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Geneva, 31 October-1 November 2016

Report of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics on its fifty-ninth session

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I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) held its fifty-ninth session on 31 October and 1 November 2016 in Geneva.
2. The session of the Working Party was attended by the following countries: Armenia; Austria; Czech Republic; Germany; Italy; Netherlands; Slovakia; Switzerland; Turkey and Ukraine. The following United Nations specialized agency was present: the International Labour Office.
3. The following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations were represented: Association of International Forwarding and Logistics Service Providers (UTIKAD, Turkey); European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); Groupement européen du transport combiné (GETC); International Cargo Handling Co-ordination Association (ICHCA); International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA); International Road Transport Union (IRU); International Union of Combined Road-Rail Transport Companies (UIRR); South-East Europe Transport Observatory (SEETO). Plaske JSC (Ukraine); Promotion Centre for Intermodal Transport (SGKV, Germany), the union of transport and logistics organizations and associations of Kazakhstan “KAZLOGISTICS” and UIRNet (Italy) also participated.
4. According to the decision taken at its fifty-seventh session (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/135, para. 70), the session was chaired by Mr. I. Isik (Turkey).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)¹

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/138

5. The Working Party adopted, as amended, the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/138).

III. Workshop – Promoting sustainable intermodal transport through innovative solutions (agenda item 2)

6. The main topics discussed at the workshop are set out below.
7. During this workshop, delegates shared their experience on the promotion of sustainable intermodal transport through innovative solutions. The workshop was divided into three sessions.
8. Session 1: Innovation and digitalisation in intermodal transport
 - Delegates from Italy presented the Italian National Logistics Platform (NLP) that provides Information Technology services to all logistics operators and all logistics nodes. NLP presents several advantages such as: accurate information in almost real time for road vehicles and the possibility of booking services online (e.g. scheduling travel with a possibility to monitor the operational situation, detecting the movement of dangerous goods).

¹ The documents and presentations of the session are available at www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

- The delegate from FIATA highlighted the importance of innovation and digitization in intermodal transport, given the rapid change observed in international trade and commerce. The digitization of transport documents presents an opportunity for the Logistics e-commerce market whose size is estimated to be worth €348.9 billion in 2019. Innovation that enhances connectivity and efficient transport operations also contributes to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions. In the same token, the delegate from IRU talked about promoting sustainable intermodal transport through innovative solutions, e-TIR being a good example.
 - In his presentation, the delegate from UTIKAD mentioned that one of the main objectives of intermodal transport is to minimize total logistics costs. This could be achieved by carrying more transport units on rail wagons and trucks. An innovating approach would be to have truck carrying two containers or one container plus a swap body. This, of course, requires that each country checks the limits of length and total weight of such vehicles on roads and decide accessible routes.
 - The Dutch delegation mentioned that at this moment mostly due to legal restrictions, most electronic documents are being used in domestic transport. There is a need that the use should be extended to international transport and intermodal transport leading to a reduction of administrative burden and streamlining of the process of exchanging information. When further developing this use and application of electronic documents, much attention should be paid to amongst others custom requirements, privacy, enforcement, under normal conditions and rescue organisations when combating calamities. Furthermore, attention should be paid to exchange information between all stakeholders in the transport chain: business to business, business to government, etc. A legal base could for the Rotterdam Rules that are being in a process of ratification in several countries.
9. Session 2: Innovative intermodal policies
- The delegate from Austria presented the physical measures currently being undertaken in Austria which include: the continuous railway infrastructure extension, the investment in terminals/transport nodes and in innovations (e.g. development of new loading technologies, new wagons, new containers). Organizational measures like fiscal incentives and support for research and development were also highlighted. With all these measures, Austria intends to transport 40 per cent of freight on rail by 2025.
 - In presenting the regulatory framework development in combined transport, the delegate of UIRR insisted in reducing complexity through harmonization of national rules, standardization at the European Union (EU) level and uniform processes and highlighted the upcoming regulatory measures that are to be looked at by EU.
 - The representative from Ukraine set out the ongoing developments in his country with particular focus on the Ukrainian Railways and the Trans-Caspian international transport route linking China with Europe via Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine.
10. Session 3: Smooth and forward looking customs procedures in intermodal transport
- The delegate from the IRU explained the importance of ensuring appropriate and efficient customs procedures at borders highlighting the importance of the TIR Convention and the development of the e-TIR, highlighting the pilot projects underway in this area.
11. The Working Party thanked all the speakers and participants present at the workshop and asked that future sessions of the Working Party continue to discuss this topic.

IV. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (agenda item 3)

A. Status of the AGTC Agreement and adopted amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.6, C.N.86.2016.TREATIES-XI.E.2

12. The Working Party noted that, at present, there are 32 Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement.² Detailed information on the AGTC Agreement, including the up-to-date and consolidated text of the Agreement (ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.6), a map of the AGTC network, an inventory of standards stipulated in the Agreement, as well as all relevant Depository Notifications are available on the UNECE website (www.unece.org/trans/wp24/depnot.html).

13. At the fifty-eighth session the Working Party adopted amendment proposals to Annex I of the AGTC Agreement submitted by the Government of Poland (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/137, paras. 19-20). The Administrative Committee of the AGTC took note that the modifications to Annex I of the AGTC for Poland had been notified to the depository in New York, that notification had been published on 23 March 2016 (C.N.86.2016.TREATIES-XI.E.2) and that no objections had been received during the period. The Working Party asked the secretariat to provide an updated version of the AGTC before the end of the biennium incorporating any additional amendments agreed upon at the fifty-ninth session of WP.24 and then notified to the Depository.

B. Amendment proposals (updating and extension of the AGTC network)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1

14. The Working Party recalled that at its fifty-sixth session, it had requested the secretariat to again contact all concerned member States and Contracting Parties on the amendment proposals affecting Armenia, Georgia and Turkmenistan (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1) and Denmark, Germany and Sweden (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4) with the objective of finalizing the required consultation process before adopting the proposed amendments.

15. The Working Party and the Administrative Committee of the AGTC Agreement took note of the efforts of the secretariat in contacting concerned member States and Contracting Parties about the amendment proposals. The Administrative Committee acknowledged the statement by the Government of Germany that the amendments included in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4 needed to be updated.

16. The Administrative Committee of the AGTC agreed to send to the depository in New York all outstanding amendments included in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/1. The Administrative Committee agreed not to send the outstanding amendments included in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4 and to wait for updated amendment proposals from the Government of Germany in relation to this document, to be submitted for approval at the sixtieth session of the Working Party.

² Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

17. In 2016, the Government of Kazakhstan submitted proposed amendments to Annexes I and II of the AGTC. These proposals were included in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/2. Given the uncertainty around the different language versions of the amendment proposals submitted by the Government of Kazakhstan, the Administrative Committee of the AGTC asked the secretariat to confirm the correct text of the amendment with Kazakhstan and agreed to discuss these amendments again at the sixtieth session of the Working Party.

C. Amendment proposals (minimum infrastructure and performance standards)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/1-ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2014/1, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/5, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/3

18. The Working Party recalled that, since 2009, efforts were underway to update the minimum infrastructure and performance standards within the AGTC in Annexes III and IV to the AGTC Agreement. The Working Party recalled that, at its fifty-fifth session, it had invited experts to prepare, in cooperation with the secretariat, appropriate amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement, in close cooperation with the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2). These proposals were prepared, in cooperation with the secretariat of SC.2 and the European Railway Agency, and included in document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/1-ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2014/1.

19. At its fifty-seventh session, the Working Party postponed a decision on amendment proposals to the AGTC agreement to await the decision of SC.2 for the same amendment proposals. At its fifty-eighth session, the Working Party was informed that SC.2 had approved the amendment proposals.

20. Following discussions on these amendments, the AGTC Administrative Committee decided, at its fifty-eighth session, to approve the amendment proposals to the AGTC Agreement based on official document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/1-ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2014/1 and requested the secretariat to prepare the appropriate depository notification.

21. The AGTC Administrative Committee took note that the modifications to minimum infrastructure and performance standards of the AGTC had been notified to the depository in New York, notification was published on 23 March 2016, and that no objections had been received during the period. The Working Party asked the secretariat to provide an updated version of the AGTC before the end of the biennium. The Working Party also asked the secretariat to provide it with the text that will be included in the consolidated version of the AGTC prior to this consolidation and to see how to make the information available in the annexes more accessible in digital form.

V. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement (agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.3/144/Rev.2

22. The Working Party recalled that the objective of the Protocol is to make container and Ro-Ro transport on inland waterways and coastal routes in Europe more efficient and attractive to customers. The Protocol establishes a legal framework that lays down a coordinated plan for the development of intermodal transport services on pan-European inland waterways and coastal routes in line with those in the AGN Agreement, based on specific internationally agreed parameters and standards.

A. Status of the Protocol

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1-2

23. The Working Party took note of the status of the Protocol as presented by the secretariat. The Working Party recalled that the Protocol had come into force on 29 October 2009 and had been signed by 15 countries. So far, nine countries have ratified the Protocol.³ The text is in documents ECE/TRANS/122 and Corrs.1-2.⁴ Detailed information on the Protocol, including the text of the Protocol and all relevant Depository Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.

24. The Working Party recalled that the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) had encouraged concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement to accede to the Protocol as soon as possible. The Working Party further encouraged Contracting Parties to accede to the Protocol as encouraged by ITC.

B. Amendment proposals

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2012/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/7, ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2015/3-ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/12

25. The Working Party recalled that, at its fifty-third session, it had considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6 (English only) containing a consolidated list of amendment proposals submitted by Austria, Bulgaria, France, Hungary and Romania, as well as modifications to the Protocol proposed by the secretariat. So far, only one amendment proposal from Austria had been considered and adopted by the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/127, para. 50).

26. In 2015, the Government of Romania proposed amendment to the Protocol (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/7). Following discussions, the Administrative Committee of the Protocol to the AGTC agreed to approve these amendments and asked the secretariat to transmit these amendments to the depository in New York. These proposals were transmitted to the depository of the Protocol of the AGTC and that notification had been published on 23 March 2016 (C.N.100.2016.TREATIES-XI.E.2.a). No objections were received. The Administrative Committee asked the secretariat to provide an updated, consolidated version of the AGTC, containing these amendments before the end of the biennium.

27. The Working Party and the Administrative Committee of the AGTC Protocol agreed that there was no longer any reason to delay the remaining modifications set out in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2010/6 (excluding the ones for Austria and Romania) and, therefore, agreed to approve the amendments proposed in this document and asked the secretariat to transmit these amendments to the depository in New York.

28. Furthermore, following approval by the Administrative Committees of the Protocol of the AGTC and the AGN of document ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2015/3-ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/12 setting out the differences between the Protocol and the AGN at the sessions of WP.24 and the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) in

³ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland.

⁴ It should be noted that only the text kept in custody by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as depository of the AGTC Agreement and its Protocol, constitutes the authoritative text of the Agreement.

November 2015, the secretariat notified these changes to the Depository on 23 March 2016 (C.N.100.2016.TREATIES-XI.E.2.a). No objections have been received to these amendment proposals. The Administrative Committee asked the secretariat to provide an updated version of the Protocol of the AGTC before the end of the biennium. The Working Party also asked the secretariat to provide text that will be included in the consolidated version of the Protocol of the AGTC in relation to this item and to see how to make the information available in the annexes more accessible in digital form.

29. The Working Party and Administrative Committee of the Protocol to the AGTC also asked the secretariat to complete its work on aligning the ports, terminals and other aspects of the Protocol of the AGTC with the AGN and to present a joint document for initial review at the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation, and then for final review at SC.3 and WP.24 in 2017.

VI. Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) (agenda item 5)

30. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about developments in the endorsement of the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code) by relevant bodies of UNECE, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

31. The Working Party took note that ITC, the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO and the Governing Body of ILO had endorsed the CTU Code in 2014. The Code is currently available on the UNECE website in English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French and Russian. A printed version of the CTU Code is also now available in English, Spanish and French. The Government of Germany has also provided a German version of the CTU Code for the website. The Working Party encouraged other member States to transmit their national language versions to the secretariat for inclusion on the website.

32. The Working Party was informed that the CTU Code is being used increasingly across the industry and became part of national law in South Africa in 2016, as well as being part of legislation in Japan.

33. The Working Party was informed that at its seventy-eighth session in February 2016, ITC "... asked the secretariat to explore how web-based training on the CTU code could be launched within existing resources." (ECE/TRANS/254, para. 107). In order to explore this, the secretariat prepared, for discussion at the session, document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/1 setting out some examples of the types of CTU Code training available in the section.

34. The Working Party thanked the secretariat for the work that on this topic and, while acknowledging that the document was not meant to be comprehensive in listing all types of training available, mentioned that there were also a number of national and international entities carrying out CTU Code training. The delegates from Germany, Slovakia and ICHCA International mentioned that there a number of courses available in local languages. The Turkish delegation mentioned that there could be a role for the secretariat to provide "train the trainers" sessions to facilitate understanding of the CTU Code.

35. The Working Party discussed the possibility of the secretariat preparing a database of CTU training providers to be put on the UNECE website but agreed that this could be construed as some form of endorsement of the training and chose not to ask the secretariat to pursue this.

36. The representative of the Netherlands pointed out that there already exists informative material and additional information for training institutions mandated through

the Maritime Safety Committee of the IMO (MSC.1/Circ.1498) and that the work on the CTU Code was also very important to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

37. The Working Party was informed that the Points of Consensus adopted by the ILO Global Dialogue Forum on Safety in the Supply Chain in Relation to Packing of Containers (21-22 February 2011) called for the improvement in data collection methods and publication of data on accidents related to the improper packing of containers. The delegate from ILO mentioned this could be brought up as a “recurrent work item” at the upcoming sectoral Advisory Body meetings to be held in Geneva on 11-13 January 2017.

38. The Working Party took note of the work undertaken by the secretariat in relation to training for the CTU Code and asked the secretariat, in collaboration with ILO and IMO, to explore how to collect statistics on CTU handling related incidents with the aim of understanding where the CTU Code should best be deployed. The Working Party also asked the secretariat to post on its website news, where this information was available, on the use of the CTU Code.

VII. Climate change and intermodal transport (agenda item 6)

39. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat that work continues on the three pillars of activities on climate change and intermodal. On mitigation, the work on the For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS) project continues with it being a key input into the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) to be carried out in 2017.

40. The secretariat reminded the Working Party about the publications on this subject including “Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for International Transport Networks” and “Diesel engine exhausts: Myths and realities”.

41. The Working Party took note of the ongoing work in climate change in relation to intermodal transport.

VIII. Intelligent Transport Systems and technological developments in intermodal transport (agenda item 7)

42. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat of the activities in relation to intelligent transport systems and developments in intermodal transport. The Working Party took note that, the workshop held as part of this session and summarized in Section III above, is a fundamental aspect of this work. The Dutch delegation noted that the Policy segment of the seventy-eighth session of the ITC titled: “Innovations for Sustainable Inland Transport with Special Attention to Information and Communication Technologies” also contributed to this discussion.

43. The Slovak delegation mentioned that in many respects transport is already intelligent but the next level needs to be a single transport document, preferably in a digital format. The Working Party took note of the ongoing work on technology in transport.

IX. Annual themes on Intermodal Transport (agenda item 8)

A. Follow-up to the 2013 workshop on weights and dimensions of Intermodal Transport Units (ITU)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/2, Informal document No. 1 (2015)

44. The Working Party recalled that after the 2013 workshop on weights and dimensions of Intermodal Transport Units (ITU), a follow-up workshop had been hosted by the International Union of Railways (UIC) (6 and 7 February 2014, Paris) and that the Working Party had received a summary of this workshop at its fifty-seventh session.

45. During the fifty-ninth session, the Working Party viewed a presentation from GETC titled “A Global Seamless Transport System — For Industry, Climate, MANKIND”. The Czech delegate mentioned that in many cases there could be problems with the parameters of current road infrastructure. The Working Party also recalled the obligation of the shipper to provide Verified Gross Mass of containers before loading on a seagoing vessel at an international level.

46. The Working Party took note of the ongoing work on weights and dimension.

B. Follow-up to the 2014 Theme: Role of freight forwarders and logistics in intermodal transport chains

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/3, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/1, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/5, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/8, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125

47. As decided by the Working Party at its fifty-sixth session and in line with its road map on future work and operations (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/131, paras. 35-36; ECE/TRANS/WP.24/125, paras. 18-22 and 40-41), the theme for substantive discussion in 2014 was “Role of freight forwarders and logistics in intermodal transport chains”. The discussions were prepared at a workshop, hosted by the Government of Belgium (12 and 13 June 2014, Brussels).

48. At its fifty-seventh session, the Working Party decided, based on the outcome of this workshop, that a study should be prepared by the secretariat on the status of freight forwarders in different countries. This study should be based on a questionnaire which would address all relevant issues. A draft questionnaire was discussed and agreed, as amended, at the fifty-eighth session of the Working Party. The questionnaire was sent to UNECE member States in April 2016 and responses were received from Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Serbia, Slovakia (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/5) and Turkey (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/8).

49. Following a question from the delegate of GETC on the French term used for “freight forwarder”, it was agreed that the secretariat should verify the terminology to use in French language versions of documents. The Dutch delegation explained that the authorised economic operators and ISO⁵ operators are also potential ways of defining or identifying freight forwarders.

50. The Working Party took note of the ongoing work on the freight forwarders market and encouraged all member States to provide information to the secretariat on this subject.

⁵ International Organization for Standardization.

The Working Party also asked the secretariat to continue work on the study based on the information that has been provided to date.

C. 2015 Theme: Intermodality leads to sustainability

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/4

51. At the end of the workshop “Intermodality leads to Sustainability” at the fifty-eighth session of the Working Party in 2015, the Working Party asked that the secretariat keep the Working Party updated on the role of Intermodal Transport and the Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, the secretariat prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/4 on Green Logistics showing some of the initiatives currently underway in the sector. During this session, the secretariat presented the contents of the document.

52. The Working Party thanked the secretariat for preparing the document. The Dutch delegation mentioned that there are a number of other initiatives that are worthy of note such as “Lean-Green” and the “Nationale Klimaattop 2016” initiatives in the Netherlands. The Working Party noted that other initiatives in this area also existed.

53. EBRD set out its current activities in relation to sustainability in logistics, in particular a professional training programme and qualification scheme that is part of the Green Logistics Programme of EBRD, and how it was relevant to the Working Party.

54. The Working Party took note of the report on green logistics prepared by the secretariat and asked that it continue informing the delegates on how intermodality leads to sustainability.

D. 2016 Theme: Promoting sustainable intermodal transport through innovative solutions

55. The conclusions of the workshop are in agenda item 2. The Working Party thanked the participants of the workshop and asked that the secretariat keep the Working Party updated on promoting sustainable intermodal transport through innovative solutions.

E. Selection of a theme for substantive discussion in 2017

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/9

56. The secretariat set out in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/9, a number of potential themes for substantive discussion at the sixtieth session of the Working Party. The Working Party questioned the relevance of City Logistics and inland waterways in relation to intermodal transport as a subject and pointed out that there was already a Pan-transport initiative on security.

57. The Working Party decided that the theme for 2017 should focus on the role of the railways in intermodal transport as well as on the importance of digitalisation of transport documents. It asked the secretariat to set out in the report of the session an appropriate title for the Workshop. The secretariat proposes as a draft title: “Railways, intermodal transport and the digitalisation of transport documents.”

X. Intermodal transport terminals (agenda item 9)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/5, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/2

58. At its fifty-seventh session, the Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2014/5 on intermodal transport terminals. The Working Party recalled that it had addressed this topic during its thirty-seventh session (18-19 April 2002) where it had established a Group of Experts to consider measures to increase the efficiency of combined transport terminal operations and during its fifty-fourth session (2-3 November 2011) where “The Role of terminals and logistics centres for intermodal transport” was the theme for substantive discussion.

59. At its fifty-seventh session, the Working Party felt that concrete follow-up activities should be undertaken to support the development of seamless international rail and intermodal transport operations at the pan-European level including the possibly of: (a) mapping and categorizing the types of terminals (i.e. simple terminal, gateway terminal, etc.) and the facilities offered by such terminals (customs facilities, dangerous goods, etc.); (b) identifying opening and operating hours of combined transport terminals which determine largely the level of service available for intermodal transport; and (c) updating the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) based on the new information acquired and possibly on the new categorization of the types of terminals.

60. Many delegates at that session reported that these data exist to some extent on the internet and could be easily collected. However, the Working Party decided that it should first discuss and agree on the structure of the information needed before addressing the ways that this information should be collected and made available.

61. As a result, the Working Party may recall that at its fifty-seventh session, it had decided that a concrete study should be prepared by the secretariat on mapping and categorizing the types of terminals that exist in the ECE region and on the facilities offered by such terminals. The Working Party requested the secretariat to draft a formal document for the fifty-eighth session on how such a study should be structured for approval at its next session stating that the UNECE report on hinterland connections could provide background information. The secretariat prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/2 for this purpose.

62. Based on this document, the Working Party agreed that the secretariat should review and consider other similar studies undertaken on the subject before proceeding with the next phase of the project. The Working Party: (a) identified a study by UNESCAP on dry ports and another by the European Commission (EC) on last mile infrastructure as potentially relevant and prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/2 summarizing these studies. The Dutch delegation asked whether it would be appropriate to set a minimum number of containers that are handled in terminals. The Working Party discussed this document and further suggested that there would be other information sources that could be used for this analysis. The Working Party agreed that it would be important for a pilot study to be undertaken in a member State to identify whether the information that is required for the study is available in those member States that were not in the scope of the European Commission or of UNESCAP studies.

63. The Working Party acknowledged the further work done on the terminals study and thanked the Government of Turkey for volunteering for a pilot project in their country looking at terminals on their territory.

XI. Preparing National Master Plans on freight transport and logistics (agenda item 10)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/5, Informal documents WP.24 Nos. 5 and 6 (2008), ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/4

64. The Working Party recalled that during its fifty-first session (19-20 March 2009), it had addressed the topic of modern transport chains, national logistics master plans and the role of governments on the design and management of freight and intermodal transport. The secretariat, in cooperation with a virtual expert group on transport chains and logistics (Informal documents WP.24 Nos. 5 and 6 (2008)), had prepared a study on the design and management of freight and intermodal transport and the role of governments (ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2008/4).

65. At its fifty-seventh session, the Working Party agreed that further action was necessary and that a formal document should be developed on guidelines for this subject. The Working Party recalled that, for its fifty-eighth session, the secretariat had prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/5 for discussion. The document set out guidelines on how to prepare a national freight transport and logistics master plan and describes the preparation of a tool-box of policy measures and mechanisms that could be utilized for the preparation of national master plans.

66. The Working Party recalled that at its fifty-eighth session it took note of the detailed guidelines document prepared by the secretariat and asked that the secretariat to submit an updated version of this document to the ITC for review and comment. The Working Party also asked that more detailed guidelines be prepared based on document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/5 prepared by the secretariat with the use of external support and incorporating comments received from member States and relevant intergovernmental institutions. The Working Party noted that the ITC had reviewed the document but had not provided any comments. It also noted that the secretariat was not able to arrange external support for the next stage of this work due to budget limitations.

67. The German delegation mentioned that if there was to be an updated version of the document it should refer to the most recent version of the German freight and logistics masterplan of 2015 rather than the previous one in the Annex. The Slovakian delegation stated that they had also prepared a detailed masterplan. The representative from the Czech Republic stated that the preparation of an appropriate masterplan is fundamental to the development of freight and it is important that it focus on the role of the state as well as the private sector. The Austrian delegation mentioned that it supported the preparation of guidelines for the development of masterplans but did not support the toolkit as a comparison of policies was inappropriate.

68. The Working Party acknowledged the progress of the work on National Master Plans and asked the secretariat to continue assessing options on how best to take this work forward to a full study.

XII. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 11)

A. Trends and performance in the industry

69. On the basis of presentations made by the representatives of Plaske, KAZLOGISTICS and UTIKAD the Working Party had an exchange of views on recent developments and trends in intermodal transport and logistics in UNECE member

countries. In particular, discussions focused on potentially changing definitions relating to intermodal transport as proposed by UTIKAD. The Working Party noted that the definitions that currently were available in the Glossary were agreed upon following extensive negotiations at the turn of the century and their modification would have implications for a number of international Conventions and legal instruments and that, therefore, any change needed to be discussed in great detail. Many delegates mentioned that the exact terminology is very important for the whole sector of intermodal transport and also for the relevant statistics.

70. The Turkish delegation commented that facilitation of the Trans-Caspian corridor was fundamental to the development of East-West trade and that until recent negotiations, the cost of transporting freight across the Caspian was uneconomical. The Working Party noted the recent consolidation in and bankruptcies in the maritime sector and suggested that this may have an impact on the intermodal transport sector.

71. The Working Party thanked the presenters for the information provided on best practice in intermodal transport and logistics and encouraged stakeholders to provide similar information at the next session of WP.24. The Working Party also asked the secretariat to continue monitoring new developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics and report on new trends at its next session.

B. Activities of the European Commission and other United Nations entities

72. The Working Party was informed about the ongoing activities of the European Commission that affect intermodal transport. The secretariat referred to earlier presentations from participants in relation to the “Last mile study”, the Fourth Railway Package, the Directive on Weights and Dimensions, the review of the Combined Transport Directive and the likelihood of an Implementing Act on Access to Essential Facilities.

73. The Working Party was informed of the ongoing activities of ILO, in particular on the follow-up work on the “Resolution concerning best practices in road transport safety”. This includes the preparation of a handbook that would include information on truck driver remuneration methods, contracting practices and policy responses within the sector.

74. The Working Party took note of the comments of speakers in relation to activities undertaken by the European Commission and the ILO on intermodal transport and logistics and asked the secretariat to continue monitoring these activities and report to WP.24 at its sixtieth session.

C. Pan-European developments in policies

75. No presentations were made under this agenda item.

D. Intermodal transport statistics

76. The Working Party took note of information provided by the secretariat on intermodal transport statistics and asked the secretariat to report on further developments at its sixtieth session.

XIII. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 12)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/248

77. The Working Party was informed about current activities in UNECE on intermodal transport and logistics and, particularly the decisions of ITC in February 2016 (ECE/TRANS/248) in relation to the activities of the Working Party.

78. The Working Party was informed about the upcoming, seventieth anniversary session of the ITC in February 2017 and the preparation of an ITC Ministerial Resolution on the activities of the ITC. The Government of Germany noted that it would be commenting on the Resolution, through its Ministry, within the required deadlines. The Dutch delegate mentioned that the Resolution refers specifically to digitalisation of transport documents that will be part of the theme of the sixtieth session of the Working Party.

79. The secretariat informed the Working Party that ITC had approved the creation of the Group of Experts on Benchmarking Transport Infrastructure Construction Costs (ECE/TRANS/254, para. 21) and that the secretariat would be writing to WP.24 participants to seek volunteers to act as experts for the various subjects.

80. The Working Party took note of the activities of the ITC in 2016 and the activities planned for the seventieth anniversary session in February 2017 and asked delegations that have comments or modifications to the ITC Ministerial resolution to refer them to their respective Ministries who should then communicate a consolidated list to the ITC secretariat.

XIV. National policy measures to promote intermodal transport (agenda item 13)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/192, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/3, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/4, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2015/10, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/7

81. In accordance with a decision of ITC, the Working Party continues work from the former European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in (a) monitoring and analysis of national measures to promote intermodal transport and (b) monitoring enforcement and review of the ECMT Consolidated Resolution on Combined Transport (ECE/TRANS/192, para. 90).

82. Comparable information for 16 UNECE member countries is currently available on the intermodal transport webpage in English, French and Russian (<http://apps.unece.org/NatPolWP24/>).

83. The Working Party had decided at its fifty-sixth session to continue ensuring that the information be kept up-to-date and requested that the questionnaire be re-sent to member States in 2015. The questionnaire was sent to member States in April 2015.

84. The Working Party may recall that Albania, Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Romania and Slovenia provided updated information on their national intermodal policies. This updated information was entered in the database in January 2016.

85. The secretariat explained that it is still in the process of preparing an updated version of the website to make it more user-friendly and useful to member States.

86. The Working Party noted that in 2016, Italy had also submitted information on their national intermodal policies ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2016/7. The Working Party noted the

additional information that had been provided and asked the secretariat to ensure that it was made available in three languages in the online database as soon as possible.

87. The ILO suggested that the information that has been collected in relation to the freight forwarders market as discussed in agenda item 8 (b) could be added to this interface to ensure it is available to all member States. The secretariat agreed to look into this.

XV. Intermodal transport and the TIR Convention (agenda item 14)

88. The Working Party recalled that, at its fifty-eighth session, the secretary of the TIR Executive Board presented the work undertaken to date and explained that a joint note was being prepared by the two secretariats and IRU on how intermodal transport works with the TIR Convention. With this in mind he asked that delegations in WP.24 provide feedback and experiences from intermodal companies and their use of TIR with the aim of identifying bottlenecks. At the fifty-ninth session, the secretariat and the IRU informed the Working Party on progress in this work, in particular, in relation to the work being undertaken by IRU in the preparation of best practice guidelines in the transportation of unaccompanied loading units.

89. The Working Party noted of the progress that has been made in integrating intermodal transport into the TIR Convention and asked the secretariat to continue informing it on progress with this workstream.

XVI. Election of officers for 2017-2018 (agenda item 15)

90. The Working Party thanked Mr. I. Isik (Turkey) and Mr. K. Schoeckart (Belgium) for their hard work in chairing and vice-chairing the Working Party for the past two sessions and congratulated Mr. I. Isik (Turkey) on being elected as Chair and Mr. M. Costa (Italy) on being elected as Vice-Chair of WP.24 for 2017 and 2018.

XVII. Date and venue of next session (agenda item 16)

91. The Working Party asked the secretariat to investigate the possibility of moving the sixtieth session to the end of October and to communicate the outcome of the request. If this was not possible it agreed to return the Working Party session to the end of November with the sixtieth session scheduled for 30 November-1 December 2017 at the Palais des Nations (Geneva). The secretariat confirmed, after the meeting, that due to room availability restrictions it was not possible to move the session to the end of October and that the end of November date for the session was confirmed.

XVIII. Summary of decisions (agenda item 17)

92. The Working Party adopted the amended list of decisions. As agreed on and in line with the decision of ITC (ECE/TRANS/156, para. 6), the secretariat, in cooperation with the Chair and in consultation with participating delegates, prepared this report for transmission to the ITC at its next session (February 2017).
