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**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)  
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE**

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**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)**

**Steering Committee Meeting**

27th Session, 3 December 2009

Vienna, Austria

**REPORT**

1. The 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the TER Steering Committee was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009 Vienna, Austria.

2. The countries that participated in the meeting were: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Albania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia attended the session partly as observers. Representatives of UNECE, TER PCO and its consultants on the TER Master Plan Revision also attended the meeting. The List of participants is attached (ANNEX I).

**Opening of the Session**

3. The session was opened by Mr. H. Meelich, TER Project Manager.

4. Mr. Zottl from the Infrastructure, Research and Development Division of the Austrian Federal Railways (ÖBB) informed the session about railway investment activities in the Vienna region and introduced the Argus System of continuous monitoring of trains and vehicle status and of on-track derailment detection.

**Adoption of the Agenda**

5. The Agenda (ANNEX II) was approved as amended.

**Election of Officers**

6. The participants in the Steering Committee elected as its officers Mr. C. Dumitrescu (Chairman, Romania) and Mr. M. Radl (Rapporteur, Austria).

**Report of the Project Manager**

7. The Project Manager presented his report on the activities carried out in the reporting period, commencing with the ceremonial signing of the TER PCO Host Country Agreement at

the highest level between the UNECE and the Slovak Government, which took place on 27 July 2009 in Bratislava. He especially appreciated the close collaboration with the UNECE in this period as well as with the DG TREN and REGIO of the European Commission, OSCE, BSEC, EIB, CEI and the ECO, which made it possible to extend some of the TER activities also to Central Asia, inter alia also in the framework of the Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project. He also briefly summarized the efforts of the TER PCO aimed at extension of the scope and activities of the TER Project to Azerbaijan, Belarus, Latvia and Ukraine.

8. His report was endorsed by the session.

### **Revision of the TER Master Plan**

9. Mr. P. Pospisil, the TER PCO Consultant, presented the summary report on the filled in Revision Questionnaires, received from 14 participating countries. He also introduced the list of 156 Master Plan Revision projects proposed by these countries and invited the remaining countries to return the filled in Revision Questionnaires to the TER PCO at their earliest convenience.

10. He further informed about the results of examination of the following documents:

- New and Revised Master Plan Projects
- Draft TER Backbone Network Status in 2009, 2015, 2020
- Proposals for Updating the Master Plan Backbone Network
- Outline of Updating the TER Backbone Network Traffic Forecast
- Interrelationships between the TER and TEM Backbone Networks by the Third Joint Meeting of the TEM and TER Expert Groups held on 1- 2 December 2009 and about the conclusions adopted by the Group.

11. The Steering Committee took note of these conclusions and asked the TER PCO to send the above documents to the participating countries by email immediately after the session, asking for their comments to them to be delivered to the PCO by the end of January 2010 at the latest. The Committee also requested the TER PCO to elaborate a short questionnaire asking for results of the rail traffic development in 2009 and distribute it to the participating countries by 15 January 2010.

12. The session also appreciated efforts of the Project Manager aimed at coordinating the TEM and TER activities (e.g. reference system, project evaluation procedures) in the framework of the elaboration of the Master Plan Revision.

13. The Steering Committee took note of the updated Master Plan Revision Timetable, proposed by the TEM PCO, according to which the works on the TER Master Plan Revision should be terminated at the end of November 2010.

### **Long term strategy of the TER development**

14. The UNECE representative, Mr. J. Cekota presented some considerations regarding the challenges, which the Project may face in the future. He especially raised the question of the long term strategy of the development of the TER Project, particularly after its Master Plan Revision is terminated.

15. The Project Manager underlined that the present short term strategy is focused on the successful termination of the TER Master Plan Revision, the results of which should be presented at the next meeting of SC.2 in Vienna in November 2010 and at the ITC Session in February 2011 in Geneva and then published. As far as the long term strategy is concerned, he especially mentioned the extension of the project activities to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, involvement in the second phase of the EATL Project and closer cooperation with the OSZhD in

Warsaw, CEI, OSCE and ECO. In this connection, the Turkish delegation drew the attention of the Committee to the new ferry link from Samsun (Turkey) to Kavkaz (Russian Federation).

16. With respect to the OSCE, the Project Manager will for this purpose make use of his participation in its meetings in February and March 2010 in Vienna and Minsk. The established cooperation with the ECO will be further developed in the framework of the 2003 Memorandum of Understanding between it and UNECE, the Addendum to which, intended to strengthen the mutual cooperation is expected to be signed in 2010.

17. In the context of the TER long term strategy, Mr. J. Cekota pointed out that apart from the technical problems related to the different gauges between Central and Eastern Europe and Asia, there also exist legal problems because of two parallel systems - COTIF and SMGS. Aiming at their harmonization and possible future unification, the SC.2 established the respective Expert Group, which will meet for the first time in Geneva in March 2010. The Group will also start preparations for the Workshop on Interoperability of both systems to be held in November 2010 in Vienna. The interested TER countries are invited to participate in the work of the Group.

#### **Status of TER Trust Fund Contributions for 2009**

18. The Project Manager reported on the financial position of the Project. He also informed the session about the status of 2009 Trust Fund contributions, which were transferred to the respective bank account of Geneva by all member countries with the exception of Greece and Italy.

19. The participants raised and discussed the problem of activating those TER member countries, which have neither participated in the Project activities nor contributed to the TER Trust Fund for some years.

20. The session requested the TER PCO and the UNECE to contact representatives of both countries at the highest possible level, using inter alia the opportunities of the ITC Meeting in February next year and of the CEI Meeting in Trieste in March 2010 and to inform about the results the next session of the Committee, which would then decide about the next steps to be taken in accordance with the TER Trust Fund Agreement provisions.

#### **TER programme of work for 2010**

21. The draft TER Programme of Work for 2010 was presented and explained objective-by-objective by the Project Manager.

22. Following his answers to the questions raised by the participants, the Committee approved the Programme proposed by the PCO as amended in accordance with the results of the discussion.

#### **TER budget for 2010**

23. The Project Manager presented the 2010 Cost Plan line by line and answered the related questions of the participants. Using this opportunity, he stressed the sound financial position of the Project, which would make it possible to cover all the expenditures included in the Cost Plan.

24. He also informed the session about his established contacts with contingent sponsors, the contributions of which may cover additional costs such as participation of observers or more meetings, if necessary.

### **Election of the Project Manager**

25. The Chairman informed the session about the present arrangement, according to which Mr. H. Meelich will hold the post of TER Project Manager until the end of 2009 as well as about the kind proposal of the Austrian Government to make him available for this post for two more years until the end of 2011.

26. The Czech delegation, seconded by the Turkish delegation, proposed to accept this offer and this proposal was supported by all the participating countries. Mr. H. Meelich was then unanimously elected by the Committee as the TER Project Manager for the period 2010 - 2011.

### **Other Business**

27. The Project Manager mentioned the possibility of merging the TER and TEM PCOs in the future, which may bring some savings having one international staff at one place only. This idea was discussed by the Committee with the result to revert to it at its next session.

28. Answering the question of the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. M. Kovacevic, the Project Manager informed the session that the TER Financial Report for 2009 to be submitted at the next Steering Committee session in April 2010 will contain the list of expenditures broken down to respective budget lines including the TER consultants.

29. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina also raised the question of purchasing special server for the needs of TEM and TER data collection. The Project Manager explained that such a server may be placed in future in Geneva to serve also the purposes of the UNECE and referred to the respective conclusion of the Joint Meeting of Experts proposing the steps to be taken to clarify this subject.

30. The Project Manager informed the session about the envisaged TER Meetings in the year 2010. The first meeting would be held in western Austria in April 2010 and the next meeting in November 2010 in Vienna, coupled with the SC.2 session. Concerning the Steering Committee sessions, their venue and timing will be consulted with the UNECE and the Project Manager will inform the National Coordinators accordingly.

### **Adoption of the Report**

31. The Steering Committee adopted the report of the session.

32. The participants expressed their gratitude to the Austrian Government and to the Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology for hosting the session and its outstanding organisation.

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ANNEXES: 2