

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
30 March 2016

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Rail Transport****Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law****Thirteenth session**

Geneva, 8–10 June 2016

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

UNECE Group of Experts: Administrative arrangements**Work Plan and Terms of Reference of the UNECE Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law****Note by the secretariat****I. Work Plan****A. Objectives of work**

1. In accordance with the Inland Transport Committee Resolution No. 263 on Unified Railway Law, the Group of Experts should monitor the pilot implementation of the legal provisions towards Unified Railway Law prepared during the first phase of the Group as well as prepare if necessary the accompanying to the draft provisions documents.
2. The planned tasks include the following elements:
 - (a) The coordination of the preparation and/or the review of the already prepared necessary documents for rail transport by the relevant international associations in the railway sector i.e. the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), the International Rail Transport Committee (CIT) and the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) following the draft legal provisions prepared during the previous phase of the group of experts;
 - (b) The monitoring of the results of pilot tests undertaken by Railway Undertakings and International Organizations for railways in order to test the provisions prepared in practice and the preparation of recommendations accordingly;
 - (c) The discussion on possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law.

3. The UNECE secretariat should ensure close cooperation with CIT, the European Union (EU), OSJD and OTIF, as well as, with the other concerned Regional Commissions of the United Nations, particularly with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

B. Activities

4. At its thirteenth session, the Group of Experts will undertake the following tasks:
- (a) Adoption of a work plan (objectives, activities, time schedule);
 - (b) Coordinate the preparation of necessary documents for rail transport following the draft legal provisions prepared during the previous phase of the group of experts:
 - (i) Discuss and exchange views on the list of documents needed to be prepared following the draft legal provisions prepared during the previous phase of the group of experts;
 - (ii) Review the already prepared documents for rail transport by the relevant international associations in the railway sector i.e.: CIT, OSJD and OTIF;
 - (ii) Discuss and exchange views on the need to prepare new documents or use the existing ones.
 - (c) Monitor the results of and prepare recommendations on pilot tests performed by Railway Undertakings and International Organizations for railways in order to test the draft legal provisions towards Unified Railway Law in practice including:
 - (i) Discuss and exchange views on which Railway Undertakings and International Organizations for railways shall perform the pilot tests and how they could be run;
 - (ii) Review and discuss presentations by Railway Undertakings and International Organizations for railways on possible pilot tests;
 - (d) Discuss and suggest possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law:
 - (i) Preliminary exchange of views on possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law.
5. At its fourteenth session, the Group of Experts will undertake the following tasks:
- (a) Review and finalise the necessary documents for rail transport following the draft legal provisions prepared during the first phase of the Group;
 - (b) Review the results of pilot tests performed by Railway Undertakings and International Organizations for railways:
 - (i) Review and finalize a list of recommendations based on results of the pilot tests.
 - (c) Review and finalize a list of possible next steps of the work on Unified Railway Law.

C. Time schedule

9. In accordance with the ITC Resolution, work on preparing and completing the planned tasks is scheduled as follows:

- (a) UNECE Group of Experts, thirteenth session, 8–10 June 2016, Geneva;
- (b) UNECE Group of Experts, fourteenth session, 5–7 October 2016, Geneva.

II. Terms of Reference¹

A. Scope of issues and achievements expected

10. In line with the Joint Declaration on Euro-Asian Rail Transport and Activities towards Unified Railway Law, signed at the UNECE Ministerial Meeting “Making the Euro-Asian Transport Network Operational” on 26 February 2013, as well as with the draft legal provisions towards Unified Railway Law prepared by the Group of Experts, the Group during this phase will focus its work on the following issues:

(a) Coordinate the preparation and/or review the already prepared necessary documents for rail transport by the relevant international associations in the railway sector i.e. CIT OSJD and OTIF, following the draft legal provisions prepared during the previous phase of the group of experts. The documents that should be prepared and/or reviewed during this phase are the following:

- Standard Model for the Consignment Note;
- Formal Report;
- Wagon List;
- Container Note;
- Charges Note;
- Subsequent Orders;
- Circumstances Preventing;
- Notification of Payment;
- Authorization to Escort;
- Missing Goods Report;
- Notification Correction;
- Provisional Analysis to Transit;
- Wagon Labels.

(b) The ITC resolution on Unified Railway Law (ECE/TRANS/2016/17) encourages Railway Undertakings and International Organizations for railways to test the draft legal provisions towards Unified Railway Law prepared, whenever possible, in practice. The Group of Experts should monitor the results of these pilot tests and prepare recommendations accordingly.

¹ The terms of reference of the Group of Experts were adopted by the seventy-eighth session of the Inland Transport Committee on 23–26 February 2016 as contained in ECE/TRANS/2016/18.

11. The Group of Experts should base its considerations on previous work of UNECE in this field, in particular the provisions of articles 2 and 5 of the Joint Declaration and the legal provisions prepared by the Group of Experts on Unified Railway Law.

B. Methods of work

12. The Group of Experts will be established and function in accordance with the UNECE Guidelines for teams of specialists approved by the Executive Committee of UNECE on 31 March 2010 (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1). At its first meeting, the Group of Experts will adopt a work plan, clearly defining its objectives and activities, including a time schedule for their implementation.

13. The Group of Experts is expected to meet twice in 2016, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, before concluding its activities with the transmission of a report to the Working Party on Rail Transport at its seventieth session (November 2016, Geneva). This report shall also contain proposals for monitoring procedures and follow-up activities.

14. Translation of documents and simultaneous interpretation of its sessions in English, French and Russian shall be provided by United Nations services (UNOG) for the two sessions held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

15. Participation in the Group of Experts is open to all concerned United Nations member countries and experts. Concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as concerned railway companies, freight and forwarding industries are invited to participate and provide expert advice in compliance with United Nations rules and practices.

C. Secretariat

16. UNECE will provide secretariat services for the Group of Experts and shall ensure close cooperation with all stakeholders, including CIT, EU, OSJD, OTIF and concerned regional commissions of the United Nations, particularly ESCAP.
