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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics

Fifty-first session

Geneva, 19-20 March 2009

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTY-FIRST SESSION

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
starting at 10.00 hours on Thursday, 19 March 2009^{1, 2}

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and its subsidiary bodies
3. European Commission (DG TREN)

¹ For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of all relevant documents to the session. There will be no documentation available in the conference room. Before the session, documents may be downloaded from the UNECE Transport Division's website <<http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html>>. On an exceptional basis, documents may also be obtained by e-mail (wp.24@unece.org) or by fax (+41 22 917 0039). During the session, official documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.337, third floor, Palais des Nations).

² Delegates are requested to complete the registration form available for download at the UNECE Transport Division's website <<http://www.unece.org/trans/registfr.html>>. It should be transmitted to the UNECE secretariat no later than one week prior to the session by e-mail (carole.marilley@unece.org) or by fax (+41 22 917 0039). Upon arrival at the Palais des Nations, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate (14, Avenue de la Paix). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone (ext. 740 30 or 734 57). For a map of the Palais des Nations and other useful information, see website <<http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>>.

4. New developments in intermodal transport and logistics
5. Modern transport chains and logistics
 - (a) National and sub-regional logistics action or master plans
 - (b) Design and management of freight and intermodal transport and the role of Governments
6. Reconciliation and harmonization of civil liability regimes in intermodal transport
7. Monitoring and analysis of national policy measures to promote intermodal transport
8. IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo in Intermodal Transport Units (ITUs)
9. Intermodal transport between Europe and Asia
10. Border crossing facilitation procedures relating to intermodal transport in a pan-European context(available at the session)
11. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)
 - (a) Status of the AGTC Agreement
 - (b) Status of adopted amendment proposals
 - (c) New amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network)
 - (d) New amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)
12. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement
 - (a) Status of the Protocol
 - (b) New amendment proposals
13. Date of next session
14. Summary of decisions

II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1 Adoption of the Agenda

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/122

1. The first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/122).

Item 2 UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and its subsidiary bodies

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/204/Add.1

2. The Working Party may wish to be informed of the results of the seventy-first session of the ITC (24-26 February 2009), in particular of its considerations and decisions relating to emerging transport trends, port hinterland transport, transport security, supply chains and logistics, 2005 and 2010 E-road and E-rail traffic censuses as well as of any other activities of its subsidiary bodies and the UNECE secretariat of interest to the Working Party.

3. The agenda of the seventy-first session of the ITC is contained in document ECE/TRANS/204/Add.1. Other ITC documentation is available on the UNECE web site.³

Item 3 European Commission (DG TREN)

Documentation: Informal documentation (available at the session)

4. The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities and plans for future work of the European Commission (DG TREN) relating to intermodal transport and logistics.

Item 4 New developments in intermodal transport and logistics

Documentation: Informal documentation (available at the session)

5. The Working Party may wish to have an exchange of views on recent developments and trends in intermodal transport and logistics in UNECE member countries. In addition to a review of the latest data and information about the performance of intermodal transport and logistics services in 2008 and an outlook for 2009 in the UNECE region, it is planned to discuss in particular the developments on European East-West, Euro-Asian, Trans-Siberian and South-Eastern European transport corridors and the potential for intermodal transport. Relevant informal documentation will be made available for delegations.

6. Delegations are invited to report on recent operating experiences, new and planned technologies, procedures, research and policies enacted in their countries or organizations. Short audio-visual aids and written documentation would be welcomed and could be distributed by the secretariat, if received in time before the session.

Item 5 Modern transport chains and logistics

(a) National and sub-regional logistics action or master plans

Documentation: Informal documentation (available at the session); ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115

7. At its forty-seventh session, the Working Party noted that several UNECE member countries had already embarked on plans to identify various logistics concepts, to analyze developments and future trends in logistics, in particular with regard to transport requirements and to define the role of Governments in this context (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115, paragraphs 39-43). Also, the European Commission had issued an action plan on logistics based on extensive consultations with stakeholders. This action plan covered issues such as e-freight and intelligent transport systems, sustainable quality and efficiency, simplification of transport chains, vehicle dimensions and loading standards as well as “green” transport corridors for freight. At its forty-ninth session, the Working Party reviewed these initiatives and felt that it might play a supportive role in this area through an exchange of information and best practices among countries in the UNECE region and by assisting in the development of appropriate logistics concepts (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paragraphs 30-32).

³ <<http://www.unece.org/trans/main/itc/itc.html>>.

8. The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent experiences made in Germany with the national Freight Transport and Logistics Masterplan and in the Netherlands with the developments of new logistics concepts. Also the European Commission may report on the latest developments with their Logistics Action Plan. Other countries are invited to also report on their experiences in this field. Audio-visual aids and written documentation would be welcomed and could be distributed by the secretariat, if received in time before the session. Relevant informal documentation will be made available for delegations.

(b) Design and management of freight and intermodal transport and the role of Governments

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/4; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/121; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/1; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2007/3; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115

9. At its forty-ninth session, the Working Party considered two notes on logistics prepared by its Chairman and its Vice-Chairman (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/1; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2007/3). These notes described and analyzed the current knowledge about logistics and supply chain management and reviewed the underlying causes and requirements of logistics determining transport demand, transport quality and land use.

10. With a view to further defining and structuring these activities, the Working Party invited interested experts to share their know-how and experiences at future sessions of the Working Party. Experts might also prepare a list of measures or fields of actions that would allow Governments to influence logistical developments at national and international levels. Elements for possible inter-governmental action could then be reviewed by the Working Party at its next sessions. The secretariat was requested to assist the Chairman in arranging such inter-sessional work for interested experts, possibly by moderating a virtual expert group communicating via e-mail (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paragraphs 26-34).

11. In accordance with this requested, the secretariat, in cooperation with an ad hoc expert group and with contributions from GETC and Austria (Informal documents WP.24 Nos. 5 and 6 (2008)), has prepared a study on the design and management of freight and intermodal transport and the role of Governments (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/4).

12. The Working Party may wish to review this study that discusses the various concepts of logistics and supply chains as well as their growing impact on freight and intermodal transport choices. The study also analyzes the role and areas of work for Governmental action and policies in this field and reviews examples of national and sub-regional initiatives. Finally, the study comes up with proposals for possible action at the intergovernmental UNECE level.

13. In particular, the Working Party may wish to decide on the activities identified in chapter VI of the study that might be pursued or newly taken up by the Working Party as they would fall within its mandate and area of competence and could provide a value-added at the inter-governmental and pan-European level.

Item 6 Reconciliation and Harmonization of Civil Liability Regimes in Intermodal Transport

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/3; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/121; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/113; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2006/5

14. Recalling the discussions at its earlier sessions (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/113, paragraphs 17-21; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117, paragraphs 48-51; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/121, paragraphs 51-53), the Working Party may wish to review the new Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea as prepared by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). As this convention may also apply to other carriages linked to sea transport, the possibility of conflict with other existing transport laws (such as CMR or COTIF) might exist in practice, even though the new convention contains provisions clarifying that international conventions in the field of road, rail and air transport shall prevail in such cases.

15. On the basis of a note prepared by the secretariat, the Working Party may wish to exchange views on the concept and practicability of the new UNCITRAL convention and may wish to consider its possible impact on intermodal transport in the UNECE region (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/3). The Working Party may also be informed of other national and sub-regional initiatives in this field, including related work initiated by the European Commission.

Item 7 Monitoring and Analysis of National Policy Measures to Promote Intermodal Transport

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/5 and Addenda; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/121; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2007/5

16. At its sixty-ninth session, the ITC had decided that the Working Party should continue the work carried out by the former ECMT in (a) monitoring and analysis of national measures to promote intermodal transport and (b) monitoring enforcement and review of the ECMT Consolidated Resolution on Combined Transport (CEMT/CM(2002)3/Final) (ECE/TRANS/192, paragraph 90). In accordance with the decisions of the Working Party, the secretariat had circulated a pre-filled questionnaire to UNECE member States with a view to obtaining an update of national policy measures to promote intermodal transport in a consistent and comparable way (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117, paragraphs 21-24).

17. The Working Party may wish to review the replies received as reproduced in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/5 and its Addenda and provide guidance of any follow-up activities taking account of the proposals made earlier in secretariat document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2007/5.

Item 8 IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo in Intermodal Transport Units

Documentation: Informal documentation (available at the session); TRANS/WP.24/R.83 and Add.1

18. The Working Party may wish to recall that in 1996 it had finalized, in cooperation with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Office (ILO), international guidelines for the safe packing of cargo in freight containers and vehicles covering the requirements of all land transport modes (TRANS/WP.24/R.83 and Add.1). In 1997, the ITC had approved these guidelines and had expressed its hope that these guidelines would contribute to reducing personnel injury in the handling of containers and would minimize physical hazard to which cargoes were exposed in intermodal transport operations (ECE/TRANS/119, paragraphs 124-126).

19. As it had been agreed earlier that these guidelines should be updated from time to time and supplemented by additional elements, such as provisions on fumigation (TRANS/WP.24/71, paragraphs 32-36), the Working Party may wish to review these guidelines, in cooperation with ILO and IMO, and establish an appropriate mechanism to do so. In this context, the Working Party may also wish to consider whether the activities of the ITC and the Working Party on transport security, as discussed at its fiftieth session (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/121, paragraphs 13-16), could have an impact on such a review.

Item 9 Intermodal Transport between Europe and Asia

Documentation: Informal documentation (available at the session); Informal document No. 9 (2007); ECE/TRANS/WP.24/111; TRANS/WP.24/2006/1

20. As mandated, the Working Party will be informed by the intermodal transport observatory in Ukraine on new developments and experiences made, particularly in investment plans and intermodal transport services along the two specified intermodal transport lines transiting Ukraine and forming part of the Euro-Asian transport corridors, i.e. Dresden-Kiev and Helsinki-Istanbul/Alexandroupolis (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/113, paragraph 10; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115, paragraphs 19-23, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117, paragraphs 26-30; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paragraphs 35-37).

21. The Working Party may wish to recall that the observatory in Ukraine has been designated in 2006 to serve as an information centre for intermodal transport operations between Europe and Asia, to provide a forum for the exchange of views among operators and Governments along the two designated lines and to allow, if necessary, for the introduction of corrective measures on the basis of best practices as well as of the model Action Plans and Public-Private Partnership Agreements prepared by the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/111, paragraphs 5-6 and annex 1; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2006/1).

Item 10 Border Crossing Facilitation Procedures Relating to Intermodal Transport in a Pan-European Context

Documentation: Informal documentation (available at the session); ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115

22. The Working Party may wish to be informed by the secretariat of progress made by UNECE bodies and international organizations, such as OTIF, OSJD and CIT on the three strategic elements of work that had been identified by the Working Party as constituting, in the long term, the cornerstones of international activities to facilitate border crossing procedures for intermodal transport in a pan-European context (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115, paragraphs 24-30):

- (a) Unified railway law resolving the present separation between the COTIF and SMGS regimes (CIM/SMGS consignment note);
- (b) Unified rail Customs transit system;
- (c) Annex on rail border crossings to the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982).

Item 11 European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC)

(a) Status of the AGTC Agreement

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.4

23. At present, the AGTC Agreement has 32 Contracting Parties.⁴ The Working Party may wish to be informed of the intentions of other UNECE member Governments to accede to the Agreement.

24. Detailed information on the AGTC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.4), a map on the AGTC network, an inventory of standards stipulated in the Agreements as well as all relevant Depositary Notifications are available at the website of the Working Party.^{5, 6}

(b) Status of adopted amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119

25. At its forty-ninth session, the Working Party had adopted, in accordance with articles 14 and 15 of the AGTC Agreement, a large package of amendment proposals updating and extending the geographical scope of the AGTC network (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paragraphs 40-45 and annex). These amendment proposals have been transmitted by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Treaty Section to all Contracting Parties by Depositary Notifications

⁴ Albania; Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; France; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Italy; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Kazakhstan; Montenegro; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovakia; Slovenia; Switzerland; Turkey and Ukraine.

⁵ It should be noted that only the text kept in custody by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement, constitutes the authoritative text of the Agreement.

⁶ <<http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html>>.

C.N.594.2008.TREATIES-3 and C.N.623.2008.TREATIES-4 issued on 21 August 2008 and 3 September 2008 respectively.

26. The Working Party will be informed of the status of these amendment proposals.

(c) New amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/3; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2007/1, Add.1 and 2; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/115

27. At its forty-ninth session, the Working Party had adopted the amendment proposals contained in documents ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/3, Add.1 and Add.2, with the exception of amendment proposals contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/3/Add.1 pertaining to (15) Austria, (19) Hungary, (35) Armenia, (37) Georgia and (39) Turkmenistan for which the consultation process had not yet been concluded (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paragraphs 40-44).

28. In case the required consultation process among countries directly concerned has been concluded, representatives of Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement present at the session of the Working Party may wish to formally adopt these remaining proposals as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1 in accordance with article 15 of the AGTC Agreement. The secretariat would then transmit these proposals to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Treaty Section for depositary action.

(d) New amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/2

29. The Working Party may wish to consider whether it would be appropriate to review the minimum infrastructure and performance standards and parameters in Annexes III and IV. These standards and parameters date back to the late 1980's and may need to be brought in line with modern rail and intermodal transport requirements.

30. To facilitate the discussions on this subject, the secretariat has prepared a short note (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/2).

Item 12 Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement

(a) Status of the Protocol

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1-2

31. The Protocol to the AGTC Agreement has been signed by 15 countries and ratified so far by eight countries, but is not yet in force.⁷ Its text is contained in document ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1-2. Detailed information on the Protocol, including all relevant Depositary Notifications, is available on the website of the Working Party.⁸

⁷ Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Hungary; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Romania; Switzerland.

⁸ <<http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html>>.

(b) New amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/9; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119;
ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117; ECE/TRANS/200; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/111; TRANS/WP.24/97

32. The Working Party may recall that the ITC had encouraged concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible. It had also requested the Working Party to consider and decide on amendment proposals to the Protocol that had already been submitted (ECE/TRANS/200, paragraph 93; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/119, paragraphs 46-50).

33. In accordance with this decision, the secretariat has prepared consolidated amendment proposals submitted earlier by Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/117, paragraph 58; TRANS/WP.24/97, paragraph 23). These proposals also take account of the results of a survey undertaken by the secretariat on the existing infrastructure standards contained in the Protocol (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/111, paragraphs 31-33).

34. The Working Party may wish to consider and decide on these proposals with a view to their formal adoption in accordance with articles 13, 14 and 15 of the Protocol, once the Protocol had come into force (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/9).

Item 13 Date of Next Session

35. The autumn session of the UNECE Working Party is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 12 and 13 October 2009.

Item 14 Summary of Decisions

Documentation: TRANS/WP.24/63; ECE/TRANS/156

36. In line with established practice (TRANS/WP.24/63, paragraph 54) and in accordance with the decision of the ITC (ECE/TRANS/156, paragraph 6), at the end of the session the Chairman will make a brief summary of the decisions taken. Following the session, the UNECE secretariat, in cooperation with the Chairman, will establish a report on the outcome of the session for formal adoption at the autumn session of the Working Party.
