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ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

Note by the secretariat

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

This note is a supplement to the information provided in document TRANS/WP.5/2000/11 and summarises activities of assistance to countries with economies in transition carried out since July 2000. These activities are presented below under the following headings:

A. Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) and Stability Pact

1. *SECI Project Group on Border Crossing Facilitation*

The third session of the Regional Road Transport Committee (RRTC), established as an implementation and monitoring mechanism of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Facilitation of International Road Transport of Goods in the SECI region, was held from 4 to 6 October 2000 at Heraklion (Greece). The RRTC noted that Croatia would become a Party to the MoU by 20 October 2000. The Committee also reviewed progress made in the implementation of the MoU and noted in particular that most Parties to the MoU would be in a position to provide, as of 1 January 2001, for liberalized access to the international road haulage market for so-called "green" and "greener and safe" goods road vehicles.

2. *Ad hoc Working Group on the reduction of border stopping time of shuttle trains.*

At its seventh meeting the SECI ad hoc Working Group on the Reduction of Border Stopping Times of Shuttle Trains (Dobrinishte, Bulgaria, 9-10 November 2000) (i) considered the degree of implementation of its decisions and (ii) undertook a technical visit to Kulata border station to review the practical border crossing problems of international passenger and freight trains.

3. *Adriatic-Ionian Highway project*

The ECE secretariat participated at the *Second expert level meeting on the Adriatic-Ionian Highway project (AIH)* held in Ioannina, Greece on 28-29 September 2000. In-depth information and technical data were submitted and exchange of information took place at the meeting on the national segments of the proposed Adriatic-Ionian Highway. The meeting also established a Technical Coordination Committee with the responsibility to formulate terms of reference for a pre-feasibility study of the Highway, collect required data, propose a study plan and seek funding from international financial institutions.

B. Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)

The *SPECA Project Working Group on transport and border crossing facilitation* held its fifth meeting in Almaty on 3-7 October 2000 with the participation of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, ECE, ESCAP, the office of the UN resident representative, EC and a number of IFIs and international organizations. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have not as yet participated in any of the SPECA Transport meetings. The meeting decided inter alia to

complete the list of priority investment projects for the region, to hold a joint SPECA/IRU seminar on road transport in 2001 and agreed to the formulation of a SPECA MoU on the facilitation of international road transport in the region, an informal document of which was submitted at the meeting by ECE.

C. Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC)

The Transport Division represented the ECE secretariat at the BSEC Conference *Business Opportunities in the BSEC Region*, held in Yalta on 7-9 September 2000.

D. Bilateral Missions

The Regional Adviser on Transport conducted a bilateral Mission to Uzbekistan on 29 November to 1 December 2000. During the mission the Regional Adviser reviewed with the authorities the present status of Uzbekistan's accession to UN/ECE transport legal instruments, proposed a priority list of additional conventions and agreements for accession by Uzbekistan and briefed Uzbekistan on a number of recent international transport initiatives including the proposed Euro-Asian Transport Corridors (ECE/ESCAP and St. Petersburg Conference of 12-12 September 2000), SPECA, BSEC, Black Sea PETrA and SECI.

E. Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport

The *Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport* took place in St. Petersburg on 12-13 September, as a follow up to the *First* one also held in St. Petersburg in May 1998. Over 600 participants attended from a number of countries, international organizations, international financial institutions and private organizations. Major recommendations included the establishment of Euro-Asian Transport Corridors and the formulation of a demonstration train project on some Corridors.

At the invitation of the Russian Federation the ECE secretariat, represented by its Regional Adviser on Transport, participated at *the Conference Organizing Committee*. The latter was also assigned the principal responsibility for the drafting of the *Conference Declaration* the final version of which was completed on 15 November 2000 subsequent to consultations with a number of interested parties (see Annex).

F. European Commission Initiatives

The Transport Division of the ECE secretariat has participated in a number of EU led initiatives including the following:

1. Black Sea Pan European Transport Area (BS-PETrA)

The ECE secretariat participated at the *Second Meeting of the Black Sea PETrA Working Group on Harmonization and Institutional Aspects of Transport and Customs Procedures* held in Thessaloniki, Greece, on 7 November 2000. The Meeting reviewed and agreed on a draft MoU on the facilitation of road transport of goods in the Black Sea region to be further tabled at the next Steering Committee of the Black Sea PETrA.

2. Within the framework of the Black Sea Pan European Transport Area (PETrA), the ECE secretariat co-chaired an ad hoc Working Group of Customs Experts held at Thessaloniki (Greece) on 8 November 2000. The experts considered, on the basis of a questionnaire, the resolve of border crossing problems in the region focusing on cooperation mechanisms among border control services, the publication of Customs regulations, the simplicity of Customs regulations and procedures and the organization of regional training courses for Customs officials.

G. Advisory missions by the Regional Adviser

In the context of assistance to countries in transition the ECE Regional Adviser on Transport conducted the following advisory missions over the period July-December 2000:

31 July-3 August, Moscow and Yekaterinburg (Russian Federation);
1 September, St. Petersburg (Russian Federation);
7-9 September, Yalta (Ukraine);
12-13 September, St. Petersburg (Russian Federation);
28-29 September, Ioannina (Greece); 3-6 October, Almaty (Kazakhstan);
6-7 November, Thessaloniki (Greece);
9-10 November, Dobrinishte (Bulgaria);
27 November, Almaty (Kazakhstan);
29 November-1 December, Tashkent (Uzbekistan);
7 December, Brussels (Belgium);
11-12 December, Istanbul (Turkey).

Annex

DECLARATION

adopted by the
Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport
held in
St. Petersburg, 12-13 September 2000

The representatives¹ of Governments and Parliaments of European and Asian countries, international organizations having a bearing on transport, international financial institutions and associations of transport carriers, freight forwarders and other private organizations having an interest in transport, participating in the *Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport* in St. Petersburg on 12-13 September 2000;

RECALLING the Declaration and reports of the *Second and Third Pan-European Transport Conferences* (Crete, March 1994; Helsinki, June 1997), the *first International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport* (St. Petersburg, May 1998), and other relevant international conferences and meetings on transport;

HAVING REGARD to Declarations of Conferences and Meetings on Euro-Asian transport issues including, *inter alia*, the *International Conference on the Restoration of the Historic Silk Route* (Baku, September 1998), the second *International Silk Road Rehabilitation Conference* (Tashkent, September 1999), the *second and third International TRANSASEURASIA Conferences* (Almaty, May 1998; Astana, June 2000), the Council of Ministers sessions of the European Conference of the Ministers of Transport (ECMT) (Warsaw, 1999 and Prague, 2000), the Sessions of the Council of Ministers of the country-members of the Organization of Railways Cooperation (OSShD) (Astana, 1999; Riga, 2000) and the Cairo Meeting of the Heads of UN Regional Commissions responsible for transport (December 1999);

RECOGNIZING the crucial role of transport in sustaining and promoting the economic and social development of countries in Europe and Asia;

RECOGNIZING also the increasing need for reliable, efficient, safe and environmental-friendly transport linkages between Europe and Asia for the promotion of international trade, tourism and economic co-operation;

CONSIDERING that the gradual opening of transport markets and the implementation of market economy principles by the European and Asian countries require closer co-operation in the field of transport;

¹ See Annex

CONCERNED that current significant and undue delays at border crossings are the source of unduly increased costs and inefficiencies in transport, trade and economic development of countries in Europe and Asia;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that economic, social, technological, environmental, safety and security aspects of transport policy continue to generate challenges and opportunities for all countries in Europe and Asia;

CONVINCED that the establishment of coherent, efficient, safe and environmental friendly Euro-Asian transport links require the approximation of national transport legislation and regulations in conformity with the international transport agreements and conventions, facilitation and harmonization of customs and other border-crossing procedures, such as transit regimes and especially the TIR Convention of 1975, co-ordinated development of relevant transport infrastructure and further research on transport issues, including those developed by the United Nations, European Union (EU) and other international organizations and fora;

RECOGNIZING the significance of activities implemented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN/ESCAP), EU, European Conference of the Ministers of Transport (ECMT), Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhD), Coordination Transport Meeting of the Ministers of Transport of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Council of Railway Transport (CIS), International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and other international organisations concerned with the development of international and interregional transport linkages and services in Europe and Asia, as well as between both continents;

Hereby,

- A. Acknowledge actions and decisions taken of relevance to Euro-Asian transport links, including:
- (i) Signature of the Addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Pan European Transport Corridor 2 (PETC 2: Berlin - Warsaw - Minsk - Moscow - Nizhny Novgorod);
 - (ii) Signature of the Memoranda of Understanding on the Pan European Transport Areas (PETrAs) of the Black Sea and of the Barents Sea-Euro-Arctic Transport Area (BEATA);
 - (iii) Extension of the UN/ECE road, rail, inland water and combined “E” transport infrastructure network agreements (AGR and AGC) to the Caucasus, Central Asia and Russian Federation;
 - (iv) Implementation of the UN/ESCAP integrated ALTID project comprising Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks as well as

facilitation of land transport, and the implementation of ESCAP Resolution 52/9 on Intra-Asia and Asia-Europe land bridges;

- (v) Extension of the Traceca Programme to new participants: Mongolia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine; also the signing of the *Basic Multilateral Agreement on International Transport for Development of the Europe-the Caucasus-Asia Corridor (The Basic Agreement)* (Baku, September 1998) and the setting up of the Inter-Governmental Commission and its Permanent Secretariat in Baku;
 - (vi) The establishment of the UN Special Programme (jointly by UN/ECE and UN/ESCAP) for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECAs) with priority focusing on transport and border crossing facilitation for international and transit traffic throughout the region of Central Asia; and
 - (vii) The agreement between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea on the interconnection of their respective railway systems on the Korean Peninsula;
 - (viii) The Inter-Governmental Agreement on the International “North-South” Transport Corridor, signed by the Republic of India, Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation on 12 September 2000, in the framework of this Conference in St. Petersburg.
- B. Support the following list of *Euro-Asian Land Transport Corridors*, presented to this Conference by UN/ECE and UN/ESCAP and based on the results of a recent meeting², as constituting the main backbone of the Euro-Asian Land Transport system:

Euro-Asian Land Transport Corridors³

I Transsiberian

Europe (PETCs 2,3 and 9) - Russian Federation - Japan, with three branches from the Russian Federation to:

- Kazakhstan - China,
- Korean Peninsula, and
- Mongolia - China;

² Meeting on the establishment of Euro-Asian transport links (Geneva, May 2000) with participants from Germany, the Russian Federation, EC, UN/ECE, UN/ESCAP and International Union of Railways (UIC).

³ All Transport Corridors are over land with the exception of the Transsiberian that links to Japan over sea.

II TRACECA

Eastern Europe (PETCs 4,7,8,9) - across Black Sea - Caucasus - across Caspian Sea - Central Asia;

III Southern

South-eastern Europe (PETC 4) - Turkey – Islamic Republic of Iran, with two branches to:

- Central Asia - China, and
- South Asia - South East Asia/Southern China;

IV North-South

Northern Europe (PETC 9) - Russian Federation, with three branches:

- Caucasus - Persian Gulf, and
- Central Asia - Persian Gulf;
- Across the Caspian Sea – Republic of Iran – Persian Gulf

C. Reiterate support for the principles reflected in section “B” of the Declaration of the First St. Petersburg Conference (1998) and emphasize the importance of the following guidelines for the development and operation of the Euro-Asian Transport Corridors:

- (i) safe and environmental-friendly sustainable conditions of transport operations and infrastructure being of paramount importance; also their compliance and, where appropriate, harmonization of national transport legislation with the relevant international regulations; also efficiency and effectiveness of transport in terms of transit time and cost;
- (ii) sustained efforts towards progressive liberalization and harmonization of the transport markets of all parties; fair and transparent transport competition among carriers and modes of transport and free and unimpeded market access to users ;
- (iii) accession to and implementation of international agreements norms and standards and best practices relevant to facilitation of international and transit traffic;
- (iv) avoidance of discriminatory taxes and charges and of other discriminatory conditions for transport users; also promotion of

facilitating conditions for international transport operators through reduction and/or elimination of undue delays at border crossings suffered by them; moreover consistent treatment in obtaining entry visas for all professionally certified transport crews across all modes;

- (v) augmentation of the capacity and output of the existing infrastructure through cost-effective technical and administrative means prior to introducing major capital investments;
- (vi) establishment of uniform and harmonized information systems including electronic data interchange (EDI) and electronic data processing (EDP), with collected data to be protected against misuse;
- (vii) promotion and facilitation of public private partnership (PPP) schemes for the development of transport in the Euro-Asian context;
- (viii) appraisal of major investment projects and their selection for financing based on sound economic and environmental principles and widely accepted international standards.

D. Recommend the following initiatives on the development for an integrated Euro-Asian transport system:

- (i) Concerted efforts by countries and all other parties concerned to ensure the early establishment of transport routes/networks for each of the Euro-Asian Corridors and to their progressive development based on sound economic principles; also, for continuity and orderly and effective development of transport in the region, the emerging networks of the Euro-Asian Corridors be based on the existing UN/ECE, UN/ESCAP, EU and OSZhD transport networks;
- (ii) Step-by-step, pragmatic and concrete initiatives be introduced on all Euro-Asian Corridors to ensure harmonization of legal frameworks, especially in respect to border crossing and optimization of border crossing procedures, in order to minimize undue delays suffered by international and transit traffic and by transport operators;
- (iii) Extension of the Pan European Corridor 2 to, *inter alia*, Yekaterinburg could be considered as a potential link to ensure interface between the PETCorridors and the Euro-Asian transport systems;
- (iv) Demonstration runs of container block-trains along each route in order to demonstrate the ability of land routes to compete with sea routes; also to identify bottlenecks;

- (v) Development of the air traffic system on the crosspolar routes;
 - (vi) UN/ECE and UN/ESCAP complete as soon as possible the on-going preparation of their joint programme on Euro-Asian land transport as recommended by the First St. Petersburg Conference (1998); particular attention be given to resource mobilization to make such programme effectively operational; moreover, in the interest of a consistent approach towards the development of new initiatives and subject to availability of resources, UN/ECE and UN/ESCAP be prepared to provide appropriate advice;
 - (vii) International organizations and programmes concerned take note of the above recommendations for possible assistance in their implementation.
- E. Recommend the next International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport be held in about two to three years to review progress on Euro-Asian land transport and to address further major related issues; also consider the establishment of a Permanent secretariat.
- F. Express their appreciation to the Government of the Russian Federation for the organization of this Conference; note the efforts made heretofore by participating States to implement international agreements relevant to the development and facilitation of efficient, safe and environmental friendly transport in the Euro-Asian context; also note the positive contribution of the private sector towards improving the transport of people and goods through and across Europe and Asia.

St. Petersburg, 13 September 2000.

Note: This document has been issued in two official versions in the English and Russian languages.

**List of participating States and international organizations at the
Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport
(St. Petersburg, 12-13 September 2000)**

Six-hundred-and-six representatives of the following States and organizations attended the Conference.

States

Azerbaijan
Belarus
Belgium
Bulgaria
China
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Hungary
India
Iran
Italy
Japan
Kazakhstan
Korea
Latvia
Lithuania
Mongolia
Republic of Moldova
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Russian Federation
Slovakia
Sweden
Switzerland
Thailand
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom
USA
Yugoslavia

International Organizations

Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)
European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
European Conference of the Ministers of Transport (ECMT)
European Commission (EC)
International Police and Road Transport Organization (ITPRTO)
International Road Union (IRU)
Organization for Railways Cooperation (OSShD)
Union State of Russia and Belarus
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE)
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN/ESCAP)
World Bank (WB)

Non-Governmental and private organizations

Representatives of 185 non-Governmental (NGOs) and private organizations attended the Conference.
