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

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**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)  
Steering Committee  
50th session, 17 November 2020**

**REPORT**

The 50th session of the TER Steering Committee was held online as a Webex videoconference.

**PARTICIPATION**

The countries that participated in the session were: Croatia, Czech Republic, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey. Representatives of the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division, Mr. G. I. Bessonov, the TER Project Manager, Ms. M. Kopczynska, the TER Deputy Project Manager and the UNECE/TER Consultants also attended the session. List of participants is attached (Annex 1).

**OPENING OF THE SESSION**

Ms. M. Kopczynska welcomed the members of the Steering Committee and opened the session.

**1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The Agenda of the session (Annex 2) was approved as submitted by the Project Management.

**2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The Steering Committee elected as its officers Mr. Jerzy Kleniewski (Chairman, Poland) and Mr. Petr Pospisil (Rapporteur, on behalf of the Czech Republic).

### **3. REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK**

The Chairman extended his thanks to the participants for their support in the course of the election and informed the session about the decision of the JSC Russian Railways not to extend the services of Mr. G. I. Bessonov beyond 31 December 2020. In this connection, he expressed his great appreciation and thanks to Mr. Bessonov for his remarkable services as the TER Project Manager from 2013. He made a proposal to prepare a plaque to Mr. Bessonov.

Mr. G .I. Bessonov addressed the session, conveying his deep feelings of gratitude to the TER National Coordinators and the UNECE representatives for their permanent support in his demanding role of the TER Project Manager and recommended as his successor his Deputy, Ms. M. Kopczynska.

The representatives of UNECE and representatives of Slovenia, Russian Federation, Serbia and Slovakia joined the Chairman in praising Mr. Bessonov for his great contributions to the TER Project as well as for his lasting friendship.

The Deputy Project Manager informed the session about the implementation of the Programme of Work in the reporting period and expressed her satisfaction that despite the difficulties caused by the Covid 19 pandemics and few opportunities to meet, the work continued on the High Speed Master Plan, Backbone Network 2020 annual report, TER Strategy 2025 and projects aimed at the GIS application for the TER network and at its compliance to the technical parameters of the international agreements. She expressed her gratitude to Mr. Bessonov for the outstanding cooperation and having kept the project in an excellent shape.

The Steering Committee appreciated the efforts of the Project Management and took note of her report.

#### ***a. TER Annual Report;***

1. The UNECE/TER Consultant, Mr. P. Pospisil, presented briefly the draft TER Backbone Network Annual Report 2020 that was sent to the PCO, UNECE and National Coordinators in advance on 29 September 2020. Consequently, the Steering Committee set the deadline for final comments to it on 31 December 2020. The report will be then finalized incorporating the comments received and made available at the UNECE/TER website.
2. Reflecting the need to adjust the TER Backbone Network, established in 2011 to take into account the newly constructed links, changes of rail traffic flows and development of the other international transport networks in the region in the meantime, the proposals on respective minor changes of selected links and/or addition of new links to the TER Backbone Network will be sent to the countries in question by the end of November 2020 with the deadline for the responses of 31 March 2021. In this connection, the possibility to postpone the decision on the new/changed links up to the TER Master Plan revision -

should its elaboration be recommended in the 2025 Strategy - will be considered.

3. In order to prepare the 2021 Annual Report, the National Coordinators were requested to provide the TER PCO with the necessary data for 2021 by the end of May 2021, making use of the respective templates to be sent to them by 30 April 2021.

***b. TER projects;***

4. Ms. M. Kopczynska introduced the UNECE/TER Consultants, Messrs. Peter Los and Enes Covrk, selected to elaborate in close co-operation the two TER projects approved at the 49<sup>th</sup> session of the Steering Committee and asked them to explain their approaches proposed.
5. Mr. P. Los presented his web-based “GIS application for UNECE TER network” and stressed its two related crucial points i.e. the network resolution and its feature parameters. The basic milestones of the work will be building of the application in January 2021, deployment to the UNECE server by the end of March 2021 and data collection to be finished in December next year.
6. In the course of the following discussion, members of the Steering Committee appreciated the work already done by the Consultant and recommended to him to concentrate in the first step especially at the TER network, ensuring that the terms of reference are achieved.
7. Mr. E. Covrk introduced the project dealing with the compliance of the TER countries’ infrastructure to technical parameters identified in the international legal agreements. The main tasks of the project will be to identify network’s spots not identical with the AGC and AGTC agreements, potential projects meeting their requirements as well as their interoperability and benchmarking between countries and projects. He also promised to distribute the report on the project by the end of November 2021. The Steering Committee appreciated his information and recommended him to make use also of the results of other Consultants working on related TER projects.
8. The Chairman expressed his thanks to both Consultants for their interesting presentations.

***c. TER Strategy 2025;***

9. The UNECE/TER Consultant, Ms. Ekaterina Kozyreva introduced to the Steering Committee document “TER Strategy – Framework for Discussion”, in which she described the current situation regarding visibility of the TER Project, context for its development strategy, similar and potentially competitive projects, challenges and opportunities for the proposed strategy, mission, vision and objectives of the TER Project until 2025, proposals on TER activities and new tools in the coming

five years and the road map for realization of the TER Strategy 2025. The copy of the document (Framework for discussion) is attached to this report as its Annex 3.

10. The Chairman thanked Ms. E. Kozyreva for her impressive and ambitious presentation, considering it as the very good starting point for this important activity. He also proposed to leave some time to the members of the Steering Committee for its study and elaboration of detailed comments.
11. The UNECE representative, Mr. N. Nikolic also greatly appreciated the document and drew attention to the request of the Consultant to the members of the Steering Committee to propose dates of individual consultations with her.
12. The UNECE representative, Mr. F. Dionori appraised the presentation of the Consultant as an excellent basis for the future TER strategy and in this connection advised her to take into account also the related UNECE activities, especially those of SC.2 relating to innovation and WP.6 in relation to transport statistics.
13. The Steering Committee requested its members to send their comments directly to Ms. E. Kozyreva with a copy to the Project Management.

***d. High Speed Rail Master Plan;***

14. The Deputy Project Manager briefly summarized the status of the draft report, elaborated by the UNECE/TER Consultant, Mr. J. Raczynski, extending at the same time her thanks to Mr. F. Dionori who enormously contributed to refining the first version of the report, and to the TER states that sent their comments to the second version with special thanks to Mr. Kleniewski, who had sent the detailed remarks to the whole report.
15. The Polish National Coordinator, Mr. J. Kleniewski stated that until the comments of his country to the draft report would not be reflected by the Consultant, the final report on the activity cannot be adopted.
16. The UNECE representatives drew in this connection the attention of the participants to the fact that there was very short time available for the final document that would be needed by 27 November. After that date, the edition, printing and publication of the final report, planned for the next year, would not be possible with all the related consequences.
17. Slovenia, Turkey and the Russian Federation noted that for them the current version of the Master Plan was acceptable subject to the including of minor editing comments that had been sent.
18. Poland stressed again that due to rejection of all comments sent to the Consultant on draft final report, it could not be accepted. Upon the discussion, the Steering Committee

requested the Deputy Project Manager to send a letter to the Consultant, asking him to confirm by 19 November 2020 whether he is ready to finalize the report and then take into account the comments received, by 27 November. The list of these final comments, elaborated by the Polish representative, taking into account Mr. Raczynski's TOR requirements, will be attached to the letter focusing on those areas that were of fundamental importance.

19. In case the Consultant delivers the final, accordingly corrected report by 27 November this year, the TER Project Management would distribute it immediately to the National Coordinators and the UNECE, asking them for final decisions on the report by 4 December 2020.
20. Should there be no answer or the negative one to the above letter received from the Consultant or in case that no unanimous positive decision on the final document is reached by the Steering Committee by 4 November, the Project Management will convene an extraordinary session on 7 December 2020. At that session, the decision on the steps to be taken to conclude this whole activity and also on the way of dealing with the consequences.
21. The Steering Committee acknowledged that the non-delivery of the final report of the Master Plan would have a direct impact on the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division achieving its General Assembly mandated targets with the consequences that this would entail.

#### ***e. Programme of Work 2021***

22. The draft Programme of Work, submitted by the Project Manager was tentatively adopted and the final version, taking into account the outcomes of the 2025 Strategy, will be submitted for approval in electronic procedure.

## **4. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

### ***a. Status of TER Trust Fund Contributions and Expenditures 2020;***

23. The Steering Committee was informed by the UNECE representative, Mr. N. Nikolic about the status of Trust Fund contributions and expenditures in 2019 and 2020. According to his information, all the member countries settled their 2019 obligations toward the Fund. In 2020, obligations of Armenia, Poland and Romania are still outstanding. Out of the total Project budget for this year amounting to USD 289,000, the expenditures until 28 October reached the level of USD 142,215.
24. In this connection, the Polish National Coordinator, Mr. J. Kleniewski informed the Steering Committee that the 2020 Polish contribution will be delivered to the Fund well before the end of the year.

25. The Steering Committee expressed its satisfaction with the sound financial situation of the TER Project.

***b. TER Cost Plan 2021 Budget - statement***

26. The TER Deputy Manager in her statement explained that the draft TER Cost Plan 2021 and budget will be submitted for approval in electronic procedure, since their final versions will depend also on the outcomes of the 2025 Strategy.

***c. Attachment to the TER Co-operation Trust Fund Agreement for Project phase 2021 - 2025***

27. The Steering Committee decided that the validity of the current Attachment will be extended to the end of 2021. Draft attachment 1 for the Project phase 2022-2026 will be prepared after the TER Strategy 2025 will be adopted.

***d. Host country agreement with Serbia for 2021***

28. Mr. N. Nikolic informed the session of the progress reached in preparation of the host country agreement for the next year.

29. In this context, the Steering Committee confirmed its interest in continued operation of the TER PCO in Belgrade and asked the Project Management to consider inviting Ms. S. Miljevic to the sessions of the Committee and getting her more involved in the activities of TER.

***e. TER managers contracts***

30. Because of the vacant post of the TER Project Manager as from 1 January 2021, the Steering Committee requested the UNECE to send as soon as possible letters to all TER National Coordinators asking them to propose candidates for TEM Project Manager.

31. The Steering Committee turned to the Deputy Project Manager, Ms. M. Kopczyńska and to the Polish National Coordinator, Mr. J. Kleniewski with the kind appeal for her to serve as the acting TER Project Manager from 1 January 2021 until the new Project Manager is approved.

32. This appeal was accepted by Polish side and the Steering Committee expressed to it its great appreciation for its understanding and positive decision.

**5. OTHER BUSINESS**

33. The Steering Committee acknowledged with interest the offer of Mr. Stanislav Dyatlov to continue as the assistant of the Project Manager also after 1 January 2021. The Steering Committee thanked Mr. Dyatlov for all his excellent work over the years and noted that any decision on this would be taken once the definitive Project Management team had been identified.

34. The Steering Committee extended its thanks to Mr. G. I. Bessonov for his diligent work and immense contribution to the development and successes of the TER Project. In this respect the Chairman proposed to prepare a plaque addressed to Mr. Bessonov to be signed by all the National Coordinators, UNECE representatives and the Deputy Project Manager.

## **6. ADOPTION OF MAIN DECISIONS**

### ***Item 1. Adoption of Agenda***

- Agenda of the session was approved.

### ***Item 2. Election of Officers***

- Mr. J. Kleniewski (Chairman, Poland) and Mr. P. Pospisil (Rapporteur, on behalf of the Czech Republic) were elected as officers.

### ***Item 3.a. TER Annual Report***

- The Steering Committee set the deadline for final comments to the 2020 Annual Report at 31 December 2020.
- List of new links to the TER Backbone Network will be sent to the countries in question by end of November 2020 with the deadline for the responses of 31 March 2021.
- In order to prepare the 2021 Annual Report, the National Coordinators were requested to provide the TER PCO with the necessary data for it by the end of May 2021, making use of the respective templates to be sent to them by the end of April next year.

### ***Item 3.b. TER Projects***

- The Steering Committee recommended to Mr. P. Los to concentrate in the first step of his work especially at the TER network, ensuring that the terms of reference are achieved.
- The Steering Committee recommended to Mr. E. Covrk to make use in his work also of the results of other Consultants working on related TER projects.

### ***Item 3.c. TER Strategy 2025***

- The National Coordinators were requested to send their comments to the document "TER Strategy – Framework for Discussion" directly to Ms. E. Kozyreva with a copy to the PCO.
- The members of the Steering Committee should propose to Ms. Kozyreva dates of individual consultations with her.

### ***Item 3.d. High Speed Rail Master Plan***

- The Deputy Project Manager will send by e-mail a letter to Mr. J. Raczynski with the list of final comments attached, asking him to confirm by 19 November 2020 whether he is ready to finalize the report and then take into account the final comments received, by 27 November. The list of these comments, elaborated by the Polish representative, taking into account Mr. Raczynski's TOR requirements, will be attached to the letter focusing on those areas that were of fundamental importance
- In case this effort would not be successful and the Steering Committee would not be thus in position to reach the unanimous positive decision on the final document by 4 December, the Project Management will convene an extraordinary session on 7 December 2020 that would decide on the next steps to be taken to conclude the whole activity and also on the way of dealing with the consequences.

### ***Item 3.e. Programme of Work 2021***

- The approval of the Programme of Work for 2021 was tentatively adopted and its final version will be approved in electronic procedure.

### ***Item 4.b. TER Cost Plan 2021 Budget - statement***

- The TER PCO will submit the draft TER Cost Plan 2021 and budget for approval in electronic procedure to the Steering Committee.

### ***Item 4.c. Attachment to the TER Co-operation Trust Fund Agreement for Project phase 2021 - 2025***

- The validity of the current Attachment was extended to 31 December 2021.

### ***Item 4.d. Host country agreement with Serbia for 2021***

- The Project Management will consider the possibility of inviting Ms. S. Miljevic to the sessions of the Steering Committee.

### ***Item 4.e. TER managers contracts***

- Ms. M. Kopczynska, the TER Deputy Project Manager will kindly serve as the acting Project Manager until the new Manager is appointed.

### ***Item 5. Other business***



- The Chairman was authorized to prepare on behalf of the Steering Committee the plaque to Mr. G. I. Bessonov, the outgoing TER Project Manager thanking him for all his great contributions to the Project and send it to him signed by all the members of the Committee.

Annexes: 3