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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

(Sixty-eighth session, 7-9 February 2006
agenda item 2)

RESULTS OF THE COMMITTEE'S BUREAU MEETINGS

In accordance with the decision taken by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) at its sixty-seventh session (ECE/TRANS/162, para. 135), its Bureau met on 18 February 2005, 3 June 2005, and 29-30 November 2005. The reports of the Bureau's meetings are reproduced below for consideration by the Committee. The Committee may wish to discuss the questions in greater detail under the respective items of the agenda.

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Annex 1

LIST OF DECISIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU HELD ON 18 FEBRUARY 2005

ATTENDANCE

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee was chaired by Mr. Peter Päßgen (Germany) and was attended by the following members: Mr. Benoît Chevalier (France), Mrs. Konstantina Kosmidou (Greece), Mr. José Alberto Franco (Portugal), Ms. Gabriela Constantinescu (Romania), Mr. Evgeny Mokeev (Russian Federation), Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly (Switzerland), Mrs. Ümit Armangil (Turkey) and Mr. Mykhailo A. Mezheryskyi (Ukraine). The representatives of Belarus, Poland and the EC were unable to attend.

ASSESSMENT OF THE COMMITTEE'S SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION

2. The Bureau:

- felt that infrastructure-related questions had been more extensively discussed than regulatory items because of their strategic importance. This was also due to the greater number of unsolved problems and the smaller amount of time devoted to transport infrastructure issues in the subsidiary bodies concerned.
- recognised that the lack of sufficient funds in the member countries was a problem for carrying out transport infrastructure projects.
- was of the opinion that important questions of transport strategy should be adequately addressed.
- Reiterated that if subsidiary bodies could not solve a substantive problem, they should bring them to the attention of the Committee.

ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS

3. The Bureau:

- noted the progress made at the 67th session of the Committee regarding the issuance of visas to professional drivers and the appreciation of all parties concerned in respect of the mutual problems encountered.
- felt that there was a need to continue this discussion with a view to reaching a better understanding of all pertinent aspects.
- recognised the necessity of appropriate follow-up by those involved in this process.
- underlined the fact that the issuance of visas was in the competency of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs.

TRANSPORT AND SECURITY

4. The Bureau:

- recalled its earlier decision not to organize an International Conference but rather a Round Table on Transport Security to be held during the Committee's sixty-eighth session focussing on gaps in the transport related international instruments of UNECE, and taking into account the necessary trade-offs between security and facilitation.
- considered that a horizontal approach was preferable to one based on the individual inland transport modes.
- noted, however that if some concrete results were to be attained at the Round-Table, which might be included in conventions and agreements, it could be necessary to focus on one transport mode within the time allocated.
- noted that the following aspects could be dealt with during the Round-Table : cross-border transport security, security in the transport of dangerous goods, security aspects of vehicles, container security, security of infrastructures including tunnels, bridges and interfaces, security of mass transit systems, etc.
- felt that the secretariat could call on the expertise and know-how of other international organizations in this field (e.g. EC, ECMT, WCO, UIC, COLPOFER, CCNR, CD).

OTHER BUSINESS

Date of next meeting

5. The Bureau was informed that its next meeting would be held on Friday, 3 June 2005.

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Annex 2

**LIST OF DECISIONS OF THE MEETING OF
THE BUREAU HELD ON 3 JUNE 2005**

ATTENDANCE

6. The meeting of the Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee was chaired by Mr. Peter Päßgen (Germany) and was attended by the following members: Mr. Xavier Guérin (France), Mrs. Konstantina Kosmidou (Greece), Mr. José Alberto Franco (Portugal), Ms. Adriana Pacuraru (Romania), Mr. Evgeny Mokeev (Russian Federation), Mr. Jean-Claude Schneuwly (Switzerland), Mrs. Ümit Armangil (Turkey). The representatives of Belarus, Poland, Ukraine and the EC were unable to attend.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

7. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda as prepared by the secretariat.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

(a) Participation of non-UNECE countries that are parties to UNECE legal instruments

8. The Bureau:

- noted that at its 60th session (22-25 February 2005), the Economic Commission for Europe had considered the request made by the Inland Transport Committee to (i) extend participation in the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) to non-UNECE States which are Contracting Parties to the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals as well as to other ITC subsidiary bodies, and (ii) grant them voting rights on issues related to these Conventions.
- was informed that the Commission (i) had agreed to encourage participation of non-UNECE countries which are Contracting Parties to legal instruments administered by WP.1 and other subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee, (ii) but was unable to reach consensus on granting voting rights to such countries at this point. It recognized the need for further discussion (Commission report, decision 11).
- Expressed some difficulties in discerning the practical relevance of voting rights in this context.
- recalling decision 11, agreed to refer the question of granting voting rights to non-UNECE States Contracting Parties to the Vienna Conventions to WP.1 for an in-depth analysis.

(b) Comprehensive evaluation of the UNECE

9. The Bureau:

- was informed about the latest developments in the comprehensive evaluation of the UNECE being conducted by a team of external consultants and learned in this connection that 40 Governments and a large number of IGOs and NGOs had provided information to the questionnaire which had been developed by the consultants.
- noted that the first draft of the report would be submitted in mid-June 2005 and the final report would be adopted by a special Commission session in early July 2005.

(c) Biennial evaluation by PSB's

10. The Bureau:

- recalled the recommendation of the Commission at its annual session in 2004 that Principal Subsidiary Bodies review biennially their intergovernmental structure, including related advisory groups, and report to the Commission at its annual session.
- noted in this connection, that the Office of the Executive Secretary is preparing a basic guide on evaluation methods intended to facilitate the PSBs' biennial evaluation (E/ECE/1423, para. 9), and agreed to undertake the biennial review at its next meeting.

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION**(a) Progress in the TEM and TER Master Plan**

11. The Bureau:

- was informed that work on the TEM and TER Master Plan had been completed in March 2005 and that the draft final report had been endorsed by the TER Steering Committee and is to be endorsed by the TEM Steering Committee at its forthcoming session which will take place from 13 to 15 June 2005.
- Learned that the TEM and TER Master Plan identified the backbone road and rail networks in the 21 countries concerned and evaluated and prioritized 491 projects of a total cost of over 100 billion Euros of which 319 projects worth 49.5 billion Euros for TEM and for 172 projects worth 51.5 billion Euros for TER.

(b) Progress in the UN Development Account Project on developing Euro-Asian Links

12. The Bureau:

- was informed about the preparation for the Third Expert Group Meeting to be held in Istanbul from 27 to 29 June 2005 which is expected to finally adopt the 8 rail and 10 road Euro-Asian routes selected for priority development, and consider prioritization of projects, improvement of transit operations, the identification of break of gauge points and future funding for project continuation, etc.
- noted with satisfaction the interest in the continuation of activities on interregional linkages after the phasing out of UNDA funding for the project.

(c) Pilot project for the facilitation of participation of Caucasus and Central Asian countries in meetings of the ITC and selected subsidiary bodies

13. The Bureau:

- was informed that with the support of this project, a total of 31 delegates from Caucasus and Central Asian countries had participated in 6 meetings of the ITC and selected subsidiary bodies. It was envisaged to ask Europe Aid of the EC, to consider continuation of the project for another year.

(d) Digital tachograph

14. The Bureau:

- was informed about the status of organization of the seminar on the introduction of the digital tachograph in the context of the AETR to be organized by the Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation in Moscow in 2005.
- noted that two additional seminars were planned in cooperation with the EC's Project on the Monitoring of the Implementation of the Digital Tachograph (MIDT) in the period 2006-2008.

THE PEP

15. The Bureau:

- took note of the report of the third session of THE PEP Steering Committee (Geneva, 11 and 12 April 2005) (ECE/AC.21/2005/13) that acknowledged the importance of ensuring a sustainable financial basis for the further implementation of THE PEP.
- also noted that out of 27 participating UNECE and WHO/Europe member States, 13 delegations had representatives of Ministries of Transport among them.
- further noted that in order to maximize the return on the considerable start-up costs of THE PEP Clearing House, the Steering Committee had stressed the importance of

ensuring the sustained and efficient operation of the Clearing House as of 2006, using, to the extent possible, regular budget funds.

- was informed that the sustained operation of THE PEP Clearing House and the interdisciplinary work to be undertaken for it would require, as of 2006, the provision of two additional professional posts (IT and substantive) on a permanent basis.

TRANSPORT AND SECURITY

16. The Bureau:

- recalled that at its meeting on 14 February 2005 (TRANS/BUR.2004/26), it had proposed the holding of a Round Table on the subject of transport and security during the 68th session of the Inland Transport Committee (7-9 February 2006). The Committee, at its 67th session, endorsed this proposal.
- took note of a secretariat document regarding the Round Table, circulated in document TRANS/BUR.2005/3.
- agreed that the title of the Round Table should be as follows: “Transport Security in the Pan-European Context: Selected Issues and Options”.
- agreed that rapporteurs should be selected to deal with the following topics: (i) Security aspects to be taken into account in the construction and maintenance of infrastructures of the inland transport sector; (ii) Lessons learned from the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) in the context of inland terminal and inland port security; (iii) Improving transport security through the introduction of requirements for personnel in the context of access to the profession; and (iv) Transport security at borders.
- also agreed that in addition to the topics, representatives from the EU, the United States and the Russian Federation should be invited to report on their recent initiatives to include the security aspect in transport-related activities.
- felt that time should be provided for discussion after the four topics and the three country reports respectively.
- agreed that the secretariat should send out a questionnaire to obtain the views of member countries on the main issues related to the four topics and in order to prepare a background note which would be complementary to the presentations by rapporteurs.
- noted the offer of the representative of Greece to report on the security-related problems encountered during the Olympic Games of 2004 and the solutions to remedy them.
- asked the secretariat to revise document TRANS/BUR.2005/3 in light of the comments made and to report at the Bureau’s next meeting on progress in preparation for the Round Table.

TRANSPORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

17. The Bureau:

- was informed about the recent activities undertaken by UNECE, UNESCWA and UNESCAP in the framework of the UN Development Account Project with a view to improving interregional transport linkages between the UNECE, UNESCAP and UNESCWA member States.
- in this connection, it learned that the recently held meeting in Amman (Jordan, 30 May - 1 June 2005) had focussed on the most important transport links connecting UNECE and UNESCAP member States to the UNESCWA region.

BLUE CORRIDOR PROJECT

18. The Bureau:

- recalled the request made by the ITC to Mr. J. Capel Ferrer, Director of the UNECE Transport Division, and Mr. G. Kowalski, Director of the UNECE Industrial Restructuring, Energy and Enterprise Development Division, to present the Blue Corridor Project to the European Commission's DGTREN with a view to establishing cooperation between the two bodies aimed at further implementation of the Project.
- was informed by Mr. Capel Ferrer about his presentation of the project to DGTREN of the EC. The EC had expressed certain reservations but had nonetheless indicated its readiness to participate in a future seminar on the Project, if held at the expert level.

OTHER BUSINESS

19. The Bureau:

- was informed on the basis of documents TRANS/WP.5/2005/1 and TRANS/WP.5/2005/2 about reflections on reinvigorating the work of WP.5 and about its future activities.
- regretted very much that, in light of the lengthy recruitment procedures in the UN system, the announcement for the post of Chief of the Transport and Infrastructure Development Section had been published with considerable delay.
- noted that its next meeting would be held on 29 – 30 November 2005 to discuss the preparation of the 68th session of the Committee.

Annex 3

The List of Decisions of the meeting of the Bureau to be held on 29 and 30 November 2005 will be issued in ECE/TRANS/2006/2/Add.1
