



**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE**

**TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)
Steering Committee
37th Session, 24 - 25 November 2014
Geneva, Switzerland**

REPORT

1. The 37th Session of the TER Steering Committee was held on 24 and 25 November 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland.

PARTICIPATION

2. The countries that participated in the meeting were: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Poland, Russian Federation and Turkey. The UNECE staff members led by Ms. E. Molnar, Director of the UNECE Transport Division, Mr. G. Bessonov, the TER Project Manager, Mr. A. Zimmer, the TER Deputy Manager, and Mr. P. Pospisil, the UNECE Consultant also attended the session. List of participants is attached (ANNEX I).

OPENING OF THE SESSION

3. The session was opened by Ms. E. Molnar, who welcomed its participants and wished the session full success. In her address, she highlighted two main tasks for the TER Project and its PCO for the next year, namely the need to select priorities from the 2014 – 2015 Programme of Work and concentrate on their implementation in order to produce the concrete activities and tangible results. The second item she highlighted was the swift decision on the location of the TER PCO, since it is expected that the Slovak Government would not be in position to host it after 1 January 2015.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

4. The Agenda of the session (ANNEX II) was approved as submitted.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

5. The participants in the Steering Committee elected as its officers Mr. M. Kovacevic (Chairman, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Mr. M. Radl (Rapporteur, Austria).

REPORT OF THE PROJECT MANAGER

6. In the report, the Project Manager and his Deputy summarized the results achieved by the Project as well as their own activities in the reporting period from the last meeting of the Committee. They informed the session about the progress of work on a new strategy to create wider prospects for TER and present it as modern and highly effective international project. Speaking about the results of collaboration with the international bodies and organizations dealing with the rail transport, they mentioned inter alia the involvement of the TER in the European Rail Research network of Excellence (EURNEX), focusing on best way how to use the EU funding for transport related research. They also stressed the importance of close co-operation of the TER with the UNECE Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) project as well as with the ITC Group of Experts on Unified Railway Law and the Group on Safety at Level Crossings. They also presented the outcomes of their negotiations with Belarus, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Italy and Germany aimed at their possible future admission to the TER Project.
7. Concluding the report, the Project Manager extended his sincere thanks to all the TER National Coordinators for their support in the course of the first year of his assignment as the TER Project Manager.
8. The Steering Committee endorsed the report. Based on the proposal of the Polish National Coordinator, it requested the Project management to distribute the documents to be examined by the Committee at least two weeks ahead of the date of the session.

STATUS OF TER TRUST FUND CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2014

9. Mr. N. Nikolic, the UNECE Regional Advisor, reported on the status of the 2014 TER Trust Fund contributions. As of November 2014, 10 member countries transferred their 2014 payments to the Fund. He also informed the Steering Committee of the letters UNECE is ready to send to the National Coordinators of the remaining

countries, asking them to convey to the responsible authorities the request to settle the 2014 Trust Fund obligations as soon as possible, but by the end of the year at the latest.

MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TER MASTER PLAN REVISION IN 2014

10. Mr. P. Pospisil introduced the 2014 annual summary report on results of the Master Plan Revision monitoring in 2013 (ANNEX III).
11. The report, based on the processed data provided by some of the member countries only, documented their achievements in implementation of the Master Plan projects, status of the TER backbone network on their territories as well as the updated TER rail traffic forecasts.
12. Upon examination of the document, the Steering Committee asked the TER PCO to distribute the blank 2014 monitoring templates (save the one No. 3 – Traffic Development) to the countries by the end of December 2014 and requested all the member countries to return them filled-in to the PCO by the end of May 2015 at the latest.

2014 STATUS OF THE TER BACKBONE NETWORK – TERSTAT MAPS

13. The draft TERSTAT maps, showing the status of the TER backbone network as of 1 January 2014 in all the member countries and in the whole region, have been elaborated on the basis of the data provided by the member countries as well as of supplementary internet information. These drafts were sent to the Polish expert, Mr. D. Przybyla, for digitalization and conversion to the GIS standard.
14. The PCO also presented two documents elaborated in accordance with the decisions of the 36th session of the Committee, dealing with the Proposals for the Update of TER Database, Reflecting New Requirements Arising from the Planned Revitalization of the TER Project (ANNEX IV) and Development of GIS Maps and with the Conversion of Existing TER Maps into an Interactive GIS Environment (ANNEX V). The Steering Committee invited the National Coordinators to send contingent comments to these documents to the PCO as soon as possible and requested the Project management to revise them accordingly and to carry out their implementation.
15. The signing of Mr. Przybyla's contract with the UNECE is expected by the end of December 2014 and the distribution of the digitalized

final draft maps to the member countries for their final verification/clearance by the end of February 2015 at the latest.

TER PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2015

16. The Committee was informed by the Deputy Project Manager about the new challenges the Project is facing and about the state of the preparations of the TER Programme of Work, setting the priorities for the year 2015, as highlighted by Ms. E. Molnar in her opening address.
17. The Committee requested the TER PCO to send the final draft of the 2015 Programme of Work, closely related also to the draft 2015 TER Cost Plan, to the TER countries by 24 December 2014.
18. The National Coordinators will be asked to formulate comments as well as their additional proposals and ideas related to this draft and to communicate them to the TER PCO at their earliest convenience. On this basis, the PCO will elaborate in close co-operation with the UNECE the final TER Programme of Work for 2015 and submit it together with the respective Cost Plan and budget.

TER COST PLAN FOR 2015

19. The TER Project management presented the first draft of the 2015 TER Cost Plan, amounting to net total of USD 294.400. The Steering Committee took note of this proposal and stressed the need to adjust it to the final version of the Programme of Work for the next year. Consequently, the Committee requested the Project management to elaborate in co-operation with the UNECE the draft final version of the Cost Plan, reflecting the final draft Programme of Work and to make it available to the National Coordinators also by 24 December 2014.
20. The TER PCO will send to all National Coordinators as well the existing versions of the Programme of Work and Cost Plan for better alignment.

TER PUBLICATION AND VISIBILITY

21. The Deputy Project Manager introduced the strategic document, aimed at increasing the TER visibility, summarizing the principles of the Project and consisting of 12 basic points to be reflected inter alia in the elaboration of annual TER Programmes of Work, starting with the 2015 one. The activities should promote development of rail transport system and lead to better connectivity of TER

member states in order to have better communication and economic growth.

22. Mr. P. Pospisil informed the session that in accordance with item 3 of the TER Programme of Work for years 2014 – 2015, draft TER Publication, presenting the Project's activities and intended inter alia as a platform to attract more countries to join the TER, accompanied also by maps, photos and diagrams, has been elaborated (ANNEX VI). The National Coordinators were invited to send their comments to the draft as soon as possible.

23. Based on the comments received, the TER PCO will arrange for printing of the Publication and create the necessary 2015 budgetary provisions. The document will be then distributed to all the member countries, other interested UNECE countries and international organizations dealing with transport.

FUTURE OF THE TER PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE

24. The Steering Committee was informed by the UNECE representatives that the Agreement between the UNECE and the Government of Slovakia on hosting the TER Project Central Office in Bratislava would expire at the end of 2014, i.e. in about one month's time.

25. The Committee noted this situation with great concern and requested the UNECE to contact once again the Slovak Government, asking it to clarify its official position with regard to this matter in a very short time.

26. The session also noted that there is no guarantee that the Slovak answer would be positive and that it will arrive soon enough. Therefore, based on the previous contacts of the PCO with the Austrian authorities and on the readiness of Poland to consider the possibility of hosting the PCO, expressed by its National Coordinator at the session, the Steering Committee also recommended to the UNECE to send official letters to all TER Governments asking for their readiness to host the PCO.

27. The Committee supports efforts of PCO and Transport Division to resolve existing situation as soon as possible and requests to be informed about all the steps taken in this respect as well as of their results and about the final decision on the location of the PCO, supported by the copies of the respective documents (preferably by the signed Agreement between the UNECE and the host country).

OTHER BUSINESS

28. The Turkish representatives informed the session that they had already available the Master Plan Revision implementation data for 2014 as well as the respective map showing the backbone network status, ready for the 2015 monitoring report. The data were transferred to the PCO representatives directly at the session.
29. They also confirmed the readiness of Turkey to host the 38th Steering Committee session in Ankara or Istanbul in April next year. This invitation was greatly appreciated by the Steering Committee, which requested the TER PCO to inform the National Coordinators of the final date and place of the session as soon as they are fixed. The 39th session of the Committee is expected to be held in Geneva back-to-back to the 69th SC.2 session.
30. According to the information of the TER Project management, there is one workshop planned in the year 2015, dealing with the interstate coordination of rail maintenance taking place probably in Turkey on the occasion of the 38th Steering Committee session there.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

31. The report on the 37th session of the Steering Committee was adopted.
32. The Committee extended its thanks to the UNECE Transport Division for its hosting the session.

ANNEXES: 6