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TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)  
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE

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TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)  
Steering Committee Meeting  
26th Session, 22-23 April 2009  
Bad Gastein, Austria

REPORT

1. The 26th Session of the TER Steering Committee was held on 22 April 2009 in Bad Gastein, Austria.
2. The countries that participated in the meeting were: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia. Representatives of UNECE, TER PCO, BSEC, OSCE and international consultants on the TER Master Plan Revision also attended the meeting. List of participants is attached (ANNEX I).

**Opening of the Session**

3. The session was opened by Mr. H. Meelich, TER Project Manager.

**Adoption of the Agenda**

4. The Agenda (ANNEX II) was approved.

**Election of Officers**

5. The participants in the Steering Committee elected as its officers .Mr. M. Radl (Chairman, Austria) and Mr. R. Ivanov (Rapporteur, Bulgaria).

## **Report of the Project Manager**

6. The Project Manager presented his report on the activities carried out from the last session of the Steering Committee until now.
7. The Project Manager expressed his gratitude to the Government of Slovakia for hosting the TER Project Central Office in Bratislava as well as to the Government of Bulgaria for provision of the TER Project Manager Deputy, Ms. E. Genova, who started her assignment on 16 February 2009.
8. The Project Manager also appreciated a close collaboration with the UNECE in the reporting period as well as with the OSCE, which made it possible to extend the TER activities also to Central Asia in the framework of the Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project.

## **Functioning of the TER PCO and Status of its International Personnel**

9. The Steering Committee endorsed Ms. E. Genova as the TER Project Manager Deputy and expressed its expectations that she may take the position of the Project Manager in the future.

## **Revision of the TER Master Plan**

10. Mr. R. Galbenu, TER PCO Consultant, informed the session about proposed steps to complete the Master Plan Revision and about the documents available for this purpose.
11. He also presented the draft proposals on Inventory of Border Crossings, Maritime and Inland Ports as well as on Interconnections and Multimodal Transfer Points.
12. In the course of the following discussion, the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina proposed the deadline for comments to these documents 31 May 2009, which proposal was accepted.
13. The representative of Poland drew the attention of the session to the fact that it would be desirable to distinguish between the border crossings in the Schengen region (with alleviated procedures) and other border crossings.
14. The Steering Committee took note of the corrected list of sections and map (ANNEX III) of the original Master Plan final TER Backbone Network as presented by the TER PCO.
15. The representative of UNECE, Mr. M. Pesut, stressed the need to keep coherence with the UNECE infrastructure agreements when proposing additional intermodal transfer points and/or inland navigation ports.
16. The Steering Committee requested the Project Manager to send the proposals on Inventory presented under item 11 by email to National Coordinators for comments at his earliest convenience.
17. Mr. P. Pospisil, TER PCO Consultant, informed about the final draft TOR for the Master Plan Revision, which took into account the comments of Turkish delegation, delivered at the 25th TER Steering Committee Session as well as changes in the timetable of the activity resulting from delays in submitting the respective Questionnaires. He stressed that there were no comments received from the participating Governments to that final draft and that it was endorsed by the Coordination Group and the Expert Groups meetings held the previous day.

18. The Steering Committee approved the final Terms of Reference and requested the TER PCO to annex them to this report together with the new timetable of the activity (ANNEX IV)
19. The TER Project Manager also informed the session about the results of the evaluation of Revision Questionnaires and about the list of new and revised Master Plan projects elaborated on their basis.
20. The TER Project Manager also communicated the requests of some member countries to receive the Questionnaires filled in by the countries of their interest. The Steering Committee approved this idea on condition that the respective data would be made available to the National Coordinators only. This decision was also supported by the UNECE representative, Mr. M. Pesut.
21. The Bulgarian representative, Mr. R. Ivanov drew the attention of the session to the fact that changes and modifications of the TER Backbone Network, proposed in the framework of the Master Plan Revision, should be approved by the Steering Committee.
22. The representatives of Russian Federation informed the session that the rail projects included in the Final Report of the Master Plan had been taken from open sources and are not actual at present anymore. The new projects will be indicated in the filled in Revision Questionnaire to be submitted to the TER PCO by 31 May 2009.

### **Matters Arising from the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and from its Respective Subsidiary Bodies**

23. Mr. M. Pesut briefed the session on the results of the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee held in Geneva, which inter alia took decision to hold the 2009 International Transport Forum conference to be organised in close cooperation with the UNECE Committee on Trade in May 2009 in Leipzig, Germany.
24. He continued with the summary of results of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project, the second phase of which started with establishment of the Expert Group. He further described the activities of the UNECE Group of Experts on Hinterland Connections of Seaports, extended to the end of 2009 and informed also about the reports on missing links and bottlenecks issued recently, about Annex 9 to Convention on Harmonisation of Border Crossing Operations, dealing with rail transport, about the OSCE and UNECE joint project on best practices on border crossings, about the preparations for the 2010 Road and Rail Traffic Census, about the Paneuropean Programme on Transport, Health and Environment carried out jointly with the WHO and about other activities implemented in collaboration with the private sector organisations involved in transport.
25. Finally, he stressed the importance of the forthcoming joint meeting with the European Commission to be held in June/July this year, which should provide an opportunity to promote the TEM and TER projects and strengthen synergies between the work of both organisations.

## **Financial Issues**

26. The UNECE representative, Mr. M. Pesut presented the Financial Report for 2008 which was based on documents distributed at the 25<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee held in Geneva, which did not undergo any substantial changes and which showed that the TER Project was financially sound. In the reporting year, 12 member countries paid their Trust Fund contributions.
27. Regarding the Status of TER Trust Fund Contributions for 2009, he informed that the UNECE sent to all member countries letters asking them to fulfil their obligations to the Trust Fund according to the respective Agreement and asked the representatives of the countries to do so as soon as possible.
28. The delegation of the Czech Republic requested that the documents on financial status of the TER Project should be submitted to the next Steering Committee in a written form. This proposal was accepted.

## **Other Business**

29. The UNECE representative, Mr. M. Pesut brought up the present managerial and operational problems of the TEM Project Central Office in Warsaw, Poland, resulting from the termination of the assignment of the former TEM Project Manager, Mr. M. Hantak on 31 March 2009. In order to overcome the transition period before the appointment of the new Project Manager, it was proposed as the only feasible solution that the TER Project Manager, Mr. H. Meelich should take the responsibility of managing the TEM Project on a temporary basis. This solution was also appreciated and supported by the meeting of the TEM representatives held the previous day. The representatives of the Austrian Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology informed of the readiness of the Austrian Government to approve such a solution provided that it would be temporary only.
30. The delegation of the Czech Republic underlined that such a difficult situation may appear again and suggested that measures should be taken to avoid its repetition in the future. The UNECE representatives appreciated this suggestion and asked for submission of such a proposal at the next session of the Steering Committee.
31. Mr. Y. Koziy, Executive Manager of the Black Sea Economic Corporation, presented the main 3 directions of its activities, namely Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods, Road Infrastructure (Black Sea Ring Highway - BSRH) and Maritime Infrastructure (Motorways of the Sea), The respective Memorandum of Understanding was adopted by the Ministers of Transport of participating countries in Sochi in September 2006 and signed in Belgrade on 19 April 2007. The Permanent Technical Secretariat of BSRH was established in Thessaloniki, Greece. BSEC closely collaborates with the UNECE and other sectoral Dialogue Partners as well as with interested business circles.
32. Mr. R. Janssens, Economic and Environmental Adviser to the OSCE, extended his thanks to the UNECE and Austrian Government for their invitation for him to attend the session and introduced the main activities of OSCE in which 56 states participated. He finished his brief presentation

with the invitation to participants to attend the Round Table to be held next day, where he intended to inform about these activities in greater detail.

### **Adoption of the Report**

33. The participants adopted the report with annexes.
34. The Steering Committee expressed its gratitude to the Austrian Government and to the Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology for hosting the session and its outstanding organisation.