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HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT,
ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Steering Committee on the Transport, Health and
Environment Pan-European Programme

Fifth session
Geneva, 16–17 April 2007
Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**THIRD HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH
(2008)**

Note by the secretariat

1. The Steering Committee on the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme considered the preparations for the third High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health at its sessions in 2005 and 2006 on the basis of the background documents prepared by the secretariat of THE PEP.¹ The present document has been prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau. It builds on the decisions and guidance from the Committee and takes into account the recommendations made by the Bureau of the Committee at its meetings in April and December 2006.²

¹ Documents ECE/AC.21/2006/9 – EUR/06/THEPEPST/9 and ECE/AC.21/2005/11 – EUR/05/5046203/11; see also the reports of the fourth session (ECE/AC.21/2006/10 – EUR/06/THEPEPST/10) and the third session (ECE/AC.21/2005/13 – EUR/05/5046203/13).

² See the reports of the Bureau ECE/AC.21/2006/10 – EUR/06/THEPEPST/10, annex 1, and ECE/AC.21/SC/2007/2 – EUR/07/5068055/2.

2. The document sets forth proposals on the substantive theme, main documentation, programme, date and venue of the High-level Meeting, as well as on the modalities of the preparatory process.

3. The Committee is invited to discuss and decide on these issues. At this stage, clear decisions and mandates for action from the Committee are necessary for ensuring appropriate and timely preparations for the Meeting and a successful outcome.

I. MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

4. The Ministers and high-level representatives of the UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries that established THE PEP in 2002 decided to monitor the implementation of the new programme, requesting that a high-level meeting be convened “no later than 2007” to “assess the progress achieved”.³

5. At its fourth session, the Steering Committee decided to postpone the Meeting until 2008 to allow more time for its preparations.

6. The delegations also provided their preliminary views on the strengths and value added of THE PEP as well as on the limitations that needed to be addressed in order to improve the programme, its implementation and its impact.

7. On the positive side, the delegations agreed on the usefulness of THE PEP as the unique forum for the three sectors, which brings particular benefits for EECCA⁴ and SEE.⁵ They were convinced that the merging of the Vienna and London processes of UNECE and WHO into one streamlined and jointly administered process has been a positive step. Overall, they considered THE PEP as a pioneer in cross-sectoral and interagency cooperation. They also confirmed that the priority areas and the institutional setting in general remain valid. Considering that the programme has operated only for a couple of years and with very limited resources, the committee felt that a fair amount has been achieved.

8. On the other hand, despite the fairly positive evaluation of the early years of THE PEP, the delegations identified a number of important limitations to be addressed. They felt that active support and resources for the implementation of the programme were currently being provided by a limited number of member States, and that wider, more active support for programme activities and sustainable funding mechanism were needed. The full involvement and ownership

³ Paragraph 10 of the Declaration adopted by the Second High-level Meeting (ECE/AC.21/2002/8 – EUR/02/5040828/8).

⁴ Countries of the EECCA (Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasus) sub region include Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

⁵ Countries of the SEE (South-Eastern Europe) subregion include the following (none of which are EU members): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

of the three sectors in the process was identified as the key element for the success of the programme. In particular, the active participation and full ownership of the transport sector was considered a prerequisite for progress, and therefore an area in need of strengthening.

9. The delegations agreed that reinforced political impetus and renewed high-level commitment for the process from the third High-level Meeting were necessary to achieve more active implementation and wider support for the programme. In addition, the political support for the programme should be invigorated through strengthening of the links to the global commitments on sustainable development, to relevant international and regional processes and to the implementation of the existing legal instruments relevant to transport, environment and health.⁶ The High-level Meeting should also send a strong political message about the positive and negative impacts of transport on human health and environment to the relevant ministerial conferences, such as the Fifth WHO Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (to be held in 2009 in Italy).

10. At its fourth session, the Committee decided on five main objectives for the High-level Meeting. These objectives aim to address the identified limitations of the programme and to maximize its value added and the benefits it brings to countries across the sectors and the region.

11. The High-level Meeting will aim at:

(a) Strengthening Member States' commitment to greater integration of transport, health and environment policies at the national level;

(b) Reinforcing the role of THE PEP as the platform for promoting greater policy integration and sustainable transport development throughout the UNECE and WHO/Europe region, in particular in the field of urban transport, as well as reinvigorating the high-level commitment and political impetus in the countries to actively implement THE PEP and be able to secure the necessary resources and support for this;

(c) Reviewing and taking stock of developments concerning sustainable transport and policy integration in the region since the UNECE Transport and Environment Ministerial Conference in Vienna in 1997;

(d) Highlighting and focusing on the main challenges that need to be addressed on a priority basis, in particular in EECCA and SEE countries; and

(e) Determining priorities for future work in transport, environment and health in THE PEP by adjusting or complementing the priorities selected in 2002 as needed.

12. At its meeting in April, the Bureau proposed a number of concrete actions for reaching the above objectives. A number of delegations volunteered as lead countries for further

⁶ Examples of the relevant processes and legislation include regional implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation; EU initiatives; and UNECE and EU regulations on strategic environmental assessment.

developing the proposals prior to their submission to the High-level Meeting. Once agreed upon by Governments during the preparatory process, the recommended actions will be referred to in the ministerial declaration, for countries to commit to.

13. The list of proposed actions and selected lead countries appears in part III of the present document, which deals with documentation for the High-level Meeting.

II. OVERARCHING THEME OF THE MEETING

14. At its fourth session, the Committee recommended the formulation of an overarching substantive theme for the High-level Meeting and in particular for the debates during the Ministerial Panel.

15. To maximize the participation of ministers and other high-level representatives in the Meeting, the theme chosen should represent a key challenge and a priority for action for all three sectors and across the entire UNECE–WHO/Europe region. To increase the visibility of the process, the High-level Meeting should attract high-level interest and media attention.

16. At its meeting in December, the Bureau discussed possible themes for the Meeting, focusing in particular on the following two proposals from the secretariat:

(a) “Change your mobility/transport behaviour, not our climate” or “Travel wise, stop climate change”. The secretariat had suggested that the Meeting focus on a concrete and politically topical challenge requiring joint efforts and prioritization from all three sectors, such as climate change. The Meeting would be invited to debate the importance of policy integration and the role of the “soft measures” (such as awareness raising and capacity-building) called for by THE PEP in promoting more sustainable transport use, and thereby in reducing the environmental and health impacts of transport, including climate change.

(b) “More choices – better choices”. This proposal highlighted THE PEP as the Pan-European policy platform that advocates broadening freedom of choice in mobility through the development of a wider range of policies and opportunities for sustainable transport, in particular in urban areas. The emphasis was on seeking and highlighting win-win-win opportunities to achieve the goals of the transport, environment and health sectors.

17. While recognizing that the first theme relating to climate change might be of high political relevance and attractive for the media, the Bureau recommended choosing a theme that was more directly linked to the objectives and substantive work carried out under THE PEP. It also recommended that the theme refer to all three sectors as well as their priority goals (i.e. efficient transport systems, a clean environment, the health and safety of the population).

18. The Bureau came up with several suggestions for potential themes or “headlines” for the High-level Meeting.

19. The Committee is invited to review in particular the following proposals made by the Bureau and to select one of them for the High-level Meeting:

- (a) Theme emphasizing the merits of cross-sectoral cooperation and policy integration for reaching sustainable transport goals:
- Transport, environment and health – improving/making better connections
- (b) Theme emphasizing the importance of making available and choosing sustainable mobility choices:
- Improving our health and environment through better [urban] transport choices
- (c) Theme highlighting sectoral goals:
- Transport: efficient – healthy – environmentally friendly
20. Annex I lists a number of other themes discussed by the Bureau.

III. MAIN DOCUMENTATION

21. At its fourth session, the Committee decided that the High-level Meeting should base its discussions on comprehensive background reports. More specifically, it agreed on the preparation of the four main documents, as outlined below.

22. The Committee entrusted the Bureau, assisted by other interested delegations (forming an open-ended preparatory group), with the main responsibility for the preparation of the substantive documentation and the draft programme for the Meeting. It invited the secretariat to facilitate and coordinate the preparatory process, using the assistance of consultants as needed.

23. The Committee is invited to provide guidance on the preparation of the documents, considering in particular their contents, structure and methodological aspects. It is also invited to consider supporting the costs of preparing some of the documents.

A. Review of transport developments and their effects on health and the environment in the UNECE–WHO/Europe region (1997–2007)

24. The third High-level Meeting will provide an opportunity for the UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries to reflect on the sustainability of the transport developments in the region over the past 10 years (since the UNECE Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment, held in Vienna in 1997).

25. The Meeting will take stock of the difficulties encountered, the actions carried out and the progress achieved to date. More importantly, it will highlight the current and future challenges in the region, areas where further collaboration and joint action by the three sectors are most urgently needed. Governments will be invited to agree on and to commit themselves to the necessary future actions.

26. As the main reference material for the stocktaking and for defining future priorities, the secretariat will commission a comprehensive background document: “Review of transport

developments and their effects on health and the environment in the UNECE–WHO/Europe region (1997–2007)”.

27. This 10-year review will build on and compile recent internationally published information available. It could focus, for example, on the following main issues:

- (a) Trends and developments in transport and land use, including aspects such as:
 - Economic developments in the region
 - Growth of transport volumes and the number of motor vehicles, with a focus on road transport (both freight and passenger)
 - Evolution of the modal shares
 - Developments in road infrastructure networks
 - Changes in urban land use and city planning
- (b) Evolution of transport-related impacts on the environment and human health, and their costs:
 - Air pollution (with a focus on urban air quality)
 - The transport sector’s energy consumption and CO₂ emissions
 - Noise
 - Traffic safety and road traffic injuries
 - Insufficient physical activity (walking and cycling)
 - Psychosocial impacts
- (c) Main international and regional legally binding agreements as well as policy initiatives put in place during 1997–2008 to promote policy integration and sustainable transport development and address transport-related environmental and health externalities
- (d) Summary of the main challenges and required actions.

28. The internationally published sources of information for the Review could include the following:

- Fourth Pan-European Environment Assessment Report prepared by the European Environment Agency (EEA) for the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007)
- UNECE transport statistics (e.g. the Road Traffic Census of 2005)
- WHO data and publications (Health for All database; Environmental Health Information System)
- Relevant data and publications from the European Commission (e.g. *Transport and Energy in Figures*) and EEA (TERM⁷ indicators)
- *Environmental Outlook 2007* and other relevant publications from the United Nations Environment Programme
- Second *OECD Environmental Outlook* and recent publications on transport and the environment

⁷ Transport and environment reporting mechanism (TERM) process is steered jointly by the European Commission (Directorate General for the Environment, Directorate General for Transport and Energy, and Eurostat) and the EEA.

- Relevant work by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)
- Data from the Joint OECD/ECMT Transport Research Centre

29. In line with the decisions of the Committee and its Bureau, the Review will draw attention to the transport-related challenges in EECCA and SEE. It will draw on the relevant chapters of the UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews and the documentation and outcomes of THE PEP workshops.

30. To ensure the preparation, translation and publication of a high-quality review in time for the High-level Meeting, the secretariat will need the help of a consultant. The costs of a senior consultant (up to four person/months) and publication costs) should be approximately USD 40,000. Delegations are invited to consider how they can support the accomplishment of this work.⁸

B. Assessment of the policy response to date by UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries – focus on THE PEP (2002–2008)

31. The second main background document to be prepared for the High-level Meeting is a report assessing the implementation of THE PEP since its establishment in 2002. This assessment report will highlight the main outcomes and the limitations of THE PEP and opportunities to improve its implementation, value added and impact.

32. In line with the decisions of the Committee and its Bureau, the Assessment will focus on the following aspects:

(a) Main progress made by the UNECE and WHO/Europe member countries in the priority areas of THE PEP (integration of environmental and health aspects into transport policy; promoting more sustainable modes of transport and travel options; promoting sustainable urban transport) and in a number of related actions;

(b) Main project outputs within THE PEP, including the Clearing House, the Toolbox for Transport, Environment and Health, workshops and other capacity-building activities and project reports;

(c) Main successes and weaknesses of THE PEP in stimulating national action in the selected priority areas;

(d) Proposals for improving the capacity of THE PEP to support Member States' efforts at the national level;

(e) Proposals for the countries to strengthen their participation in implementation of THE PEP.

⁸ For the estimated need for resources, please refer to document ECE/AC.21/SC/2007/9–EUR/07/THEPEPST/9.

33. The assessment will be prepared by the secretariat in collaboration with the Bureau and the other interested delegations, on the basis of the information provided by the member countries.
34. On the Bureau's recommendation, the secretariat has prepared a questionnaire to facilitate the provision of information by countries. The questionnaire is annexed to the annotated provisional agenda for the fifth session of the Steering Committee (ECE/AC.21/SC/2007/1 – EUR/07/5068055/1) and is available at http://www.thepep.org/en/commitee/committee_fifth.htm. The French and Russian versions of the questionnaire will be posted on the website in due time.
35. Delegations have been requested to complete the form, to the extent possible, in coordination with the transport, environment and health sectors and submit it to the secretariat by **30 March 2007**. The contact details are indicated on the form.
36. The information provided by countries will be used as a basis for the discussion at the fifth session of the Steering Committee. The delegations will also be invited to provide this information orally at the session. On the basis of the written information and the outcomes of the discussion, the secretariat will prepare a draft report, which, once finalized, will be submitted to the High-level Meeting.
37. To facilitate the compilation and analysis of the information by the secretariat, the delegations are invited to submit their written responses in English, if possible.

C. Meeting declaration

38. After the discussions, the High-level Meeting will be invited to adopt a declaration containing the main conclusions of the Meeting, providing guidance on the future development and activities of THE PEP, and outlining concrete actions for Governments to commit to. The recommended actions aim at reaching the objectives for the High-level Meeting as decided on by the Steering Committee (see part I on the main objectives of the Meeting).
39. At the last meeting of the Bureau, following a suggestion by the Chair of the Committee, a number of delegations volunteered as lead countries for further developing the proposed actions. The lead countries will be invited to inform the Committee about the work carried out or planned. Other countries and organizations may wish to volunteer to support the work.
40. The Committee is invited to discuss and approve the proposed actions, on the basis of the information to be provided by the lead countries, as outlined below, or to propose alternative or additional ones. It may wish to provide guidance on their further development:

Objective 1: Strengthen Member States' commitment to greater integration of transport, health and environment policies at the national level.

Proposed action: Development of national strategies and action programmes as well as institutional mechanisms by countries for the integration of transport, health and environment policies.

Lead countries: Belgium and the Czech Republic

Objective 2: Reinforce the role of THE PEP as platform for promoting greater policy integration and sustainable transport development throughout the UNECE and WHO/Europe regions, in particular in the field of urban transport.

Proposed actions:

- Develop a sustainable financing mechanism for countries to subscribe to that would secure the necessary resources for the implementation of the activities in the Committee's Programme of work.
- Strengthen the role of THE PEP in supporting member countries' action at the national level, notably by (a) providing guidance and building capacity for policy integration, demand management and urban transport issues; (b) disseminating information and exchanging experiences through THE PEP Clearing House, the Toolbox and the workshops; and (c) promoting environmental and health impact assessments of transport policies, programmes and projects and the development of methods for economic valuation of the environment and health impacts of transport.
- Agree on developing guidelines in accordance to a pre-established time schedule and on the basis of draft "elements for guidelines" (e.g. on policy integration or on sustainable urban transport) to reinvigorate and upgrade the political commitment and impetus for the implementation of THE PEP work plan.

Lead countries: France and the United Kingdom

Objective 3: Focus on the challenges faced by EECCA and SEE countries.

Proposed actions:

- Ensure that the needs of EECCA and SEE countries are fully taken into account and highlighted in the background documentation to be prepared for the third High-level Meeting.
- Prepare recommended actions for inclusion in the Meeting Declaration calling for concerted action in the EECCA and SEE countries, as well as stimulating further donor support.
- In the field of urban transport, draw from the outcomes of the Cyprus, Moscow and Tbilisi workshops⁹.

⁹ See the reports of the workshop on "Sustainable and Healthy Urban Transport and Planning", (Nicosia, 16-18 November 2003) (document ECE/AC.21/2004/4 -EUR/04/5045236/4); the workshop on "Implementing Sustainable Urban Travel Policies in Russia and other EECCA countries", (Moscow, 29 September – 1 October 2004) (document ECE/AC.21/2005/4 - EUR/05/5046203/4); and the workshop on Sustainable Urban Transport and Land Use Planning", (Tbilisi, 18–20 October 2006) (document ECE/AC.21/SC/2007/5 EUR/07/5068055/5). See also http://www.thepep.org/en/workplan/urban/urban_docs.htm and <http://www.cemt.org/topics/urban/Moscow.htm> for background material and the presentations.

Lead countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Georgia and the Russian Federation

Objective 4: Identify priorities for future work in transport, health and environment within THE PEP by adjusting or complementing the priorities selected in 2002 as needed. (The focus should remain on areas where THE PEP could bring comparatively greater value added, such as demand management, the cost of inaction and the economic benefits of investing in sustainable transport.)

Lead countries: Austria and the Netherlands

41. Once agreed upon by Governments during the preparatory process, the recommended actions will be referred to in the Ministerial Declaration.

42. More detailed information on the planned actions will be included in the annexes to the declaration. The Meeting can also agree to establish ad hoc working groups to perform further work to implement the actions in accordance with an agreed schedule.

D. Discussion paper for the Ministerial Panel

43. The fourth main background document to be prepared for the High-level Meeting is a short discussion paper for the Ministerial Panel. The paper will be drafted by the secretariat in collaboration with the Bureau and the interested delegations (the open-ended preparatory group).

44. The document will focus on the substantive theme selected for the Meeting, providing a concise synthesis of the main issues at stake, as well as discussion points and questions to facilitate the debate.

IV. PROGRAMME: STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING, SPEAKERS, CHAIRS

45. At its meeting in December, the Bureau discussed the structure of the High-level Meeting and recommended dividing it into four separate sessions, each possibly chaired by a minister, as follows:

- (a) Review of transport developments and their effects on health and the environment in the UNECE–WHO/Europe region (1997–2007)
- (b) Assessment of THE PEP
- (c) Ministerial Panel
- (d) Concluding session with the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration

46. The proposed structure enables the appointment of a number of ministers and high-level representatives as co-chairs, panellists or keynote speakers.

47. The Bureau recommended organizing a Ministerial Panel to discuss the main theme of the Meeting. It also recommended the preparation of a background document and making available of a facilitator for the discussion. The Panel should be composed of one or two

Ministers per sector along with high-level representatives of international organizations and NGOs, and might include mayors of a few cities in the region.

48. The Bureau was in favour of holding a 1.5-day meeting, instead of a one day meeting, to facilitate informal but useful exchanges of views among ministers and other high-level participants, notably at a dinner or similar social event that could take place in the evening of the first day. Organizational details need to take account of the venue and the date chosen for the Meeting.

49. The Bureau suggested that the High-level Meeting be followed by a short session of the Steering Committee to allow it to take stock of the decisions made and discuss how to reflect them in its programme of work.

50. Delegations are invited to consider the proposal for the structure of the Meeting and discuss the optimal arrangements for ministerial participation. It is invited to consider possible candidates for session chairs and to serve as panellists or keynote speakers for the discussions.

V. DATE AND VENUE

51. The Steering Committee may wish to choose a date and venue for the Meeting that will encourage high-level participation from all three sectors. To this end, it may wish to take into account the other ministerial and high-level meetings planned or envisaged for 2008. (A preliminary list of meetings appears in annex II.)

52. Delegations are invited to consider hosting the High-level Meeting, and to inform the Steering Committee accordingly.

V. PREPARATORY PROCESS

53. The Committee is invited to decide on the modalities of the preparations for the Meeting. In particular, it may wish to focus on the following aspects:

(a) Composition of the preparatory group

54. The members of the Bureau together with other interested delegations (forming an open-ended preparatory group) were entrusted with preparing the draft agenda and the substantive documentation for the High-level Meeting. The secretariat was invited to facilitate and coordinate the preparatory process, using the assistance of consultants as needed.

55. Delegations are invited to confirm their interest in participating in the preparatory group.

(b) Preparatory meetings

56. In addition to using electronic means of communication, the preparatory group should meet as often as necessary to discuss and finalize the draft documents.

57. The Committee is invited to set up a time schedule for the preparatory meetings once it has decided on the exact date of the High-level Meeting. It may wish to consider the following preliminary schedule for the preparations proposed by the Bureau:

- On 18 April 2007 (Geneva, Palais des Nations), back to back with the fifth session of the Steering Committee, to take stock of the decisions of the Committee
- In late 2007 to discuss the first drafts of the programme and the documents
- In December 2007 (Rome, WHO/Europe), back to back with the meeting of the Bureau, to discuss the revised versions of the documents
- In early 2008 to finalize the documents that will be submitted to the High-level Meeting (once they have been edited and translated into French and Russian)

58. Delegations are invited to consider hosting the preparatory meetings and to support the participation in the process by representatives from EECCA and SEE countries.

Annex I

**OVERARCHING THEME OF THE THIRD HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON
TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH**

The following list contains selected proposals from members of the Bureau of the Steering Committee. The prioritized themes are indicated in bold type.

Themes emphasizing the merits of cross-sectoral cooperation and policy integration for reaching sustainable transport goals

- (a) **Transport, environment and health – improving/making better connections**
- (b) Transport, health and environment – working together for shared or mutual benefits/the common good
- (c) Transport, health and environment – better policy integration for mutual benefits
- (d) Transport, environment and health – a common agenda /shared policy goals for a sustainable future / sustainable and efficient transport

Themes emphasizing the importance of making available and choosing sustainable mobility choices

- (a) **Improving our health and environment through better [urban] transport choices**
- (b) Sustainable transport – improving our health and environment as we travel
- (c) Transport, health and environment – (THE) Mobility choices for the common good/shared benefits/a better tomorrow
- (d) Choose efficient transport options that improve our health and environment

Themes highlighting sectoral goals

- (a) **Transport: efficient – healthy – environmentally friendly**
- (b) Efficient transport that is safe, healthy and environmentally friendly
- (c) Efficient transport – safe transport – environmentally friendly transport
- (d) Efficient transport and healthy population in clean and safe environment

Annex II

**PRELIMINARY LIST OF MINISTERIAL AND HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS
TAKING PLACE OR PLANNED IN 2008**

- February: WHO Ministerial Conference on Health Systems (Estonia);
- March: OECD/Environmental Policy Committee (EPOC) Ministerial Meeting (venue to be decided)
- May: International Transport Forum (successor to ECMT Ministerial Council Meetings) on Sustainable Energy for Transport, most likely focusing on the challenge of climate change (Germany);
- May: World Health Assembly (Geneva)
- Second half of 2008: OECD Global Forum on Sustainable Development: Transport and Environment (possible focus on globalization, linked to the implementation of environmentally sustainable transport, or EST, guidelines) (venue to be decided)
- September: WHO Regional Committee (Copenhagen)
- 2008: Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety to be organized at the initiative of the independent Commission for Global Road Safety (for ministers of transport, health and the interior – exact date and venue to be decided)