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Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics
(Forty-third session, 8 March 2005, Paris,
agenda item 3)

INTERMODAL TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS

ECMT/UNECE Seminar on Intermodal Transport between Europe and Asia

A. OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

1. Given the present and forecasted traffic increases between Eastern and Western Europe, to what extent and under what conditions could intermodal transport play a significant role in dealing with these additional traffic flows? How to promote alternative modes to road transport, given the present difficulties of the European intermodal system?
2. To answer these questions, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) were invited, by the Minister of Transport of Ukraine to hold a Seminar on “Intermodal Transport between Europe and Asia: Opportunities and Challenges”, that took place in Kiev on 27 and 28 September 2004.

3. The Minister of Transport of Ukraine also invited the Joint ECMT/UNECE Working Party/Group on Intermodal Transport and Logistics to hold its autumn session immediately after the Seminar, i.e. on 28 and 29 September 2004.

4. The venue of this Seminar was Kiev, an interface between European and Asian trade flows, which brought together more than 120 participants interested in the improvement of intermodal land transport relations between Europe and Asia.

B. PARTICIPATION

5. The Seminar was attended by more than 120 participants representing the following ECMT and UNECE member States: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the European Commission (EC).

6. The following international and national organizations participated: ECMT, UNECE, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Coordinating Transport Meeting (CTM) of the CIS, CLECAT, International Union of Combined Road-Rail Transport Companies (UIRR), International Union of Railways (UIC), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Multimodal Transport Association (IMMTA), Organization for Cooperation of Railways (OSZhd), Europlatforms, Steering Committee of Pan-European Transport Corridor III, Steering Committee of Pan-European Transport Corridor VII, TRACECA Programme, World Road Association (PIARC), Association of International Freight Forwarders of Ukraine, Association of Forwarding Companies of Ukraine “Ukrzovnishtrans”, “Belarus shipping company”, “Delta-Lozman” (Ukraine), NESTEAR (France), Plaske (Ukraine), Société Aérospatiale Adour Technologie (France), “Ukrferry” (Ukraine).

C. PROGRAMME

7. Three successive sessions were organized, devoted to the analysis of the present situation of transport relations and to the opportunities and challenges of intermodal transport in East-West trade:

- (a) Development of Intermodal Transport between Europe and Asia;
- (b) Intermodality: Significance and Comparative Advantages;
- (c) Intermodality: Development and Improvement Perspectives.

D. CONCLUSIONS

8. At the end of the Seminar, the following conclusions were adopted:

“Representatives of transport authorities of European, Central Asian and Caucasus States, ECMT, UNECE, UNESCAP, EU and other international organizations as well as transport unions and associations and other concerned bodies, which took part in the international Seminar held in Kiev on 27 and 28 September 2004,

Taking into account the importance and timeliness of efforts to develop intermodal transport communications for the sustainable development of international traffic in the European and Asian direction,

Supporting the initiatives of the Member States for acceleration of intermodal transport development, creation of up-to-date transport infrastructure and the introduction of new technologies,

Confirming their adherence to the resolutions of international Conferences adopted before, as well as the provisions of relevant International Transport Conventions and Treaties,

Acknowledging the efforts of ECMT, UNECE, UNESCAP and the EU TRACECA Programme for the development of European and Asian transport links directed to a consistent, coordinated and harmonious development of the transport infrastructure on the Continent,

Welcoming the initiative taken by ECMT and UNECE to work in partnership towards the development of intermodal transport and logistics,

Having discussed the prospects of intermodal transport and ways for improving its organization,

Have considered that the main lines of further joint activities for the creation of effective intermodal land transport links between Europe and Asia should be as follows:

- combining efforts in order to increase the efficiency of measures taken to raise the volumes of intermodal transport through the development of technical and technological capacities of transport infrastructures of the Member States,
- increase in the coordination of activities of transport, Customs and border authorities of the Member States for simplification of border crossing procedures for freight transportation using intermodal transport,

- removal of physical and non-physical obstacles that impede passing of traffic between the countries of the European and Asian region,
- enlargement of the network of intermodal transport by faster accession of the countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus to the AGTC Agreement and its Protocol on combined transport on inland waterways,
- development and implementation of joint investment projects and ensuring their financing,
- acceleration of freight traffic by rail in gauge interchange stations,
- creation of a network of logistics centres and information support for freight transport,
- implementation of harmonized tariff and price policies,
- development of rail ferry lines in the region of the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Caspian Sea and improved use of the inland waterways for intermodal transport,
- increased use of rail transit capacities for intermodal freight transport for passage from China to Europe via Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Russian Federation, Belarus, the Caucasus States, Ukraine and Turkey,
- support to the United Nations Development Account Project on capacity building for developing, in particular, Euro-Asian transport linkages, jointly carried out by the UNECE and UNESCAP,
- harmonization of the regulatory and legal frameworks in the field of transport of the Member States on the basis of international agreements, ECMT resolutions, UNECE Conventions and the legislation and principles of EU transport policy.

Ask the International Organizations involved to follow-up and deal concretely with the issues and problems above and to make available all the information provided during the Seminar to a wide audience.

Express their confidence that the results of the international Seminar will contribute to a better coordination of activities for further development of intermodal transport that can serve the dynamically developing trade and economic relations between the States of Europe, the Near and Middle East, Asia and other territories and increases the effectiveness of the Euro-Asian transport system as a whole.

Kiev, 28 September 2004”
