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Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Eighty-sixth session

Geneva, 20–23 February 2024

Item 15 of the provisional agenda

Inland Transport Committee Round table on the

Four-Platforms of the Committee's Strategy:

Theme: Fostering the digital and green transition

for inland transport in support of the

Sustainable Development Agenda

Concept note of the Roundtable “Digital and green transition in transport”

I. Background

1. The high-level segment of the seventieth session of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) was held under the theme “Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the UNECE region”.
2. Related issues have been prominent areas of the Inland Transport Committee’s (ITC) work for several years and have yielded a rich body of high-level documents endorsed by the Committee, as well as instruments and knowledge products of the transport subprogramme.
3. All four pillars of the Inland Transport Committee Strategy until 2030,¹ adopted by the Committee at its eighty-second session (ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2), include elements on the above themes. More prominent among those is the Strategy pillar of ITC as the United Nations Platform for supporting new technologies and innovations in inland transport. This is done, among others by ensuring that its regulatory functions are keeping pace with cutting-edge technologies driving transport innovation - especially in the areas of Intelligent Transport Systems, autonomous vehicles and digitalization - thus improving road traffic safety, environmental performance, energy efficiency, inland transport security and efficient services in the transport sector. The long-term action plan of the transport subprogramme includes the development of regional and global platforms for digitalization, automated driving and intelligent transport systems.
4. At its eighty-fifth session, ITC discussed ECE/TRANS/2023/6 taking stock of the progress and achievements by the Committee and its Working Parties in promoting a digital and green transformation of the transport sector, in support of member States’ and contracting parties’ efforts to develop a more sustainable transport system.

¹ The four pillars being: Development of regional and global inland transport conventions; Support to new technologies and innovations; Support to regional, interregional and global inland transport policy dialogues; Promotion of sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility

5. Given this precedent, it is important that ITC continue to work in the area of digital and green transition. As a result, a roundtable will be convened at the eighty-sixth session of ITC on the afternoon of Friday 23 February 2024 to delve into more detail on this matter.

II. Roundtable plan

6. The roundtable will seek to convene member State and international organisation experts along with other interested stakeholders to share best practice in the digital and green transition and discuss areas where further work is necessary in the framework of the activities of ITC and its subsidiary bodies.

7. The draft programme for the afternoon of Friday, 23 February 2024, will include:

- (a) A first session on the digital transition in freight movements; and
- (b) A second session on the nexus between digital and green transition in transport mobility.

A. Digital transformation in transport

8. The first session of the roundtable will focus on the many activities that are undertaken by member States in the digitalisation of the transport sector. Member States and other stakeholders will be invited to share their experiences in this area including those instruments that are being developed and managed by ITC as well as the Conventions and legal instruments that support developments in this area. In particular, areas that may be considered to be covered include:

- Digitalization of transport related documents, such as eTIR, eCMR
- UN Regulations in the area of vehicle automation
- Intelligent transport systems
- Telematics in transport of dangerous goods.

9. It is envisaged that four to five speakers would present in this session with a question and answer session at the end.

B. The nexus between digital and green transition in transport

10. Building on discussions in the first session, the High-level event on climate change held on the first day of ITC and the ITC strategy on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, this session will draw a close link between the digitalisation of the transport sector and its green credentials. In particular, Member States and other stakeholders will share their experience in this nexus and will be accompanied by speakers from other interested stakeholders highlighting where transport efficiency can be improved by harnessing the benefits enabled by this nexus.

11. It is envisaged that four to five speakers would present in this session with a question and answer session at the end.

12. Based on the outcomes of the two sessions, a summary will be prepared and included in the report of the eighty-sixth session of ITC so that it can be reported to the UNECE Commission as a key implementing tool related to the theme of the previous UNECE Commission session.

III. Next steps

13. Member States and interested stakeholders are invited to nominate potential speakers for the event for the two sessions.