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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

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**ISSUES THAT NEED CONSIDERATION AND REQUIRE DECISIONS
BY THE COMMITTEE**

Activities related to seaports' connections to the hinterland



UNECE

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Press Release ECE/TRANS/08/P07
Geneva, 24 September 2008

UNECE event addresses the weakest link in global supply chains

Growing volumes of international trade in goods cause major bottlenecks in the hinterland connections of seaports which currently form the weakest link in global supply chains. This issue was the focus of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) two-day conference held on 17-18 September in Piraeus, Greece, at which the key problems associated with hinterland connections and possible solutions were debated.

The Greek Minister of Mercantile Marine, The Aegean and Island Policy, Mr. Anastassios Papaligouras highlighted in his opening speech the importance of international cooperation in developing the transport sector and the role of the United Nations in facilitating such cooperation, particularly at a time of rapid transport growth.

“Three main relevant trends must be considered,” said Ms. Eva Molnar, Director of the UNECE Transport Division. “New, global supply chains are changing the future of transport, so investments are prone to be demand driven. The opening up of transport markets, especially in the UNECE region, coupled with a growing number of non-European investors, such as the Chinese COSCO Group in the port of Piraeus, leads to fundamental market restructuring. Competing, deregulated, ports in Western Europe are benefiting landlocked countries in Central Europe but landlocked countries in Eastern Europe may still be the captive market of their key port outlets.”

Whereas the shipping industry has responded well to globalization, and its ensuing growth in trade, through increasingly efficient practices, hinterland connections have typically not been a priority area for development and often struggle to obtain adequate funding. Lack of facilitation measures further aggravates the problem. Combined, these factors have led to a situation of “freight traffic jams” in and out of ports (or within a 20-50 km radius of ports) when goods are transferred from holding areas and on to their final destination.

Major gateway ports represent massive engines of economic growth for countries and the stakes are high to attract business. Global warming, and the consequent melting of Arctic ice, is opening new sea routes that could potentially decrease the value of land bridges. Ports that can offer efficient services at all levels will naturally have the competitive advantage.

The Greek Government, recognizing the great importance of seaport connections in the supply chain, recently gave concessions for operating the ports of Piraeus and Thessaloniki to specialized companies. Mr. Papaligouras, the Greek Minister said: “These companies determine to a great extent the global market and therefore the concession of these two container terminals is aimed, among other things, at the effective inclusion of these two ports in the international transport chains to avoid any future threats of isolation and loss of significance.”

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So what is the best way to proceed? At the Piraeus meeting researchers, government officials, including the Chinese Vice Minister of Transport, the Polish Vice Minister of Infrastructure and the Deputy Minister of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunications from Albania, and stakeholders (port authorities, rail companies, freight forwarders, etc.) presented their views on the complex nature of hinterland connection development, from financial and administrative issues to environmental concerns and infrastructure planning. "There are many actors involved in hinterland connections of seaports," said Mr. Peter de Langen, Economist, Corporate Development of the Port of Rotterdam, "but even if they all optimize their activities, there is still a need for overall coordination". The biggest challenge, it appears, will be to achieve the right balance among the various, and competing, elements as well as different stakeholder interests.

With the growing influence of global supply chains and the changing role of port authorities, the event concluded that it was time to rethink the organization of transport systems. It identified the need for additional integration among supply chains, hinterland connections and intermodal transportation to optimize time and cost balances whilst protecting the environment. Further innovation will also be required to respond to increased competition.

"Many questions have been raised over the last two days", said Ms. Molnar at the end of the meeting, "and it is clear that a shift in the perspective to supply chain integration is called for. The UNECE Transport Division will also have to adapt to these new challenges – we will need to rethink our approach to intermodality and how we can incorporate port and hinterland perspectives into our existing projects, such as the Trans-European Motorway (TEM), Trans-European Railway (TER) and Euro-Asian Transport Linkages (EATL), whilst continuing our work on hinterland connections of seaports".

The Piraeus Conference forms part of the ongoing work of the UNECE Group of Experts on Hinterland Connections of Seaports. This Group is tasked to prepare a set of recommendations to UNECE Governments on how to improve hinterland connections in areas such as infrastructure, procedures, personnel and information exchange. On a larger scale, the work of this Group aims to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals through knowledge transfer, particularly to landlocked developing countries.

For more information, please visit: http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5_ge1_SPC.html, or contact:

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Additional background information is also provided in the Special Edition Number 284 of UNECE Weekly "Hinterland Connection of Seaports" (<http://unece.org/trans/news/weekly2008-284.pdf>).



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Economic Commission for Europe

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Special Edition: Hinterland Connections of Seaports

Hinterland connections of major (gateway) seaports include diverse transport routes (rail and road links as well as costal and inland waterways). They can be thousands of kilometres long. As gateways for growing merchandise trade, seaports have been increasingly confronted by hinterland bottlenecks.



The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Transport Division is organizing a conference on “The Role of Seaports as a Link between Inland and Maritime Transport”. The conference, which is kindly hosted by the Government of Greece, will take place in Piraeus, Greece on 17-18 September 2008.

Economic benefits from increased trade are in danger of going to waste unless measures are taken to develop hinterland connections of seaports. Increasingly efficient container transport, coupled with the recent growth in trade volumes, is creating bottlenecks at ports because hinterland connections moving goods forward are not sufficiently developed to handle the growth.

In keeping with the Transport Division’s mandate of facilitating international transport, and in order to help achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals in the UNECE region, a Group of Experts on Hinterland Connections of Seaports was established by member countries in February 2008 to help tackle this challenge. The Group will collect and analyze information, presenting a final set of recommendations to governments in 2009.

The Conference in Piraeus is one of the activities being organized to produce the set of recommendations. Experts on the issue will report their most recent

research findings in presentations offering key data and examples of best practices. Participants should gain an understanding of what is necessary to ensure efficient links between maritime and inland transport modes, how to effectively integrate seaports in transport infrastructure planning, and how to develop sustainable national, regional and global transport systems.

In addition to stimulating free-flowing and focused discussions on the best ways of solving the hinterland connection problem, the Conference will also provide middle and low-income countries in the UNECE region with an opportunity to benefit from the experience of high-income port/hub/transit economies.

The recommendations, if implemented effectively, could significantly reduce the prohibitively high costs of international trade in a number of UNECE emerging market economies, thereby enhancing prospects for their self-sustaining economic and social development.

The development of well functioning pan-European transport systems has been among the strategic objectives of the UNECE for over 60 years. The current project marks a new path in the UNECE transport-related work which can help achieve the Millennium Development Goal of a global partnership for development (Goal no. 8). This Goal encourages addressing the special needs of

landlocked countries and, by cooperating with the private sector, making available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication. Indirectly it therefore also contributes to reducing poverty (Goal no. 1) through more efficient trade practices and to ensuring environmental sustainability (Goal no. 7) by optimizing transport connections that favour intermodal transport, including rail and inland waterways.

Contact information

For more information and to register for the Conference, please consult our website: http://unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5_ge1_SPC.html or contact

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Container Throughput in Major European Ports

Thousand TEU*

Ports	2007	2006	2005
1. Rotterdam	10,791	9,653	9,288
2. Hamburg	9,890	8,862	8,088
3. Antwerp	8,176	7,018	6,488
4. Bremen	4,912	4,450	3,735
5. Gioia Tauro	3,445	2,939	3,161
6. Algeciras	3,414	3,255	3,180
7. Felixstowe	3,300	3,000	2,700
8. Valencia	3,043	2,612	2,410
9. Le Havre	2,638	2,137	2,058
10. Barcelona	2,610	2,318	2,071
11. Zeebrugge	2,020	1,653	1,408
12. Ambarli	1,940	1,446	1,186
13. Southampton	1,900	1,500	1,374
14. Marsaxlokk	1,900	1,485	1,321
15. Genova	1,855	1,657	1,625
16. St. Petersburg	1,698	1,450	1,121
17. Constantza	1,411	1,018	771
18. Piraeus	1,369	1,386	1,395
19. Las Palmas	1,230	1,329	1,091
20. La Spezia	1,187	1,137	1,024
21. Haifa	1,143	1,053	1,107
22. Leghorn	1,044	658	659
23. Marseilles	1,002	941	908
24. Duisburg	901	787	712
25. Izmir	892	848	784
26. Gothenburg	841	812	772
27. Ashdod	809	693	587
28. Tilbury	783	753	678
29. Liverpool	695	630	626
30. Gdynia	614	461	400

*Note : TEU: Twenty Feet-Equivalent-Unit.

Source: The Port of Rotterdam Authority/Industry & Bulk Cargo

Participation

Government Representatives

Minister of Mercantile Marine, The Aegean and Island Policy and Minister of Transport and Communications, Greece; Vice Minister of Transport, China; Vice Minister of Infrastructure, Poland; Maritime Expert, Undersecretariat of Maritime Affairs, Prime Ministry, Turkey, as well as high level representatives and experts from Austria, Belgium, Iran, Lithuania, Slovakia and other countries.

Organizations

European Commission; World Bank; International Maritime Organization (IMO); International Labour Organization (ILO); International Transport Forum (ITF); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC); United Nations Economic and Social Commissions for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and Western Asia (UNESCWA); European Sea Ports Organization (ESPO); International Association of Ports and Harbors; International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF); International Union of Railways (UIC); and European Association of Freight Villages (Europlatforms).

Business Sector

Port of Rotterdam; DB Schenker; Koninklijk Nederlands Vervoer; Hutchison Port Holdings; P&O Ferries; International Freight Forwarders Association Turkey; Ports of Stockholm; Port of Antwerp; Ningbo Port, China; Turkish State Railways; Russian Railways; and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Greece.

Academia

Erasmus University Rotterdam; University of Gdansk; University of Antwerp; National Technical University of Athens; University of Westminster, London; Istanbul University; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Programme Highlights

- ▶ Seaport Best Practices: The interface between maritime and inland transport
- ▶ Hinterland connections of seaports: Bottlenecks or seamless links with roads, railroads and inland waterways
- ▶ Port operations and management: A key factor in the supply chain management
- ▶ Challenges to the development of seaports in the globalized world
- ▶ Technical visit of the port of Piraeus

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Hinterland Connections of Seaports



UNITED NATIONS

The Role of Seaports as a Link between Inland and Maritime Transport 17 - 18 September 2008 - Piraeus, Greece

Background

Fast and sweeping economic globalization has revealed infrastructure and regulatory impediments to efficient and smooth transport operations, most notably in seaports as interface points with inland transport modes.

Recognizing the need to better connect seaports with their hinterland, member countries of the UNECE established a Group of Experts on Hinterland Connections of Seaports with the mandate to elaborate concrete recommendations for governments on how to enhance benefits from the rapidly growing intermodal trade. The conference in Piraeus will be a platform for dialogue amongst stakeholders.

Expected Results

- Increased awareness of why well developed, efficient and seamless connections between seaports and their hinterland are essential to international trade
- Shared results of recent research and best practices
- Important object lessons for UNECE emerging market economies
- Substantive input to the work of the UNECE Group of Experts on Seaports and Hinterland Connections

Participants

United Nations Organizations, Inter-governmental institutions, Shipping lines and International freight forwarders, Universities, Road and Rail organizations

Registration

A registration form must be filled in for each member of your delegation. Registration forms can be downloaded here: http://www.unece.org/trans/doc/2008/wp5/GE1_SPC_RegistrationForm.doc Please send it by fax or e-mail to UNECE (fax: +41 22 917 0039, or via e-mail: caroline.jeunet@unece.org) and to the Greek Ministry of Mercantile Marine, The Aegean and Island Policy (fax +30 210 4146 315, or via e-mail: vpadelopoulou@yen.gr)

Languages and Interpretation Services

The Conference will be conducted in English, Russian and Greek

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Preliminary Conference Programme



Wednesday 17 September 2008

08.00 - 09.00	Registration
09.00 - 10.30	Official Opening
10.30 - 11.00	Coffee Break
11.00 - 12.30	Seaports Best Practices: The interface between maritime and inland transport Following presentations by high-level government experts, conference participants will be invited to ask questions and express their views on key aspects of seaports that are needed for efficient intermodal transport, as well as the relevance of seaports in transport infrastructure planning and development of national, regional and global transport systems.
12.30 - 13.30	Press Conference
13.30 - 15.00	Lunch
15.00 - 18.00	Hinterland connections of seaports: Bottlenecks or seamless links with roads, railroads and inland waterways Following presentations by invited researchers, participants will be invited to ask questions and share their experiences concerning best practices and strategies in tackling bottlenecks in seaports, as well as those in connecting inland transport infrastructure networks.
16.30 - 17.00	Coffee Break
17.00 - 18.00	Questions and Comments
20.00 - 22.00	Official Dinner hosted by the Ministry of Mercantile Marine, The Aegean and Island Policy

Thursday 18 September 2008

09.00 - 11.00	Port operations and management: A key factor in supply chain management Governments, international governmental and non-governmental organizations and major users will exchange views and discuss the importance of effective functioning and operations of various seaport services and their role in ensuring efficient and smooth transport supply chain operations.
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee Break
11.30 - 13.00	Port operations and management: A key factor in supply chain management (continued)
13.00 - 15.00	Lunch
15.00 - 17.00	Challenges to seaports development in the globalized world Following presentations by invited international organizations, governments, researchers and industry representatives will discuss challenges to the development of seaports and their hinterland connections, and the need for timely action and intensive international collaboration, aimed at providing a favourable legal and institutional framework to face these issues in the future.
17.00 - 17.30	Coffee Break
17.30 - 18.00	Conclusions and recommendations

Friday 19 September 2008

10.00 - 12.00	Technical Visit of the Port of Piraeus
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