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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

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Item 15(b) of the provisional agenda

INLAND WATER TRANSPORT

Technical and legal questions regarding the
development and facilitation of international transport by inland waterway

Declaration of the Pan-European Conference on Inland Waterway Transport

Draft Resolution and its Plan of Action submitted by
the Chairman and the Secretariat of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport

At its fiftieth session, the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) provisionally agreed on a Plan of Action for the implementation of decisions taken by the Pan-European Conference on Inland Water Transport (Bucharest, 13-14 September 2006) and asked its Chairman to prepare, with the assistance of the secretariat, a draft resolution on the promotion of inland water transport and submit it together with the plan of action for consideration and adoption by the Committee (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/174, para. 14).

The text of the draft resolution, annexed to which is the Plan of Action, is reproduced below.

SUPPORTING FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF INLAND WATER TRANSPORT

Resolution No. ...

adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on ... February 2007

The Inland Transport Committee,

Recalling the Declaration adopted by the Pan-European Conference on Inland Water Transport (Bucharest, 13 and 14 September 2006, document ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2006/11),

Bearing in mind the overall objective to develop efficient, balanced and flexible transport systems, which meet the economic, social, environmental, and safety requirements of UNECE member Governments,

Conscious of the important role of inland water transport, which in comparison with other modes has economic and ecological advantages as well as spare infrastructure and vessel capacity and is therefore capable of lowering social cost and negative impact on the environment by inland transport as a whole,

Noting with satisfaction that since the 2001 Rotterdam Conference, the role of UNECE as a central intergovernmental body dealing with the pan-European standard setting in inland navigation has increased considerably due to the development of Europe-wide technical, safety, environmental protection and manning requirements, reflecting to a large extent the proactive implementation of the Action Plan specified in the Committee's Resolution No. 250 (document ECE/TRANS/139, annex 2),

Noting also the importance of UNECE Environmental Conventions, such as the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, for the orderly and environmentally respectful development of inland waterway transport and its infrastructure,

Welcoming the Communication from the European Commission (EC) on the promotion of inland waterway transport: Integrated European Action Programme for Inland Waterway Transport (NAIADES, document ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2006/5),

Expecting that the UNECE can support the EC in the implementation of the NAIADES Programme, in particular in countries that are not members of the European Union,

Convinced that the UNECE, in close cooperation with other relevant international organizations, can and should support to the maximum extent possible the realization of the tasks set by ministers in the Bucharest declaration,

1. *Endorses* the Action Plan to implement decisions of the Pan-European Conference on Inland Water Transport (Bucharest, 13 and 14 September 2006), which is annexed to this resolution,

2. *Requests* the Working Party on Inland Water Transport, in close cooperation with the European Commission, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) and the Danube Commission (DC), to proceed with the implementation of the Action Plan mentioned above, and to amend its Programme of Work for the period 2007-2011 accordingly;

3. *Asks* the Working Party on Inland Water Transport to regularly inform the Inland Transport Committee of the progress made in the implementation of this resolution.

ANNEX
**I. PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS
 TAKEN BY THE PAN-EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON INLAND WATER TRANSPORT**
 (Bucharest, 13-14 September 2006)

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
Harmonization and integration of the regulatory framework	
<p>1. <i>Ministers welcome the progress made in the harmonization of technical requirements for inland waterway vessels, where equivalency has been established between the rules of different organizations. They call the organizations concerned to ensure that equivalence is preserved in the future maintenance as these requirements evolve aiming at mutual recognition of ship certificates.</i></p>	<p>To continue the work within UNECE on further improvement of technical requirements for inland navigation, bringing as close as possible the standards in force within EC, UNECE, CCNR and DC;</p> <p>To encourage member governments to apply, as widely as possible, the provisions of the “Recommendations on Harmonized Europe-wide Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels” (annex to resolution No. 61) and other technical standards agreed at an all-European level, with a view to achieving the mutual recognition of ships’ certificates issued on their basis and avoiding double inspections;</p> <p>The Working Party SC.3, assisted by a Group of Volunteers, should launch the elaboration of specific technical requirements for sea-river vessels.</p>
<p>2. <i>Ministers consider the free movement of crew members Europe wide as a strategic priority in view of the opening and integration of markets. It is essential for the functioning of the sector. Therefore they invite governments to facilitate such free movement and urge also the following specific actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The River Commissions, the European Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe are called to continue their efforts for the mutual recognition of boatmaster licenses.</i> • <i>The River Commissions concerned are invited to rationalize requirements for the specific knowledge and experience needed for the navigation on certain river stretches.</i> 	<p>To complement the Programme of work of the Working Party SC.3 for 2007-2011 as “Continuing activity”, priority 1, with a new element concerning the free movement of crew members across Europe. To study a possibility for the development of an all-European uniform Riverfarers’ Identity Document. To call upon States members to encourage the facilitation of such a free movement of crew members;</p> <p>To continue the work on the application and updating of the Recommendations on Minimum Manning Requirements for the Issuance of Boatmasters’ Licences in Inland Navigation with a view to their Reciprocal Recognition for International Traffic (annex to resolution No. 31);</p> <p>Together with CCNR and DC to rationalize and unify as much as possible the requirements on checking the knowledge by boatmasters of specific stretches of inland waterways and their navigating skills on those stretches. To consider, with the participation of shipping companies, the harmonization of crew</p>

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The European Commission and the River Commissions are invited to continue their efforts, in close co-operation with their social partners, to harmonize job descriptions.</i> • <i>Education and training institutes in the field of inland shipping are invited to actively co-operate and to create, together with the River Commissions, a European network aiming at the facilitation of exchanges on national educational programmes and vocational training.</i> 	<p>members' job profiles;</p> <p>To study possible inclusion into the Programme of work of the Working Party the establishment, jointly with river commissions, of a European network aiming at the facilitation of exchanges on national educational programmes and vocational training in inland navigation.</p>
<p>3. <i>Ministers welcome the ongoing harmonization of civil law in order to facilitate the full utilization of inland waterway transport in Europe. They urge all river states in Europe to adhere to the Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway and invite the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine in association with the Danube Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, to revise the Convention on the limitation of liability in inland navigation with a view to enlarging its geographical application.</i></p>	<p>To include in the agenda of the Working Party SC.3 the question of practical implementation by member Governments of the provisions of the Budapest Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway (CMNI) and its impact on national legislation;</p> <p>Jointly with river commissions, to initiate the revision of the Strasbourg Convention on the Limitation of Liability in Inland Navigation (CLNI) with a view to converting it into a Pan-European legal instrument, by including this item into the Programme of work of SC.3.</p>
<p>4. <i>Taking into account the increased integration of inland waterway transport in Europe and with a view to maintaining the high safety and security level of inland navigation, the co-ordination and exchange of information between national authorities should be further strengthened, with the purpose of facilitating inspection of vessels and to avoid duplication in controls. Ministers invite the River Commissions to take initiatives in this field in close cooperation with national authorities.</i></p>	<p>UNECE, acting in close cooperation with the European Commission and river commissions, should encourage the elaboration by member countries of national policy in this regard. The question of "transport and security" should be retained on the agenda of the Working Party. In this connection, the elaboration and adoption of Annex IV of the AGN Agreement, concerning the security on inland waterways, should be accelerated.</p>

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
<p>5. <i>Ministers consider that the existing legislation should be rationalized and simplified, subject to maintaining the best levels of safety and providing for the possibilities offered by new technologies. Furthermore the administrative framework should be improved through streamlining formalities and procedures. For these purposes they call upon the European Commission, the River Commissions and all other organizations involved to undertake the necessary actions.</i></p>	<p>In the framework of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport, initiate the consideration of measures aiming at the simplification of national legislation of member countries while taking into account the opportunities offered by new technologies without prejudice to the level of safety;</p> <p>In this regard, all stakeholders, including member countries, EC, UNECE, ECMT and river commissions, are invited to take into account the findings and implement the recommendations of the Group of Volunteers on legislative obstacles, as reflected in TRANS/SC.3/2005/1.</p>
<p>Coordinated development of inland waterway transport</p>	
<p>6. <i>Ministers recognize the need for the promotion of inland waterway transport as a commercially attractive and environmentally compatible mode of transport through coordinated action. They invite all the involved actors to contribute to the realization of the NAIADES programme, which covers for the first time all the areas of actions, and which should serve as a basis for action also at Pan-European level.</i></p>	<p>UNECE, acting in close cooperation with the European Commission, river commissions and other interested parties, should strive to overcome the fragmentation of the inland water transport market in Europe and to establish the principle of free navigation on inland waterways at the pan-European level.</p> <p>UNECE should actively promote the advantages of transport by inland waterway and indicate the problems it is facing through the regular (once every ten years) publication of the White Paper on Trends in and Development of Inland Navigation and its Infrastructure;^{1/}</p> <p>To carry on cooperation with other stakeholders on questions relating to the improvement of current institutional structure in inland navigation, preserving however the experience gained and positive results of work by the existing institutions, including UNECE, and taking into account the potential they possess.</p>

^{1/} The last edition of the “White Paper” was published in 1996 (see TRANS/SC.3/138).

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
<p>7. <i>In this context Ministers invite the governments of the states that are not members of the European Union to also take the necessary initiatives in the interest of the realization of NAIADES in their countries. Ministers also invite the European Community to make full use of mechanisms to support these countries in financial and technical terms.</i></p>	<p>To initiate the elaboration of a comprehensive strategy for inland navigation, extending beyond the EC and covering also such countries as Belarus, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine;</p> <p>The UNECE secretariat should monitor the implementation of the follow-up to the Bucharest Declaration and, at the same time, should follow the actions by the European Commission aimed at the implementation of the NAIADES Programme to ensure cooperation between UNECE and EC. The European Commission should, in particular, be informed of the decisions of UNECE member Governments concerning the maintenance and further development of inland waterway infrastructure (AGN network, “Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E waterway Network” (Blue book), “Inventory of Most Important Bottlenecks and Missing Links in the E waterway Network”, “Economic Study of the Danube – Oder – Elbe Connection” and the situation regarding the elaboration of the Economic Study on the Dnieper – Vistula – Oder Waterway Connection);</p> <p>A Workshop should be organized in cooperation with EC and international financial institutions on practical realization of recommendations of the High-Level Group on the Extension of Major trans-European Transport Axes (TEN-T) to the Neighbouring Countries in order to identify the top priority projects capable of being supported by relevant EC funds and financial institutions such as EBRD, etc.</p>
<p>8. <i>Ministers invite the shipping industry in close cooperation with freight forwarders, operators of other transport modes and ports to develop new markets and to expand reliable door-to-door transportation, inter alia by reducing delays in the transshipment of containers in seaports.</i></p>	<p>To request the UNECE secretariat to periodically invite the representatives of shipping interests and ports from different European regions to participate in the work of different subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee with a view to identifying and taking into account the needs of the industry to implement this decision of the ministerial conference.</p>

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
<p><i>10. Ministers invite the industry to continue modernization of the fleet in order to further improve logistics efficiency and environmental performance. Investments in the fleet should aim to facilitate continued use of smaller waterways and improve the reliability of transport in the context of extended periods of shallow water levels.</i></p>	<p>The Working Party SC.3 should consider the possibility of preparation by member Governments, together with river commissions, of specific studies on fleet modernization and enhancing of its efficiency. To carry out studies with a view to identifying the most efficient types of vessels to be used on the so-called “Great European Transport Circle^{2/},” including the stretches of coastal sea routes.</p> <p>To prepare for the possible development of additional provisions to AGN Agreement aimed at the integration of inland navigation, sea-river shipping and short sea crossings.</p>
<p><i>11. Ministers call upon the European Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the River Commissions to reinforce environmental standards, in order to further improve the environmental performance of inland waterway transport compared to other modes.</i></p>	<p>To encourage member Governments to practically apply in their national legislation the provisions of UNECE Recommendations relating to the prevention of water and air pollution by inland shipping, in particular, chapters 8A and 8B of the “Recommendations on Harmonized Europe-wide Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels;”</p> <p>In cooperation with EC and river commissions, to regularly review the environmental standards taking into account the technological progress and the ever-increasing requirements for the protection of the environment.</p>
<p><i>14. Ministers invite the competent authorities to facilitate the establishment, in cooperation with the industry, of promotion and development centers and to nominate national focal points for promoting and supporting inland waterway transport and sea-river shipping.</i></p>	<p>To invite member Governments to establish national centers for the promotion and development of inland waterway transport and designate national coordinators, which should contribute to the development of effective mechanisms for cooperation between authorities and inland transport sector and facilitate the development of policy aimed at the achievement of concrete results.</p>

^{2/} Rotterdam – North Sea – Baltic Sea – Volga-Baltic Waterway – Volga – Don – Azov Sea – Black Sea – Danube – Rhine – Rotterdam.

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
Infrastructure development and the environment	
<p>16. <i>Ministers, having in mind the AGN and the TEN-T network, note the intention of the European Commission to initiate a European development plan for improvement and maintenance of waterway infrastructure and transshipment facilities. They also support the recommendations issued in 2005 by the High Level Group on the Extension of Major trans-European Transport Axes to the Neighbouring Countries.</i></p>	<p>To go on with the improvement and maintenance of a modern and efficient network of inland waterways as a key element of the pan-European transport system and a basis for its further development. To consider the elimination of bottlenecks in the E waterway network as a pivotal point for the establishment of a sustainable and efficient inland waterway network. To this purpose, to regularly revisit and review the “Inventory of Most Important Bottlenecks and Missing Links in the E Waterway Network;”</p> <p>To assess the feasibility of the Dnieper – Vistula – Oder waterway link. To encourage the commencement of work of the Group of Rapporteurs addressing this issue in 2007.</p>
<p>17. <i>Ministers recognize the need to improve the multi-modal network by ensuring at the national level better balance for the investments between transport modes through, inter alia, guidance for financing maintenance and prioritizing improvement of waterway infrastructure. Reliability of inland navigation should be aimed at through harmonized fairway depths for interlinked waterway networks, respecting the need to integrate environmental protection in the development of inland waterways.</i></p>	<p>No particular action is expected by UNECE. At the same time, UNECE, the European Commission and river commissions should encourage their member Governments to improve on the national level the technical parameters of inland waterways through the modernization of their infrastructure and maintaining sufficient fairway depths as a possible alternative to the construction of new infrastructure of other land modes of transport;</p> <p>To continue to study the questions of financing of inland waterway development. Some basic aspects of possible cost sharing among beneficiaries as well as the main economic indicators for such infrastructure development could become a subject of a White Paper on financing the infrastructure of inland waterway transport.</p>
<p>19. <i>Ministers consider that in case of the establishment of a framework for infrastructure charging and the internalization of external costs, such framework should be applied to all modes on an equal basis allowing a level playing field between transport modes. However, the consequences for traffic flows on inland waterways should be carefully considered.</i></p>	<p>This item is of practical relevance to government policy for the development of the transport sector as a whole. Nevertheless, it would be worthwhile to have an exchange of views on this issue within the Working Party SC.3. A Workshop should also be organized jointly by UNECE, ECMT and river commissions with participation of representatives of the industry, ports and inland waterway administrations (managers) with the aim of discussing and elaborating approaches to the solution of this issue.</p>

Items of the Bucharest Declaration	Action to be undertaken
<p>20. <i>Ministers recognize the importance of implementing River Information Services (RIS), based on the established framework of standards and general principles, in order to contribute to the safety and environmental performance of inland navigation, optimize the use of the infrastructure and facilities and facilitate market observation. They call all the actors involved to support the rapid implementation of these services, where possible through concerted actions.</i></p>	<p>To continue the work on implementation of the “Guidelines and Recommendations for River Information Services” (RIS) on European inland waterways on the basis of the standards adopted;</p> <p>To encourage Governments to actively establish the RIS services on their inland waterways of international importance in accordance with agreed general principles, unified standards, norms and regulations;</p> <p>UNECE should complete during the period 2007-2008 the development of all the RIS related standards and establish a mechanism for their regular updating in cooperation with EC, river commissions and relevant international expert groups.</p>
<p>21. <i>Ministers invite the river commissions for navigation and environment of the Danube and the Rhine to establish procedures for a structured dialogue on environmental issues concerning inland waterway infrastructure projects and to support these processes, taking into account the conclusions of the “Study on the Development of Infrastructure and Protection of the Environment” elaborated under the auspices of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport. All riparian states are invited to actively commit to supporting this work.</i></p>	<p>To recommend to the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy and its Division on Environment, Housing and Land Management to take part in the activities mentioned in this item and establish a good cooperation with the ECMT and river commissions.</p>
