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Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda

Development of transport networks and/or links:

Trans-European Motorway and Trans-European Railway projects

Information on the Trans-European Railway project development

Submitted by the TER Project Manager

I. Objectives of the Project

1. The main target of the Trans-European Railway (TER) project is to improve the quality and efficiency of transport operations, to assist the integration process of European transport infrastructure systems and to develop a coherent and efficient international railway and combined transport system in accordance with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Pan-European infrastructure agreements.
2. Some of the key goals of the TER project include:
 - The facilitation and development of a coherent and efficient international railway system as part of a combined transport system among the Central and Eastern European countries (through the territories of the TER countries and between them and other European countries),
 - Playing an important part in reducing congestion in Central and Eastern Europe and
 - The reduction of environmental and safety problems on major international railways of those countries.

II. Activities in 2020

3. The forty-ninth session of TER Steering Committee was held virtually in July 2020. The following main decisions were taken:
 - (a) Establishment of the Selection Committee to choose the best candidate as a consultant for elaboration of the 2025 TER Strategy.
 - (b) Approval of the Terms of Reference for the Geographic Information System (GIS) project and for the study on compliance of TER infrastructure to technical parameters identified in international agreements.



4. The fiftieth session of TER Steering Committee was held virtually in November 2020. The following main decisions were taken:

(a) Agreement on starting the following activities:

(i) Launch of a study on compliance of TER countries' infrastructure standards to the technical parameters identified in international legal agreements. The objective of this study is to identify sub-standard solutions on the TER network in relation to the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC) and the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) standards, in order to identify and assess potential projects/investments for reaching the proper standards. Additionally, to make an interoperability assessment between the TER and the European Union Trans-European Network for Transport (TEN-T) networks;

(ii) Launch of the project on presenting TER data in GIS format. Its main output will be an online application including an associated database and user manual, allowing users to filter, visualize, map, and export data to support railway policy and decision makers.

(iii) Development of the TER Strategy 2025. Its objective is to propose specific activities, projects, tools and workshops in line with other ECE projects and initiatives as well as the promotion of an intermodal approach, and supporting TER member countries in coping with the post-COVID-19 reality.

(b) The validity of the current Attachment (Programme of Work) to the TER Co-operation Trust Fund Agreement was extended to 31 December 2021.

(c) Ms. M. Kopczyńska, the TER Deputy Project Manager, was requested to serve as the acting Project Manager until the new Manager is appointed.

5. The fifty-first, extraordinary session of the TER Steering Committee was held virtually in December 2020. It was dedicated exclusively to the TER High Speed Rail Master Plan phase 2. As a result of the meeting it was proposed that the title of the Master Plan be extended by adding the following expression '- a general background to support further required studies. This document could be a basis for continuation of the work in future, if such decision is made by the TER Steering Committee.

6. Apart from the decisions taken during the TER Steering Committee sessions, the procedure for the selection of a TER Project Manager has been started. The Governments of Croatia and Poland submitted their candidates. The selection procedure is planned to be held during the fifty-second session of the TER Steering Committee, on 2 June 2021.

7. The Covid-19 pandemic was an extremely complicated time due to the element of unpredictability creating difficulties to deliver on planned outputs. Many activities have been delayed, postponed, or even cancelled, and others were to be modified. There is a strong need to rejuvenise the previous concept of the TER work with face-to-face meetings, recognising that the human factor is a crucial aspect of any success. As discussed at the latest TER Steering Committee any consultancy support that is planned for future TER activities should be well aligned with the needs of member States. Ultimately, TER is an intergovernmental body and reflects the interests of the TER Member States as expressed by the TER National Coordinators.