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Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment
Second session, 6 July 1999

**DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ECE JOINT AD HOC EXPERT GROUP
ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

Note by the secretariat

Background

1. The Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL) adopted at the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (Vienna, 12-14 November 1997) stipulates, in its chapter VIII, para. 2 (c), that ECE is invited, taking into account the relevant provisions of the Plan of Action, including those on cross-sectoral activities, to consider how best to support the activity of the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment, e.g. by the creation of a joint ad hoc expert group on transport and the environment
2. At its first session, the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment requested the secretariat to prepare terms of reference for such an ECE ad hoc expert group for review at its second session (JMTE/1998/4, para. 27).

Rationale for the establishment of a joint ad hoc expert group

3. An opportunity should be given to all member States, beyond the reporting mechanism, to regularly contribute their expertise and voice their concerns.

4. Equally important is the need for expert assessments, analyses and proposals so that the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment can fulfil its tasks, e.g. defining priorities and analysing the long-term objectives in the field of transport and the environment; linking the Programme's policy to the regional and subregional strategies; evaluating the Programme's implementation and assessing progress towards the long-term objectives based on sound statistics; evaluating the information received through the reporting mechanism; and preparing the Programme's mid-term review in the year 2002 (ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL, chapter VIII, para. 3).

Mandate

5. The ECE Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Transport and the Environment would assist the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment, in particular in:

(a) Identifying key priorities in the Programme of Joint Action, based on long-term regional objectives and technical and scientific developments;

(b) Establishing, on the basis of subparagraph (a) above, a revolving work plan, including selected topics to be reported on by national focal points. Such a work plan would be submitted to the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment and could be revised annually;

(c) Providing guidance for the implementation of the Programme of Joint Action and ensuring good coordination, based on practical experience gained in different countries. Specific emphasis should be given to progress achieved and problems encountered in countries with economies in transition;

(d) Preparing the 2002 mid-term review and, if appropriate, the round table in the year 2000 as proposed by the Ukrainian delegation during the first session of the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment (JMTE/1998/4, para. 29);

(e) Evaluating the opportunities for new non-legally binding actions as well as the feasibility and necessity of a new legally binding instrument (e.g. a convention on transport, environment and health, focusing on adding value to and avoiding overlaps with existing agreements), as requested in the Ministerial Declaration to be adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (London, June 1999).

Structure and composition

6. The joint ad hoc expert group would be open to experts nominated by member States and relevant intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations working in the field of transport and the environment, as well as to all focal points and lead actors.

7. In accordance with the Programme of Joint Action (chapter VIII, para. 1(ii)), efficient informal and non-bureaucratic procedures will be used. The Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment may wish to consider whether the expert group's meetings and documentation would be of a formal or informal character, i.e. with or without interpretation and translation of documents.