

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Eighty-eighth meeting
Geneva, 16 December 2016

Item 5

Informal Document No. **2016/63/Rev.1**

Preparation for the 70th anniversary of the Inland Transport Committee
Draft Ministerial Resolution

Note by the secretariat

The Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) met on 29 and 30 November 2016 and discussed the preparations for the 70th anniversary session of ITC. Among other matters, the Bureau reviewed the draft Ministerial Resolution in its entirety, and considered all comments received thus far by member States and Contracting Parties to the UN Conventions administered under the purview of ITC. The draft with all received comments had been re-circulated to governments on 24 November for further comments and feedback by 10 December.

The Bureau of ITC agreed on the majority of the text of the draft resolution as their recommendation that incorporates the majority of comments received into a consolidated draft by the Bureau of ITC. Countries that are not ITC Bureau members, but have sent comments have been contacted by the Secretariat asking for their consideration and seeking their possible endorsement with or without further recommended changes. The consolidated draft was also sent for submission to the EXCOM Bureau on 30th November.

Owing to the fact that a number of delegations indicated that further time was needed for internal consultations on decision 1, the Bureau of ITC decided to postpone its substantive discussions on this decision and to request, in the meantime, EXCOM to provide its views on the two proposed paragraphs/formulations of decision 1 of the draft resolution, namely on the reporting to ECOSOC.

Furthermore, the Bureau recognized that, as the consultation process is still on-going, further comments and amendments may be submitted by member States and Contracting Parties to the UN Conventions administered under the purview of ITC by 10 December. In this case, further comments would be incorporated.

Finally, as to the organization of the adoption / signing of the resolution in the Ministerial Meeting on 21 February 2017, the secretariat has communicated to the ITC Bureau that the modality for agreement of the resolution (signature or approval) is still under consideration.

Draft Ministerial Resolution

on

Embracing the new era for sustainable inland transport and mobility

We the Ministers of [list countries] having come together to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee on 21 February 2017,

Fully aware of the new era for transport and mobility - marked by the fourth industrial revolution - as well as the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

Recalling the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, General Assembly resolution 69/213 of 19 December 2014 on the role of transport and transit corridors in ensuring international cooperation for sustainable development, General Assembly resolution 70/197 of 22 December 2015 towards comprehensive cooperation among all modes of transport for promoting sustainable multimodal transit corridors and General Assembly resolution 70/260 of 15 April 2016 on improving global road safety, and the Global Sustainable Transport Conference convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations and hosted by the government of Turkmenistan;

Declaring our unmitigated belief that safe, clean, secure, inter-connected, efficient mobility for people and freight can only be accomplished by means of inclusive international legal framework, effective public administration, international cooperation, new technologies, social responsibility and innovative financing;

Appreciating the historical importance of the Inland Transport Committee as the cornerstone of European post-World War II reconstruction through international transport cooperation;

Recognizing the global relevance of the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, with reference to the outcome of the UNECE reform review and specifically decision A(65) of the Commission in 2013 acknowledging the Committee as a unique United Nations centre providing a comprehensive regional and global platform for consideration of all aspects of inland-transport development and cooperation;

Acknowledging the unique role of the Inland Transport Committee as, not only the specialized intergovernmental body for inland transport, but also as the centre of United Nations conventions that have formed and continue to develop the core international regulatory framework for inland transport across the world;

Emphasizing the importance of passenger and freight transport and mobility as being elemental for access to work, education and social services, and thus as a facilitator for social inclusion and as being essential for regional and global integration and economic growth.

Attest to the valuable contribution and tangible results of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, inter alia their activities in continuously updating the conventions to the benefit of all Contracting Parties, as well as developing new ones to meet modern transport demands;

Profess that the UN transport Conventions under the purview of the Committee provide a well-established and functional international regulatory framework for the sustainable development of inland transport;

Note that the majority (75 per cent) of United Nations Member States are contracting parties to at least one of these transport conventions;

Maintain that accessions to the UN transport conventions are positively associated with better performance in the implementation of transport-related Sustainable Development Goals and targets;

Affirm the role of the Inland Transport Committee in promoting sustainable transport of freight and of passengers at international, national and urban levels with particular attention to seamless intermodal transport, as well as public transport, and by improving traffic safety, environmental performance, energy efficiency, inland transport security and efficient service provision in the transport sector;

Recognize the importance of developing transport systems that favour the development of urban public transport systems, strengthen urban-rural connectivity, link rural communities and economic activity to regional and global supply chains and thus promote social and economic equity and inclusion;

Reaffirm the role that Trans-European North-South Motorways (TEM), the Trans-European Railways (TER), and the Euro-Asia Transport Linkages (EATL), as well as the four main transport infrastructure agreements play in supporting internationally harmonized, multi-country investment planning for present and future trade and cargo flows both within Europe and beyond, and particularly, between Europe and Asia;

Advocate for Public-Private-Partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms as a pivotal element for the development of viable transport infrastructure and services;

Underline the importance of a motorization culture that promotes a safe and environmentally sustainable transport system, supported by the comprehensive regulatory framework administered by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for improving traffic, infrastructure and vehicle safety, driver training as well as for effectively addressing driver fatigue and drink driving;

Pay due homage to the work carried out in support of road safety objectives by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, the Administrative Committees of Conventions, and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety;

Recognize the contribution of the Committee and its Inland Transport Security Forum to addressing the increased vulnerability of inland transport infrastructure and mobility, and the main security risks associated with inland transport such as terrorism, theft, illegal border crossings and the trafficking of dangerous substances;

Commit to the advancement and fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals as these are inextricably linked to transport; also in relation to the challenges that we are facing as a consequence of climate change;

Acclaim the critical role of the Committee and its relevant subsidiary bodies as platforms to which Governments will increasingly resort to develop and implement effective solutions to tackle climate change mitigation and adaptation, air pollution, and overall environmental performance of transport, including, but not limited to, the construction of vehicles and the transport of dangerous goods;

Acknowledge that the Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Strategy of the Economic Commission for Europe was an important milestone in the integration of responses to technological changes in the regulatory activities of the Committee;

Promote the full use of Information Communication Technologies in inland transport, with particular emphasis on the computerization of procedures established under the UN transport Conventions administered by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies;

Welcome the role of the Committee in promoting harmonization and an enabling regulatory framework as a key component in fully harnessing the advantages of technological innovation in all areas of inland transport, and especially in vehicle regulations and automated systems in vehicles;

Commend the innovative policy dialogue, dedicated technical assistance and substantive capacity-building activities which can be traced through best practice sharing and projects;

Value the analytical activities that are showcased in high-quality publications which spearhead knowledge creation;

Stress the importance of work undertaken by the Committee in transport statistics as a fundamental complement to its regulatory and analytical work;

Emphasize that policy development tools such as the For Future Transport Systems (ForFITS) greatly enhance the ability of transport decision makers to make informed choices and support the decarbonization of the sector;

Assert that public transport, walking and cycling are key mobility elements addressed in an integrated way by the Committee, its subsidiary bodies and the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) and welcome the Paris Declaration “City in Motion – People First” of the Fourth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment of April 2014;

Consider the need to align urban and transport planning with sustainable principles and to follow an approach that recognizes humans as the basis of urban and transport planning (“human-centered approach”);

Commend the Committee for utilizing its in-depth expertise in transport to spearhead inter-sectoral cooperation, such as the interfaces between transport and customs, industry, statistics, environment, telecommunication and health, resulting in a holistic approach to transport and border crossing facilitation;

Appreciate partnerships that bring value and tangible results to the work of the Committee, including in particular cooperation with regional integration organizations, such as the European Union, the Euro-Asian Economic Commission, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, the Euro-Mediterranean Economic Cooperation; with international financial institutions, as well as with UN Departments and Specialised Agencies, such as the regional commissions of the United Nations, the International Energy Agency, the International Maritime Organisation, the International Labour Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, the World Health Organization; with inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the International Transport Forum, the International Union of Railways (UIC), the International Road Transport Union (IRU), the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Rail Transport (OTIF), the Organisation for Cooperation Between Railways (OSJD), the river commissions, among others;

Acknowledge the added value of institutionalized partnerships, such as the Inter-agency Secretariat on Statistics with Eurostat, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the International Transport Forum; interagency partnerships on the transport of dangerous goods; as well as the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) with the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe and the Environment Division of the Economic Commission for Europe;

Welcome the Fifth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment, which will take place in Vienna in 2019;

Fully support the overarching objectives of the work of the Committee, namely improved connectivity through internationally harmonised development of inland transport infrastructure, efficient transport services, seamless border crossing, facilitated international inland transport and hinterland connections to maritime ports, reduced GHG emissions and air/noise pollution, increased mobility choices, reduced traffic fatalities and injuries, with special reference to the importance of the regulatory framework for road safety and for the transport of dangerous goods as a major contributor to safe transport;

Deem it necessary that the Committee, its subsidiary bodies and even more its tangible results get more visibility and recognition across the world and within the United Nations;

In light of the above, we the Ministers attending the seventieth anniversary of the Inland Transport Committee, underlining the uniqueness of the Committee within the United Nations system as an intergovernmental body with the capacity to transform inland transport globally, and, in this respect, wishing to reflect this responsibility in its future work and reporting structure,

Decide:

[1. To request the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, in the interest of enabling the Committee to cater even more efficiently to the needs of global inland transport as demonstrated by the Contracting Parties to the UN transport Conventions, to consider the question of mandating the Committee to report to both bodies while leaving the organisational structure of the UNECE secretariat, as well as the programme-budgeting functions and oversight unchanged;]

Alternative wording for decision 1:

1. To request the Economic Commission for Europe, in the interest of enabling the Committee to cater even more efficiently to the needs of the UN transport Conventions, to consider mandating the Committee to report on these Conventions and submit those reports both to the Commission and, for information purposes, to ECOSOC on an annual basis while leaving the organisational structure of the UNECE secretariat, as well as the programme-budgeting functions and oversight unchanged;

2. To address the challenges of sustainable development of mobility and inland transport, particularly within the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, by supporting intergovernmental transport and transport related multi-disciplinary cooperation within the platform of the Inland Transport Committee and by placing due emphasis on the importance of mobilizing resources and aligning financing flows with sustainable development objectives;

3. To encourage member States to mobilise all relevant stakeholders, both State and non-State actors, to continue their participation in the Committee, scale up their efforts for the future inland transport we want, and to join ITC projects and other transport-related initiatives in support of the Sustainable Development Agenda, as well as the Global Climate Action Agenda and the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety;

4. To address the challenges faced as a consequence of climate change, to pay special attention to the promotion of sustainable transport, and to ensure the safety and capacity of international transport corridors by supporting intergovernmental transport and transport related multi-disciplinary cooperation within the platform of the Inland Transport Committee;

5. To invite member States, stakeholders, the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety to take a safe-system approach, develop road safety targets and indicators and to reinforce their collective efforts to improve traffic safety in all inland modes of transport and in particular to take concerted and effective action to reduce road fatalities by half by 2020;

6. To encourage member States of the United Nations, that have not yet done so, to consider becoming contracting parties to the United Nations inland transport conventions.

7. To state its commitment to embracing and promoting technological changes in all inland transport modes, specifically by further integrating in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, Intelligent Transport Systems and automated driving, as well as by promoting the digitalisation of transport documents first of all in international transport;

8. To call upon the Committee and its subsidiary bodies to further strengthen international, regional, national and urban connectivity in a sustainable way through promoting intergovernmental policy dialogue and through developing new legal instruments, as well as through continuous modernization of existing ones, through exercising its convening power in bringing together key stakeholders, accelerating diffusion of best practices and delivering well targeted analytical papers in timely manner;

9. To voice its conviction that taking an active part in the work of the Committee and its Working Parties, can bring unprecedented benefits for Governments;

10. To request the UNECE secretariat to prepare a report on progress achieved with the development of the decisions of this resolution, and with the implementation of the ITC Strategy that will be adopted by the Committee, as well as on progress in sustainable mobility and inland transport and to table such report for the consideration of the Committee at one of its future sessions, no later than 2020.