participated in the group: Belgium; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Netherlands; Russian Federation; Spain; Turkey and the United Kingdom as well as the European Commission.

139. The Committee adopted the following proposals agreed upon by the informal group:

- (a) The indication of a priority per programme activity should be deleted;
- (b) The indication of a priority (using the same ranking scheme 1, 2, 3 as was done for the programme activities in document TRANS/1998/3) should be added to each work element. The determination of a priority should allow to determine the most important questions;
- (c) The Committee's subsidiary bodies should ensure that the formulation of the work programme, and particularly the items concerning "work to be undertaken", be as precise and concrete as possible.

140. Furthermore, the Committee requested the Working Parties, with a view to improving the legibility of the programme of work, to dissociate in future those of their missions which are permanent in character from those activities to be undertaken on particular items within a limited time period.

141. It also underlined that clear time schedules should be included for the work to be undertaken in the case of items which are not of a permanent nature.

142. The Committee asked the Chairpersons of its subsidiary bodies to examine whether those programme activities for which they assumed responsibility complied with the above-mentioned requirements. If this was not the case, the necessary modifications should be discussed at their respective sessions to make sure that the appropriate decisions were taken and that the amended texts of the draft programme of work were submitted to the Committee's Bureau (24-25 November 1998). The Committee also felt that its Bureau should devote particular attention in future to the improvement of the presentation of the programme of work.

143. In so doing, the Committee underlined the need for its subsidiary bodies to streamline as much as possible their respective programmes of work and to specify the broad objectives pursued by them and the measures to be carried out to achieve these objectives.

144. In connection with this item, the Inland Transport Committee noted that the Commission would establish a special group of experts on the programme of work for considering the budgetary implications of the various ECE sectors on

the basis of the various priorities within each sector. Therefore, the Committee should specify clearly its priorities and the staff resources needed to carry out the work related to the priority programmes.

145. The Committee felt that, while for the time being no additional resources would be needed to carry out its work programmes, all posts currently allocated to the Transport Division for the 1998/1999 biennium should be filled as a matter of urgency with competent staff, if necessary through employment of temporary staff. It also felt strongly that the current number and level of posts of the Transport Division had to be maintained in order to achieve an appropriate level and quality of implementation of the important activities carried out by the Committee.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Documentation: TRANS/1998/8.

146. The Committee considered the above tentative list of meetings and incorporated the following changes:

- the first meeting of the Committee's Bureau should take place preferably during the second half of June 1998;
- the Meeting of the Ad hoc Working Group for the Elaboration of a Draft European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (AC.6) should take place from 2 to 5 June 1998 (dates to be confirmed) and not from 2 to 4 June 1998 as originally scheduled;
- the Meeting of Experts of the European Provisions concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (WP.15/AC.2) (second session) scheduled for 5 June 1998 should be deleted;
- supplementary meeting days for the September session of the Joint Meeting of the RID Safety Committee and the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods are scheduled from 7 to 9 September 1998;
- the Principal Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) (forty-second session) originally scheduled from 13 to 15 October 1998 should take place from 14 to 16 October 1998;

- the dates originally retained for the sixty-first session of the Inland Transport Committee (18-22 January 1999) should be deleted and replaced by the following dates: 8 to 12 February 1999; the 1999 Committee session will last 4 days (8-11 February 1999); on 12 February 1999 the Bureau will be convened; as from the year 2000 onwards the Committee session would be limited to three days;
- the dates reserved for the Committee's Coordination Meeting (24-25 November 1998) should be taken for the newly elected Bureau.

147. The Bureau will examine the duration of the meetings of the Committee's subsidiary bodies in 1999.

148. The Committee adopted the list of meetings as circulated in TRANS/1998/8, together with the above modifications, which will be circulated in ECE/TRANS/126.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE IN 1999 and 2000

149. Mr. H. Courtois (Belgium) and Mrs. V. Cucu (Romania) were elected Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson respectively, for the sessions of the Committee in 1999 and 2000.

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE'S BUREAU

150. In accordance with its rules of procedure, the Committee elected the following as Bureau members for a two-year period:

Chairperson:	Mr. H. Courtois (Belgium)
Vice-Chairperson:	Mrs. V. Cucu (Romania)
	Mr. S. Kuchinsky (Belarus)
	Mr. J. Matejovic (Czech Republic)
	Mrs. M.-N. Poirier (France)
	Ms. U. Einsfelder (Germany)
	Mr. D. Tsagalidis (Greece)
	Mr. E.D. Kazansev (Russian Federation)
	Mr. J.-C. Schneuwly (Switzerland)
	Mrs. S. Kizildeli (Turkey)

OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Date of next session

151. The Committee may note that its sixty-first session is tentatively scheduled to be held from 8 to 12 February 1999.

(b) Tribute to Mr. A. Golaszewski

152. The Committee noted that Mr. A. Golaszewski, Chairman of the Committee of the Organization for Co-operation between Railways (OSZhD) would be retiring on 30 June 1998. Highlighting the valuable contributions he had made during its sessions, the Committee wished him all the best for a happy and well-deserved retirement.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

153. The Committee adopted the report on its sixtieth session and the annexes thereto.

Annex 1

THIRD ROAD SAFETY WEEK IN THE UN/ECE REGION

Resolution No. 246

adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on 16 January 1998

The Inland Transport Committee,

Conscious that the number of persons injured or killed in road accidents is still intolerably high and that road safety is a human, social and economic problem which has to be addressed in partnership between public administrations, private sector organizations and road users themselves,

Conscious also that in developing and implementing programmes and measures to improve road safety, special attention has to be paid to vulnerable road users, whether children, the elderly, bicyclists, passengers or others,

Noting that the first and second Road Safety Weeks held in 1990 and 1995 helped to raise awareness in ECE member countries of the fact that road safety can only be achieved through the concerted efforts of Governments, national and international public and private organizations, road users and the public in general,

Recalling the decision taken at its fifty-ninth session to organize a third international road safety campaign in the ECE region,

1. Decides to designate 1-7 May 2000 as the third ROAD SAFETY WEEK, during which road safety campaigns aimed at improving the safety of vulnerable road users will be mounted in ECE member States;

2. Invites member Governments to implement road safety programmes in their own countries in support of the ECE Road Safety Week under the common slogan "Partnership on the road increases safety";

3. Recommends in particular that Governments:

(a) Target their national campaigns at the major sources of danger to vulnerable road users, whether specific groups or in general;

(b) Develop, drawing on all possible sources of expertise, national activities to be carried out within the framework of Road Safety Week which address the most pressing problems for vulnerable road users in their respective countries;

(c) Ensure the participation of all groups concerned in the planning and implementation of national campaigns within the framework of the Road Safety Week;

(d) Make every effort to publicize the third ECE Road Safety Week through the mass media and by creating Internet links between national road safety web sites and the ECE road safety web page which will be created to mark the Road Safety Week;

(e) Share their experiences and ideas regarding the organization of the third Road Safety Week with other ECE member Governments through the Inland Transport Committee and its relevant subsidiary bodies i.e. the Principal Working Party on Road Transport and the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety, thereby maximizing the potential benefits for all;

4. Invites relevant international organizations to provide support and advice to ECE in the organization of the Road Safety Week;

5. Requests the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety to prepare a programme defining the objectives and modalities for the third Road Safety Week, paying particular attention to activities to be undertaken at the national, regional and international levels;

6. Requests the Economic Commission for Europe and its secretariat to provide all necessary support and publicity to the preparation, execution and follow-up to the Road Safety Week.
