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COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT

(Commission decision G (49))

Report by the Executive Secretary

1. This report has been prepared in response to paragraph 25 of decision G (49).
2. The second Pan-European Transport Conference, organized jointly by the European Parliament and the European Commission with the cooperation of, inter alia, the ECE, was held on 14-16 March 1994 in Crete (Greece). ECE provided a significant contribution to the success of the Conference and its results. The ECE secretariat participated actively in the elaboration of the Declaration issued by the Conference and a Progress Report on Indicative Guidelines for Further Development of pan-European Transport Infrastructure also submitted to the Conference. As a result, both documents referred on various occasions to the ECE work in the field of transport, including the legal instruments developed under its auspices. The Conference itself was made aware of the work of the Inland Transport Committee on its five priority areas of work, namely infrastructure, road safety, vehicle construction, transport of dangerous goods and combined transport. The Committee decided to contribute also to the follow-up to the Conference by giving impetus to a number of its activities.
3. The preparatory work for the 1996 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment was set in motion. Three meetings of the Preparatory Committee were held and a fourth is scheduled to take place on 16-17 February 1995. A questionnaire to identify the topics to be dealt with by the Conference and to take stock of the measures already applied or under

consideration was sent to Governments. Some 35 Governments have provided replies and, on the basis of those replies, summary documents were prepared by the secretariat. The PrepCom is currently considering draft guidelines for a common strategy regarding transport and the environment.

4. The second Road Safety Week in the ECE region, considered as an important instrument for reducing the number and gravity of accidents involving young road users, will be held from 27 March to 2 April 1995. Preparatory work for this event continued to be carried out throughout 1994. Preparations included the elaboration of a brochure containing relevant information and data, circulation of information on relevant activities being carried out by member States, issuing press releases and ensuring the involvement of international mass media and other international organizations. Governments were invited by the Inland Transport Committee to make every effort so that campaigns waged within the second Road Safety Week might be as effective as possible and to ensure the fullest involvement in the campaign of mass media and organizations concerned.

5. With regard to the international carriage of dangerous goods by inland waterways, the Inland Transport Committee decided to set up an international working group for the future elaboration, together with other international organizations concerned such as the Central Commission for the Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR), the Danube Commission and the Commission of the European Community, of a European Agreement concerning such carriage (ADN). Due to lack of secretariat resources, however, the secretariat could not prepare and circulate the text of the European provisions, which had been updated in 1993.

6. A revised edition of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), including all amendments prepared in 1992 and 1993, was published in English and French. New draft amendments were prepared for entry into force in 1997. Annexes A and B of the ADR have been adopted by the European Community (EC Directive 94/55) as the provisions applicable to the transport of dangerous goods by road in all countries of the EU, including domestic transport, as of 1997. In view of this development and to facilitate the implementation of ADR, the restructuring of the annexes of the ADR, initiated in 1993, continued in 1994.

7. The restructuring of the ADR is being carried out in parallel with that of the RID. Activities also continued with a view to keeping RID and ADR constantly harmonized with the UN Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. A ninth revised edition of these Recommendations, containing the series of amendments adopted by the ECOSOC Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods in the biennium 1993-1994, will be published in 1995. This new edition should be considered by Governments, United Nations bodies and international organizations for inclusion (probably by 1 January 1997) in the legal instruments they administer. ECE should therefore include them in the ADR and ADN. In this context, cooperation also continued with UNEP, ILO, WHO and OECD for the development of a globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of dangerous chemicals, as a follow-up to Chapter 19 of UNCED Agenda 21.

8. So far, only one country has signed the Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers used in International Transport, open for signature until 14 April 1995. The appropriate legal procedures were initiated in several countries.

9. Two new ECE legal instruments in the field of transport were finalized in the last twelve months, bringing the total number of ECE agreements and conventions in this field to fifty. The number of Contracting Parties to these agreements and conventions continued also to increase: in 1994 a total of 24 States, of which one is a non-ECE State, became Contracting Parties to one or more ECE legal instruments. The increase in the number of Contracting Parties concerned a total of 26 legal instruments. Most of the new Contracting Parties were countries from the central and eastern parts of Europe, including newly independent ECE Asian member countries. Noting the importance of the ECE legal instruments for the achievement of a coherent efficient transport system in the ECE region, the Inland Transport Committee Committee invited Governments who had not yet done so to become Contracting Parties to these international legal instruments.

10. The importance of the further development of the TEM and TER projects continued to be underlined by the participating Governments which renewed their support to the projects. The number of Governments participating in the Projects continued to increase. The TEM and TER networks continued to be adapted to the new political and economic situation in the region. The present financial constraints were also taken into consideration. A study updating the traffic forecasts on the TEM network should be finalized in 1995. The importance of the projects for the development of road, rail and combined transport infrastructure in central and eastern Europe, especially in the light of the Crete Conference, was underlined.

11. A report was finalized on the methodological basis for the definition of bottlenecks, missing links and quality of service of infrastructure networks. The report will be used for the identification of priority investment projects in central and eastern Europe, undertaken by the EU in the framework of the G24 transport group. The report will be followed up by work on design and selection of regulatory and infrastructural measures to improve the transport situation.

12. A Glossary for Transport Statistics, prepared jointly with ECMT and EUROSTAT, was published in English, French and Russian. The three secretariats also prepared a Joint Questionnaire on Transport Statistics, intended to harmonize transport statistics at the international level and to reduce the response burden on member Governments.

13. The draft amendments to the 1958 Agreement were adopted and have already been notified by the Depositary to Contracting Parties on 16 January 1995 for acceptance. They will adapt the 1958 Agreement to the new needs by placing more emphasis on the protection of the environment and conservation of energy, streamline the administrative procedures, improve efficiency of work by introducing majority rules and make the Agreement open worldwide by allowing accession of countries using different approval procedures. A second stage development proposal is at present under consideration.

14. The new revised edition of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), the provisions of which were due to enter into force on 1 January 1995, was for the first time in many years published in English and French prior to that date.

15. With regard to the incorporation into a legally binding international instrument of provisions on inland water transport using combined transport techniques, contained in Resolution No. 240 of the Inland Transport Committee, a consensus could not be reached as to the modality of such an instrument.

16. The fifty-eighth session of the Inland Transport Committee is scheduled to be held from 15 to 19 January 1996.

17. The subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee were requested to intensify their work on subjects of special interest to countries in transition. A workshop on Transport Statistics intended for transition countries was held in The Hague (Netherlands) in June 1994. A second one is being prepared for 1995 in Germany. An Ad hoc meeting will be organized from 26 to 28 June 1995 in order to consider ways and forms of rendering assistance to countries of central and eastern Europe. In order to prepare that meeting, a small informal meeting might be convened in April or May 1995. The result of this work should be the elaboration of a programme of action aimed at assistance to countries in transition which should include, inter alia: the organization of workshops and particular studies of interest to those countries; expert evaluation of their new transport legislation relating to transition of their transport industry to market economy, and training of personnel. In addition, a round table discussion on assistance to economies in transition would take place during the fifty-eighth session of the Committee in 1996.

18. A contribution to the Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition (TFACT) was announced by the Government of the Netherlands.

19. Significant progress has been made in filling vacancies in the Transport Division. At the same time an additional post of Regional Advisor was allocated to the Division for assistance to countries in transition in the field of transport and was filled in November 1994.
