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TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)  
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE

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TER/SC/126

TER Steering Committee  
19<sup>th</sup> Session  
1-2 July 2004  
Milan, Italy

**ABRIDGED REPORT**

1. The 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the TER Steering Committee took place in Milan, Italy on 1-2 July 2004.
2. The following TER countries attended the meeting: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Representatives of UNECE and TER Project Central Office also attended the meeting.
3. On behalf of Italian Authorities Mr. Carlo De Vito, Head of Infrastructure Division in RFI welcomed the participants of the meeting. TER Project Manager expressed his gratitude for the good conditions offered to hold the meeting.

Election of Officers

4. Upon proposal of the Project Manager, Mr. Rudolf Koller, representative of Austria was elected Chairman and Mr. Radoslav Ivanov, representative of Bulgaria was elected Rapporteur

Adoption of the Agenda

5. The participants to the Steering Committee adopted the agenda of the meeting.

Report of the Project Manager

6. The Project Manager provided detailed information on the activity developed by the PCO for the period from the last Session of the Steering Committee until to date.

He underlined the important activities in which the PCO staff was involved and particularly the main areas on which its efforts concentrated: organisation of the UNECE-TER – EFIP – TINA – Bavarian Chamber of Commerce Seminar on railways-inland waterways multimodal transport (March, Passau, Germany) and UNECE-TER – CER – UIC – European Commission (TAIEX) Seminar on regionalisation of railway passenger services (April, Paris, France).

The Project Manager informed the participants on the efforts of UNECE as well as PCO to extend TER membership towards other Central European countries (Switzerland, Ukraine, Belarus) as well as Caucasus region. He, also, presented the main elements of the CEI – UNECE-TER discussions held in Trieste, Budapest and Innsbruck (WP1) on the co-operation in 2004 with particular emphasis on the Seminar on border crossings during the Summit Economic Forum of CEI in Portoroz, Slovenia as well as the TER meeting which will be organized on the same occasion on projects identified as a result of the implementation of the TER Master Plan.

7. The Steering Committee approved the report and activity of the Project Manager and PCO.

#### Information on the implementation of TER Master Plan

8. The representative of the Executing Agency and the Deputy Project Manager outlined the major elements of the TOR for the TER Master Plan and informed the participants about the stage of implementation of this study.

9. The participants were also informed that the following countries have provided until now templates with projects identified in accordance with the methodology agreed upon: Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Austria has also provided information on the developments of projects for modernisation of her infrastructure.

10. Of paramount importance is the fulfillment of this commitment by all the other countries for the successful implementation of the TER Master Plan. Detailed information was presented to the participants on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Co-ordination Group Meeting on TEM and TER Master Plan, which took place on 9 June 2004 in Geneva.

11. Due to the delayed receipt of the countries' contribution it was agreed that the Master Plan would be finished by October 2004. In providing inputs for the TER Master Plan, TER countries could also use relevant information available, studies, etc. elaborated within other organisations like UIC, European Commission, TRACECA, OSJD, etc. Existing National Master Plans or strategic development programmes in various countries, could be also used.

12. It was outlined again, that the successful implementation of this complex and difficult work could be accomplished only if the participating countries would provide as soon as possible their inputs to the PCO according to the TOR and the request of the Co-ordination Group.

13. The preliminary assessment done by the consultant on the projects identified and sent to him until now were distributed to the representatives of the countries concerned i. e. Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Turkey for verification. Assessment of projects provided also by other countries will follow soon and be distributed to those concerned.

14. The representative of the Russian Federation appreciated very positively the implementation of TER Master Plan work and informed the meeting that due the reorganisation of the railway sector in his country, he would provide the templates for projects proposed for the Master Plan with some delay.

15. The representative of Czech Republic reiterated his country support for the Master Plan work and informed the participants that his country contribution would come soon to the PCO and Consultant.

16. Polish delegate requested TER PCO to make efforts for co-ordination of the TER Master Plan work with the similar exercise ongoing in UIC with the understanding that the added value generated from this synergy would be for the benefit of the countries and their railways concerned. The Steering Committee agreed to such approach but stressed that by no means the expected accomplishment of the TER Master Plan and its timetable be put in jeopardy.

#### Discussions and approval of the proposal for establishing a Task Force TER-CEI on facilitation of border crossing procedures

17. During the meeting of WP1 on Infrastructure Developments and Technical Operations (12-14 May, Innsbruck, Austria), TER Project Manager gave detailed information on the joint TER-CEI proposal for the establishment of a Task Force on facilitation of border crossing procedures.

18. He also informed the participants that the following countries expressed their readiness to take part in this operation: Austria, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine was invited too. Poland, Russian Federation and Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed their interest to take part in the activity of this group.

19. The Steering Committee appreciated positively this TER-CEI initiative and requested PCO to establish in co-operation with CEI and the countries mentioned above the mandate, the venue of the meetings and the border crossings selected to be approached in accordance with existing examples where Schengen regulations were implemented.

20. The organisation of the next TER meeting on border crossings would be done in co-operation with CEI during the Summit Economic Forum in Portoroz, Slovenia (24-25 November 2004). If conditions in Slovenia were considered by PCO not very favourable financially for the organisation of this meeting, PCO will seek to find another location for it in due time.

21. The report of the WP1 meeting which took place on 12-14 May 2004 in Innsbruck including the proposals and decisions outlined was approved.

22. The UNECE representative stressed the importance of the TER border crossing activities and of the creation of the relevant Task Force in co-operation with CEI and invited those countries, which have not expressed an interest for participation in the Task Force to consider their involvement.

#### Involvement of TER in Secretarial Work of Corridor VI

23. The Polish National Co-ordinator provided information on the role and the expected tasks to be accomplished by the secretariat of the rail section of corridor VI. As explained, the overall task would be to prepare and present to the corridor Steering Committee, in a commonly agreed manner, the annual report on the progress achieved during the past year, to propose the annual programme of work and monitor its implementation. Furthermore it was specified that the work of the secretariat would be based on data provided by the countries concerned in the form of replies to a uniform questionnaire, in which the following issues would be addressed:

- inventory of priority infrastructure needs along the Corridor VI, including missing links and bottlenecks;
- progress in covering those needs by the efforts of the countries concerned;
- collection and processing of relevant data and elaboration of necessary GIS application
- identification of projects
- border crossing status and facilitation measures taken by the countries concerned
- follow up of the railway reform

24. Several participants mentioned that though the tasks described are within the range of competence and experience of the TER PCO, the proposed activity comes at a moment when the TER PCO staff was reduced with one person, i.e. the Assistant Project Manager responsible for TER data and GIS activities, whose role in the execution of these tasks is essential.

25. Facing such difficulties several countries proposed that further clarifications on possible support to the TER/PCO from countries situated along Corridor VI be investigated.

26. Taking into account the above tasks, as well as the fact that all Corridors are important for TER Project, the Steering Committee appreciated that an involvement of TER/PCO into this work could be undertaken in terms of assisting TEM/PCO, acting as Corridor VI Secretariat with the railway aspects, at the extent possible, with the understanding that such an assistance would not disturb the TER/PCO's current activities and tasks and that the further involvement of TER/PCO into this work could be explored upon receipt of concrete support from the TER member countries directly involved in the Corridor VI.

Matters arising from UNECE-ITC 66<sup>th</sup> Session

27. The representative of the Executing Agency informed the Steering Committee about the new strategic objectives of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee for the near future, approved by the last UNECE ITC Session held in February 2004 at Geneva, including namely:

- Development of Euro-Asian transport links
- Use of telematics and ITS
- Transport security
- Charging users of railway infrastructure
- Globalisation of world economy and implications for transport.

28. In this connection, the Inland Transport Committee requested its subsidiary bodies to review these priorities in order to identify those relevant for their activities. Since TER is a UNECE Project, it is highly recommendable to follow suit and incorporate the corresponding activities into its programme of work for the next Project phase 2006-2010.

29. He further on presented the conclusions and recommendations of the EC, ECMT, UNECE and the EIB seminar on Transport Infrastructure Development for Wider Europe held in Paris in November 2003. According to them, the Corridor approach should remain the central element of infrastructure development in wider Europe and the Euro-Asian transport links should be taken into account and considered in the intermodal perspective especially because of rapid increase of traffic flows between Europe and China.

30. Consequently, the European Commission and its above partners as well as the EIB will establish the working group to review existing Corridors and if necessary to propose the new ones and to update the Van Miert report criteria for priority transport projects identification.

31. In this context, the UNECE will further on support the ongoing works on the TER Master Plan, which may also bring valuable inputs to the work of the ITC subsidiary bodies and recommends the Steering Committee to consider seriously the matter of Euro-Asian links in the next Project phase.

32. During the discussions, the representatives of several countries fully supported the idea of incorporating the above mentioned objectivities, including the Euro-Asian transport links.

33. In view of the increasing importance of the Euro-Asian transport links, the Steering Committee considered extremely positive the inclusion of the respective activities in the Programme of work for 2005 and thereafter in the next project phase, 2006-2010 and stressed the need that all efforts should be made in order to ensure full membership to the TER Project of the concerned CIS countries, not yet members, which will enable the TER Project to pursue these goals in a systematic way, and offer its experience gained in the course of its existence.

Approval of financial report for 2003

34. The Project Manager and his Deputy presented the Financial Report for 2003.
35. The Steering Committee approved the Financial Report of TER for 2003.

Draft Programme of Work for 2004

36. The Project Manager presented the major activities envisaged in 2004 in accordance with the Draft Programme of Work distributed.
37. The Steering Committee approved the Programme of Work including the preliminary list of meetings.
38. The representative of the Executive Agency gave additional information on the activities for self evaluation of the TER project.

Draft budget for 2004

39. The Project Manager and his Deputy introduced the draft budget for 2004.
40. The Steering Committee approved the budget for for 2004.

TER PCO Staff

41. The representative of the UNECE reminded the Steering Committee about the tasks, volume of work and the importance of the implementation of these tasks for the member countries and the TER Project and underlined the need of a strong, competent and skilled personnel in the PCO.
42. The representative of Austria informed the Committee that his country is ready to approve the continuation of the activity of Mr. H. Meelich in 2005 as Project Manager of TER.
43. The representative of Romania took note of this wish of the Steering Committee for the extension of the contract for Mr. M. Lupescu for 2005, last year for the present cycle. He stated that the Romanian side would start internal procedures after receiving the letter from the Executing Agency.
44. Pending the answer received from the Romanian authorities, the Executing Agency will take other appropriate steps for the completion of the personnel in the PCO.

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Other Business

52. The representative of the Executive Agency provided information on the request of the consortium under DORNIER Consultancy leadership for co-operation with the TER Project in the implementation of the South-East European Transport Observatory (SEETO), European Union Project and the positive reply from UNECE. Copies of relevant correspondence were made available to the members of the Steering Committee.

53. The representative of Hungary explaining that in relation to the further extension of the TER Project for a new cycle as well as the procedure required in his country for the approval of providing facilities in Budapest for PCO during this new cycle, requested the Executing Agency to send an official letter in this respect to the relevant Hungarian authorities.

54. Before the end of 2004, PCO will convene a special Session of TER Steering Committee dedicated to the results of TER Master Plan.

55. On the basis of the proposal made by Bulgaria during WP1, the Steering Committee approved the inclusion of the section Sofia via Karlovo to Varna and to Burgas in the TER network.

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Adoption of the Report

57. The Steering Committee adopted the report with the annexes.