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UNITED NATIONS

UN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION
FOR WESTERN ASIA



**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL** 23-24-2001

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/TRANS/2001/2
25 April 2001
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

TRANS-PORT SECTION

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

REPORT

**SECOND SESSION OF MEETING OF THE HEADS OF DIVISION RESPONSIBLE
FOR TRANSPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL
ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS
BEIRUT, 23 AND 24 JANUARY 2001**

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I. ORGANIZATION

1. The second session of the Meeting of the Heads of Division Responsible for Transport of the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions was held on 23 and 24 January 2001 at ESCWA in Beirut.
2. The purpose of the session was to discuss progress achieved in implementing the action plan agreed at the first session, and, in particular, the proposed joint project for national capacity-building in the development of interregional land and land-cum-sea linkages, with special emphasis on those connecting Asia, Europe and Africa. The proposal was submitted to the United Nations Development account through ESCWA, the coordinator, and preliminary approval was granted by the United Nations Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs for funding of some US\$ 1.25 million over a five-year period from 2002 to 2006.
3. The session discussed the issues involved in implementation of the joint project and prepared the proposal for final submission.

II. ATTENDANCE

4. Present at the session were Heads of Division and Chiefs responsible for transport from the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) (see annex I for list of participants).

III. OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. Mr. Yousif Suliman, Director, Regional Cooperation and Integration Division, ECA, Chairman of the first session, welcomed the participants, saying that the session would help to establish a framework for cooperation between the five Regional Commissions and set goals for the future. Having thanked ESCWA for planning and hosting the session, Mr. Suliman gave the floor to Ms. Mariam Al-Awadhi, Executive Secretary a.i. of ESCWA.
6. Ms. Al-Awadhi opened the session, welcoming the participants and thanking them for attending. She wished them success in discussing progress achieved in implementing the action plan agreed at the first session and, in particular, the proposed joint project for national capacity-building in the development of interregional transport linkages, with special emphasis on those connecting Asia, Europe and Africa.
7. Mr. Ahmed Farahat, Chief of the Sectoral Issues and Policies Division of ESCWA, welcomed the participants and wished them success in their deliberations. He summarized the main objectives of the session as to reach agreement on the institutional set-up of the project, discuss the detailed aspects of implementation to be included in a project document and draw up an outline for the report on transport to be submitted to ECOSOC by the Executive Secretaries.

IV. SECOND SESSION OF THE MEETING

A. ELECTION OF OFFICES AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (AGENDA ITEM 2)

8. Mr. Ahmed Farahat, Chief of the Sectoral Issues and Policies Division at ESCWA, was elected as Chairman and the Transport Section of ESCWA as Rapporteur.
9. The following amended agenda was adopted:
 - (a) Opening of the second session of the Meeting;
 - (b) Election of officers and adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Review of activities in 2000;

- (d) Joint project proposal: Capacity-building through cooperation in developing interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages;
- (e) Outline of the report on transport to be submitted to ECOSOC by the Executive Secretaries;
- (f) Future matters;
- (g) Adoption of the session report.

B. REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN 2000
(AGENDA ITEM 3)

10. The final report of the first session of the Meeting, that took place in Cairo from 7 to 9 December 1999, (ECA/RCID/074/99) was noted with appreciation.

11. The reports submitted by the Regional Commissions to the second session of the Meeting of Heads of Division are summarized below.

12. Consultations have been held by ECA with Egypt and Morocco regarding the proposed Europe-Africa linkages (Spain-Morocco through the Gibraltar Straits and cross-Mediterranean maritime links) and Africa-Asia links (through Egypt, using M40, M50 and R40 and cross-Mediterranean links); however, further consultations with the appropriate companies will be required. Having reviewed the Consultant's report, ECA proposed that the organizational structure in each country involved in the joint project should be minimal and that these should be a single focal point. A number of other comments were discussed during the session. The main objectives of ECA in this session are to finalize the project document, provide the necessary information on ways to implement the project and provide relevant information and comments for the preparation of the action plan.

13. The following documents concerning interregional transport links and facilitation were submitted by ECE:

(a) International Agreements and Conventions in the Field of Transport: a list of 55 agreements and their status as of January 2001;

(b) Euro-Asian Transport Links: the report of the informal meeting held in May 2000 during which five links connecting the major regions in Asia with the system of Pan-European Transport Corridors were identified;

(c) Declaration adopted by the Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport held on 12 and 13 September 2000. This Declaration includes a statement of support for the above-mentioned links;

(d) Draft resolution from the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, which includes the following statement:

"7. Encourages regional commissions which have not yet done so to promote the development of national and regional systems of regulations for the inland transport of dangerous goods on the basis of the UN Recommendation on the transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations, and related instruments".

(e) A Powerpoint presentation outlining the work and accomplishments of and the new challenges facing the ECE Transport Division.

14. In May 2000, ESCWA prepared a draft agreement on international roads in the Arab Mashreq, which was similar to the European AGR Agreement. After consideration of the observations of an Expert Group Meeting, member countries and the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, a final draft has been prepared and will be submitted for adoption at the forthcoming session of the Committee on Transport in February 2001. This agreement will be the basis for the identification of interregional corridors involving ESCWA

member countries. A detailed study on the facilitation of the international transport of goods in five ESCWA member countries was prepared in 2000. This report is currently being edited and translated into English. The first regional seminar on the TIR Convention was jointly organized by ESCWA, ECE and IRU and held in Amman, Jordan on 31 October and 1 November 2000. As the coordinator of the cooperation programme for 2000, ESCWA submitted the joint proposal: Capacity-building through cooperation in developing interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages to the United Nations Development account. The proposal was endorsed by the United Nations Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. See annexes for the work programmes of the ESCWA Transport Section for 2000-2001 and 2002-2003.

15. Consultations on interregional linkages were held by ESCAP with Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran. The latter was, in principle, agreeable to the land transport link identified at the Cairo session, and suggested that routes through Iran, Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic should be identified for the purpose of providing direct access to the Mediterranean ports of Lattakia and Tartous. Clarification is sought on the status of the link between Al-Bou Kamal in the Syrian Arab Republic and Deir Azzor in Iraq. During the meeting with Turkish officials, three additional interregional link were proposed, namely, CE70/R05 (this designates two routes, because CE70 divides) and E70/M10. It should be noted that the route identified during the Cairo session as CE70 is in fact CE97. ESCAP and ECE are cooperating in a joint project on transport links between Asia and Europe and have submitted detailed proposals for routes, which are detailed in their report. In June 2000, the ESCAP Secretariat submitted the recommendations of the first session of the Meeting, including the proposal to strengthen major interregional transport links, to the fifty-sixth session of the Commission. The Commission endorsed those recommendations, emphasizing the need for the close and active involvement of the countries concerned in the formulation and operationalization of interregional transport links.

16. A detailed report on trade between Africa and South America, the first such report since 1982, was submitted by ECLAC. The report concludes that now, as then, trade between the two continents is of little importance to either region. Only 1.8 per cent of Africa's foreign trade is with South America and only 1.4 per cent of South America's trade is with Africa. Following extensive analysis, the report concludes that neither the cost of transportation nor the lack of transportation options appears to be the reason for the low level of trade. If transport costs for a specific transaction are prohibitive, the most likely cause is inefficiency at ports or the high cost of insurance and inland transport. The low level of trade may be partly explained by the lack of historical trade routes between the two continents and partly by the fact that their economies are not complementary.

C. JOINT PROJECT: CAPACITY-BUILDING THROUGH COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING
INTERREGIONAL LAND AND LAND-CUM-SEA TRANSPORT LINKAGES
(AGENDA ITEM 4)

17. The Chairman presented the core structure of the joint project document. After discussion, the session agreed on the core structure attached in annex II of this report.

18. The Chairman then presented a draft overall objective for the project. After an extensive discussion the following text was agreed.

19. "The overall objective of this project is to enable the respective countries, particularly the developing countries, of ECA, ECE, ESCAP, ESCWA and ECLAC to meet the challenges of the rapidly globalizing economy by strengthening their national capacities, and to assist them in the development of interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages and promote interregional cooperation in the field of transport in order to facilitate interregional trade and tourism".

20. Once agreement had been reached on the overall objective, the Chairman opened the discussion of the specific objectives of the project, which were agreed to be the following:

(a) To assist the respective countries in enhancing their national capacities to develop and harmonize interregional transport infrastructure;

(b) To assist the respective countries in strengthening their national capacities to improve transport facilitation along their interregional linkages;

- (c) To promote networking among experts and institutions in support of interregional cooperation;
 - (d) To enhance the sharing of best practices and experiences in all transport-related fields.
21. The session then discussed the activities related to each specific objective, which were agreed to be as follows:
- (a) To assist the respective countries in enhancing their national capacities to develop and harmonize interregional transport infrastructure;
 - (i)* Identification of interregional transport linkages and corridors;
 - (ii)* Consultation with countries concerned;
 - (iii)* Establishment of national focal point for project implementation;
 - (iv)* Assessment of existing conditions of interregional linkages;
 - (v) Development of a set of recommendations on common infrastructure standards for interregional transport linkages;
 - (vi)* Strengthening of national capacity for socio-economic assessment of major interregional transport linkages.
 - (b) To assist the respective countries in strengthening their national capacities to improve transport facilitation along their interregional linkages;
 - (i)* Identification and promotion of major existing international transport facilitation conventions;
 - (ii)* Organization of interregional workshops to raise awareness among national officials of improved facilitation measures for interregional transportation;
 - (iii)* Organization of regional and national workshops to enhance national capacity to improve facilitation measures at border crossings;
 - (iv)* Assistance in the establishment and/or the effective functioning of national facilitation bodies.
 - (c) To promote networking among experts and institutions in support of interregional cooperation;
 - (i)* Establishment of a database of experts and institutions;
 - (ii) Publication of directories;
 - (iii)* Creation of a project web site in order to disseminate information about expertise, institutions and project progress.
 - (d) To enhance the sharing of best practices and experiences in all transport-related fields.
 - (i)* Organization of workshops and/or seminars;
 - (ii)* Establishment of a transport forum;
 - (iii)* Use of ICT in sharing experiences and best practices.

22. The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) project, jointly developed by ESCAP and ECE, will be incorporated into the project to the extent that its activities are in line

* Note: Items marked * were identified as most important.

with those of the joint project and within the limited budget currently allocated to ECE and ESCAP. Additional SPECA activities can only be incorporated if the overall budget of the joint project is increased.

23. The issue of the management and implementation of the project was thoroughly discussed and the following text was agreed.

24. "All five United Nations Regional Commissions are jointly responsible for the successful management and implementation of the project. Primary responsibility for steering the project, which will be a regular item on the agenda of the annual Meeting of the Heads of Division, will rest with the Meeting. The Heads of Division may invite Government representatives, national focal points (see below) and/or others to attend discussions of the project-steering agenda item as may be deemed necessary and feasible. The Chair of the Meeting will rotate annually among the Heads of Division. The Chair will be responsible for organizing, servicing and hosting the annual session.

25. The mechanism adopted by the Heads of Division in order to ensure effective and efficient management and implementation of the joint project is described below.

26. Each Regional Commission shall select focal points for the countries within its jurisdiction that are of prime importance to implementation of the project. These national focal points should, preferably, be high-level officials specializing in transport, who may be selected from the members of the committees on transport of the respective Regional Commissions. They will constitute a formal link between the stakeholders, namely, the member countries and the project team. Every effort will be made to involve all relevant national focal points in the activities of the project throughout its duration. This should enhance ownership of the project by the stakeholders.

27. Each national focal point will, in turn, be requested to form a national team to assist in implementation of the relevant project activities.

28. Each of the five Regional Commissions shall be responsible for management of the project activities for which it is assigned primary responsibility. Implementation of the project within each Commission will normally be the responsibility of the section, unit or team designated by each of the respective Heads of Division. The five chiefs or leaders of such groups will be the designated Regional Commission focal point of the project. These focal points will be responsible for implementation of the components assigned to their respective Regional Commissions and for the coordination of activities with the others, as needed.

29. In order to maintain consistency and ensure smooth implementation of the project, one Regional Commission will be designated Project Coordinator throughout the five-year duration of the project. The role of the Project Coordinator will mainly be to ensure that the components of the project assigned to the respective Regional Commissions are implemented and monitored harmoniously, consistently, efficiently and effectively. The Project Coordinator will, in particular, submit one consolidated progress report that includes inputs from the other Regional Commissions each six months to the United Nations Development account, and an annual report to the Meeting, for purposes of monitoring and follow-up. The Meeting may, if necessary, consider changing the Coordinator at any time during implementation of the project.

30. For the five-year duration of this particular project, the Meeting designated ESCWA as Project Coordinator.

31. The session requested the secretariat of ESCWA to prepare the project document in consultation with the other Regional Commissions and submit it to the United Nations Development account as soon as possible.

D. INTERREGIONAL LINKAGES

32. The ESCWA consultant gave a brief presentation of the system of interregional linkages and corridors, based on those identified at the 1999 Cairo session (see maps in annex III).

33. ESCAP distributed a leaflet on the Asian Highway System and ECE distributed a set of maps of the E-Road Network in the Caucasus and Central Asia (see annex IV).

34. When countries of particular importance for the identification of interregional linkages are selected, borders, standards, the existence of links and position of major trade corridors should be taken into consideration.

E. OUTLINE OF THE REPORT ON TRANSPORT TO BE SUBMITTED TO
ECOSOC BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES
(AGENDA ITEM 5)

35. The issue was extensively discussed and it was decided that each Regional Commission will prepare a two-page report on emerging issues in the region and the related activities undertaken and submit that report to ESCWA as soon as possible.

F. FUTURE MATTERS
(AGENDA ITEM 6)

1. Hosting of the third session and Chairmanship of the Steering Committee

36. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will host and Chair the third session of the Meeting.

2. Tentative date of the third session of the Meeting

37. It is planned to hold the third session of the Meeting from 15 to 17 January 2002 in Bangkok.

3. Other business

38. No issue was raised under this item.

G. ADOPTION OF THE SESSION REPORT
(AGENDA ITEM 7)

39. The session adopted its report as amended and rose at 4.30 p.m. on 24 January 2001.

Annex I

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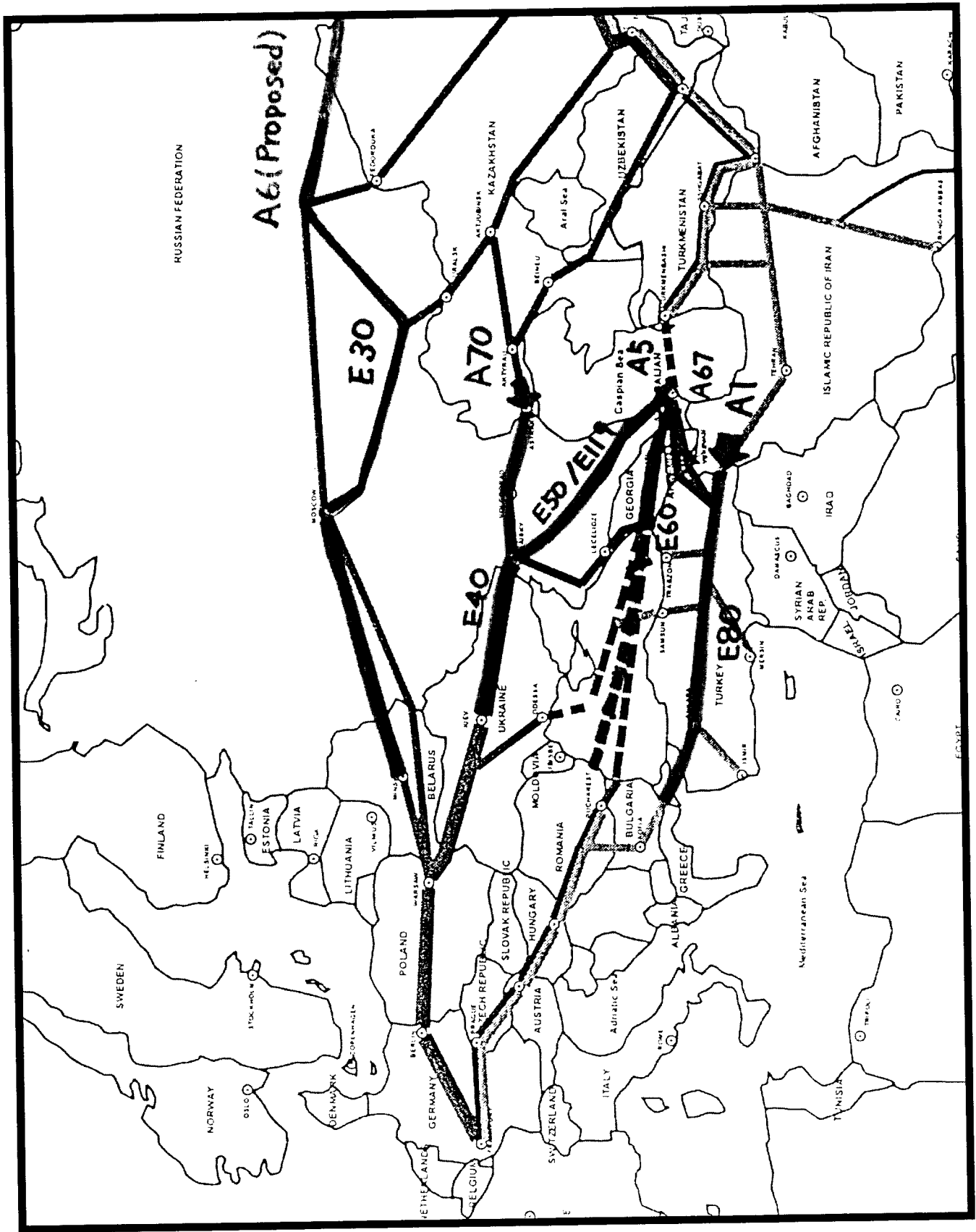
Consultants

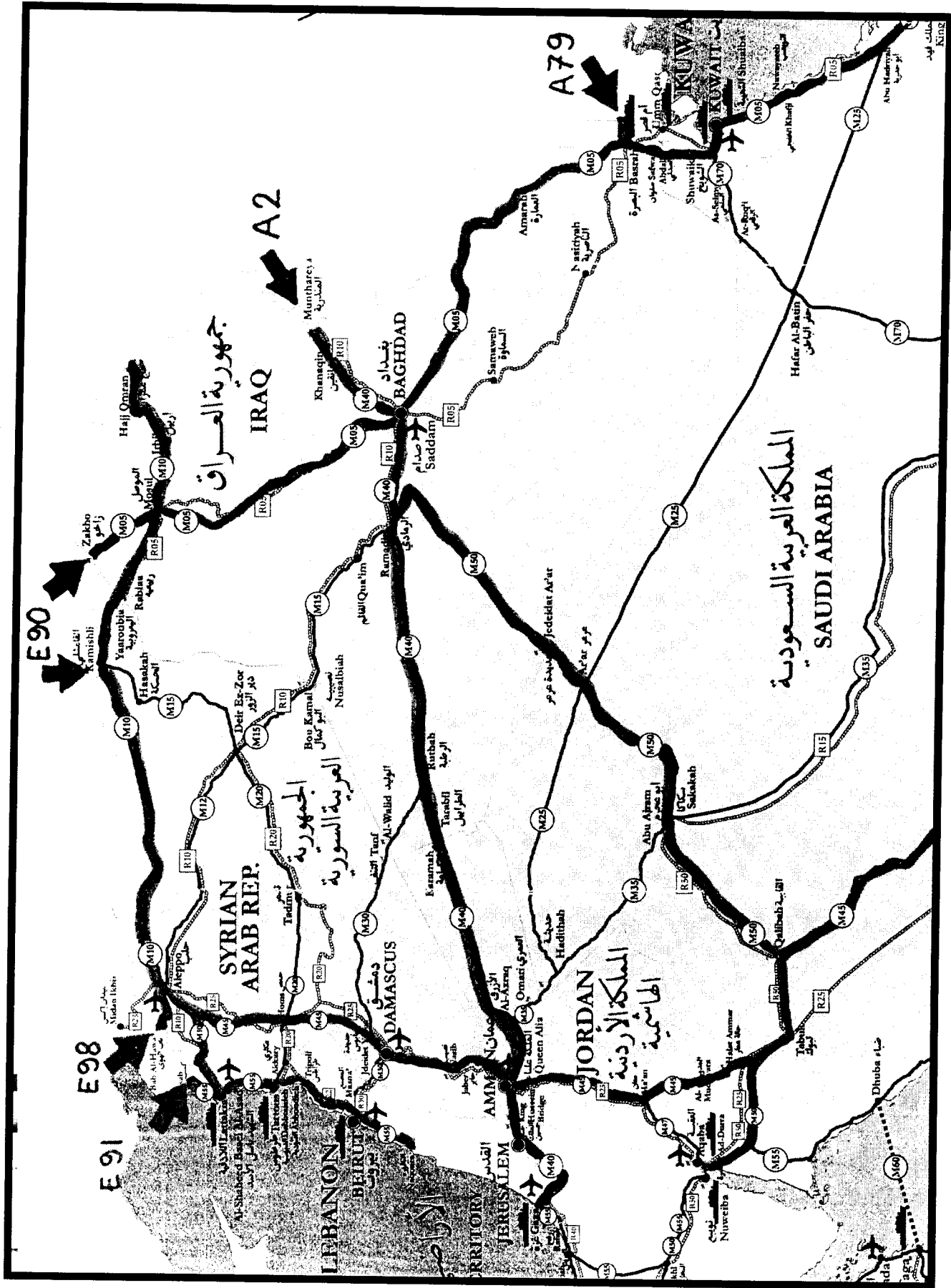
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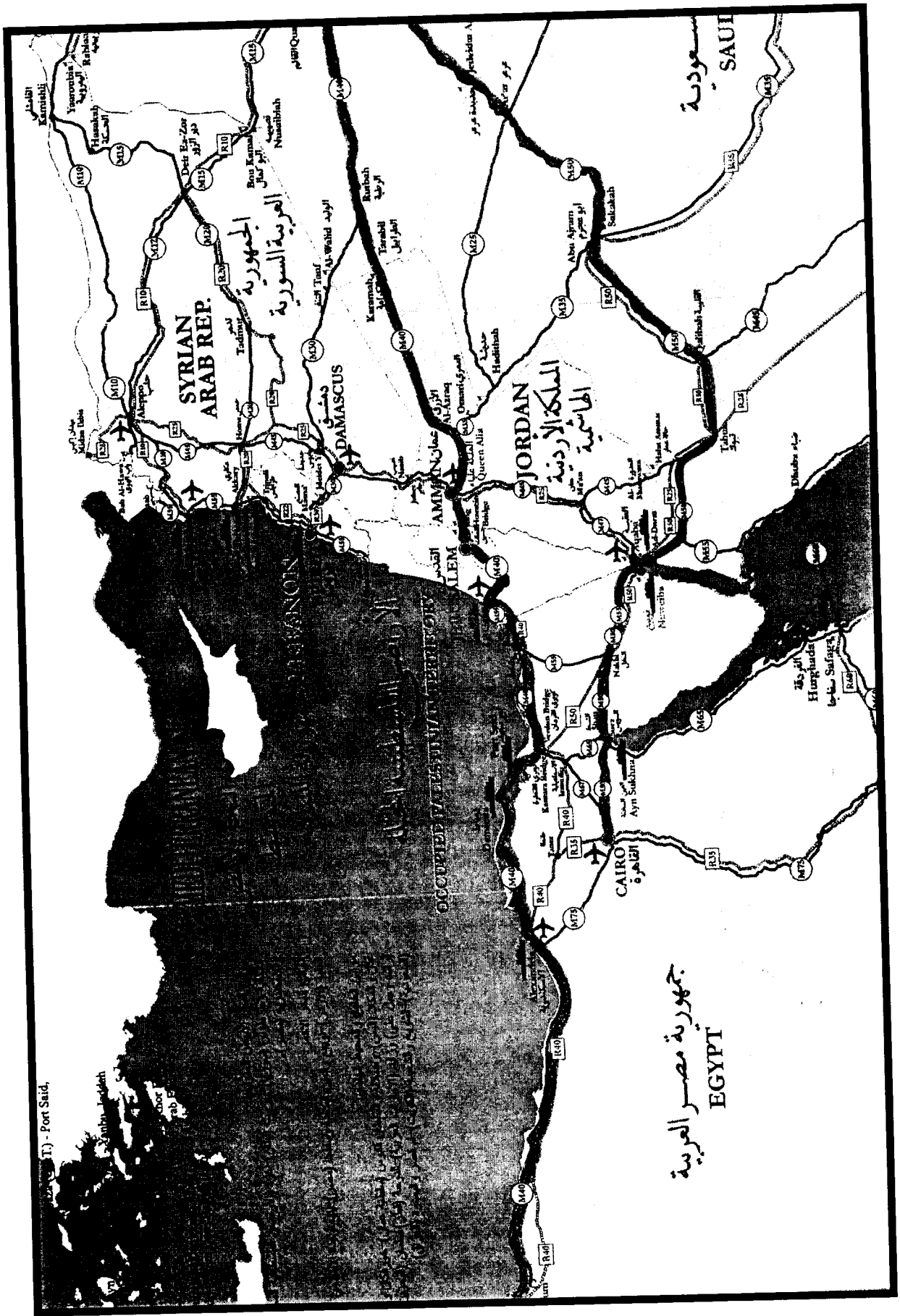
Annex II

CORE STRUCTURE OF PROJECT DOCUMENT

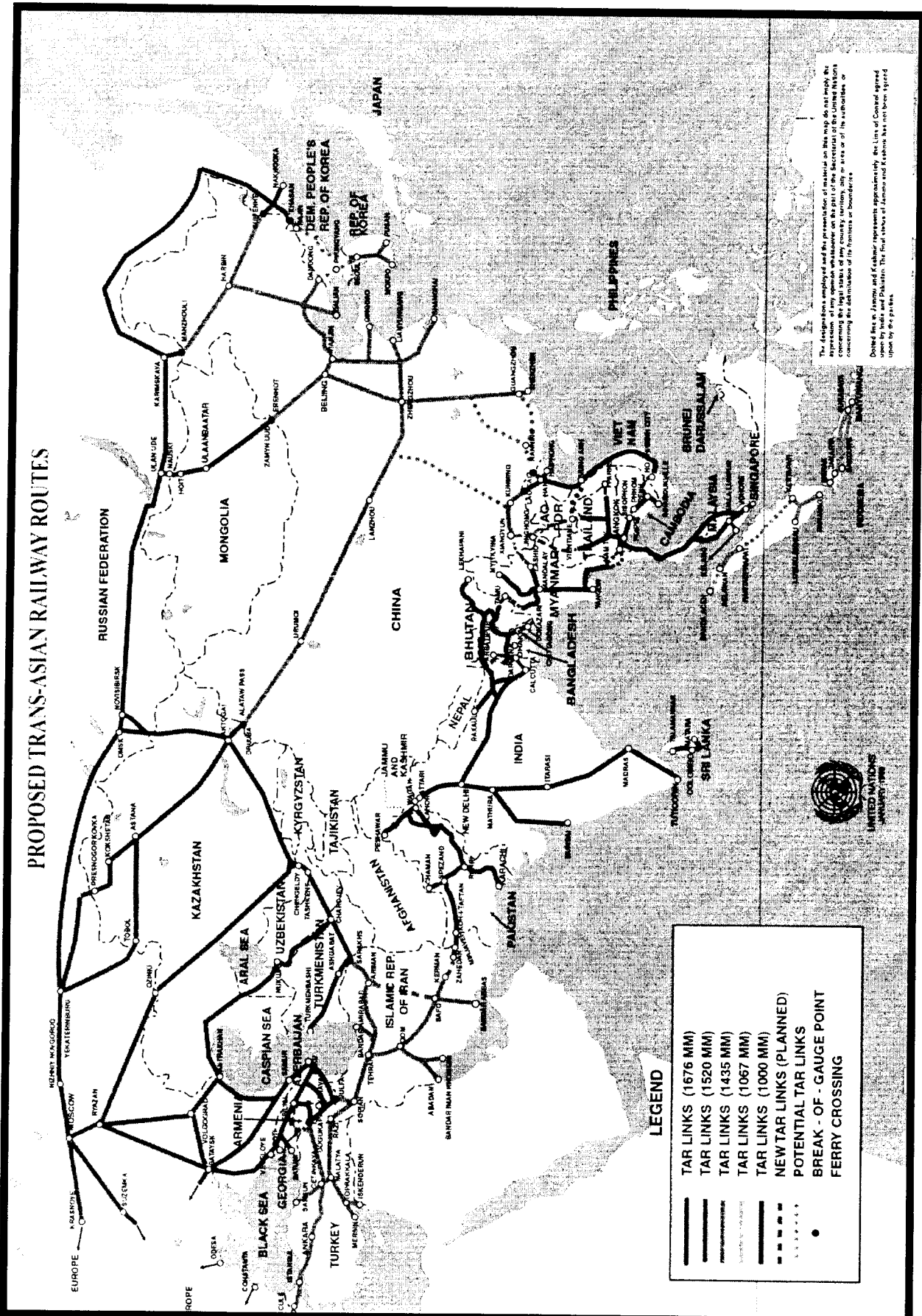
1. Overall objective.
2. Project management and implementation.
3. Specific objectives (for each objective):
 - (a) Activities;
 - (b) Outputs;
 - (c) Inputs;
 - (d) In addition to:
 - (i) Time-table or schedule for achieving the objective;
 - (ii) Resources required in US\$;
 - (iii) Responsibility;
 - (iv) Proposed cost plan;
 - (v) Balance of total expenditure for each goal per budget line;
 - (vi) Consultant fees and travel expenses;
 - (vii) Staff travel;
 - (viii) Contractual services;
 - (ix) Equipment.







PROPOSED TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY ROUTES



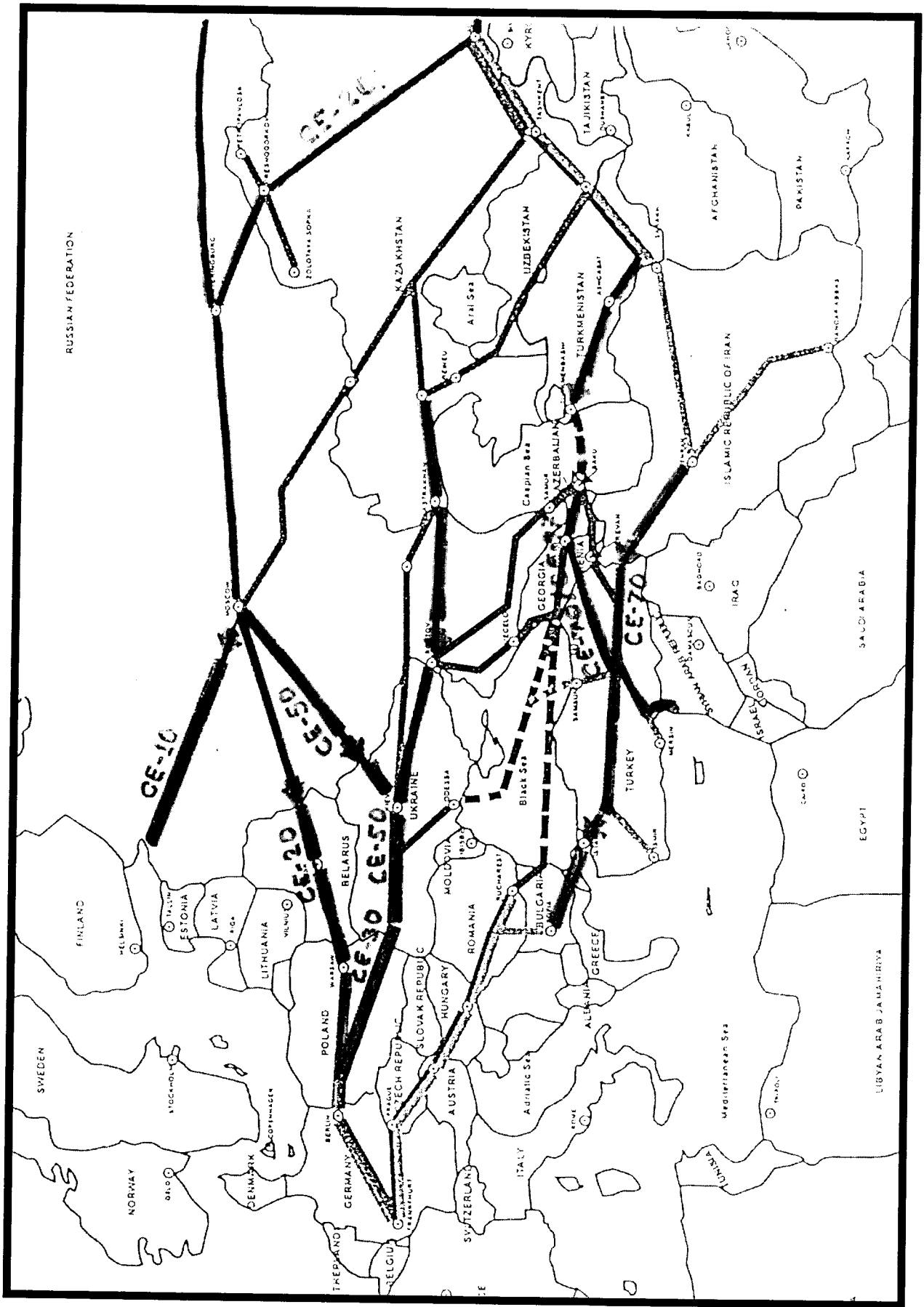
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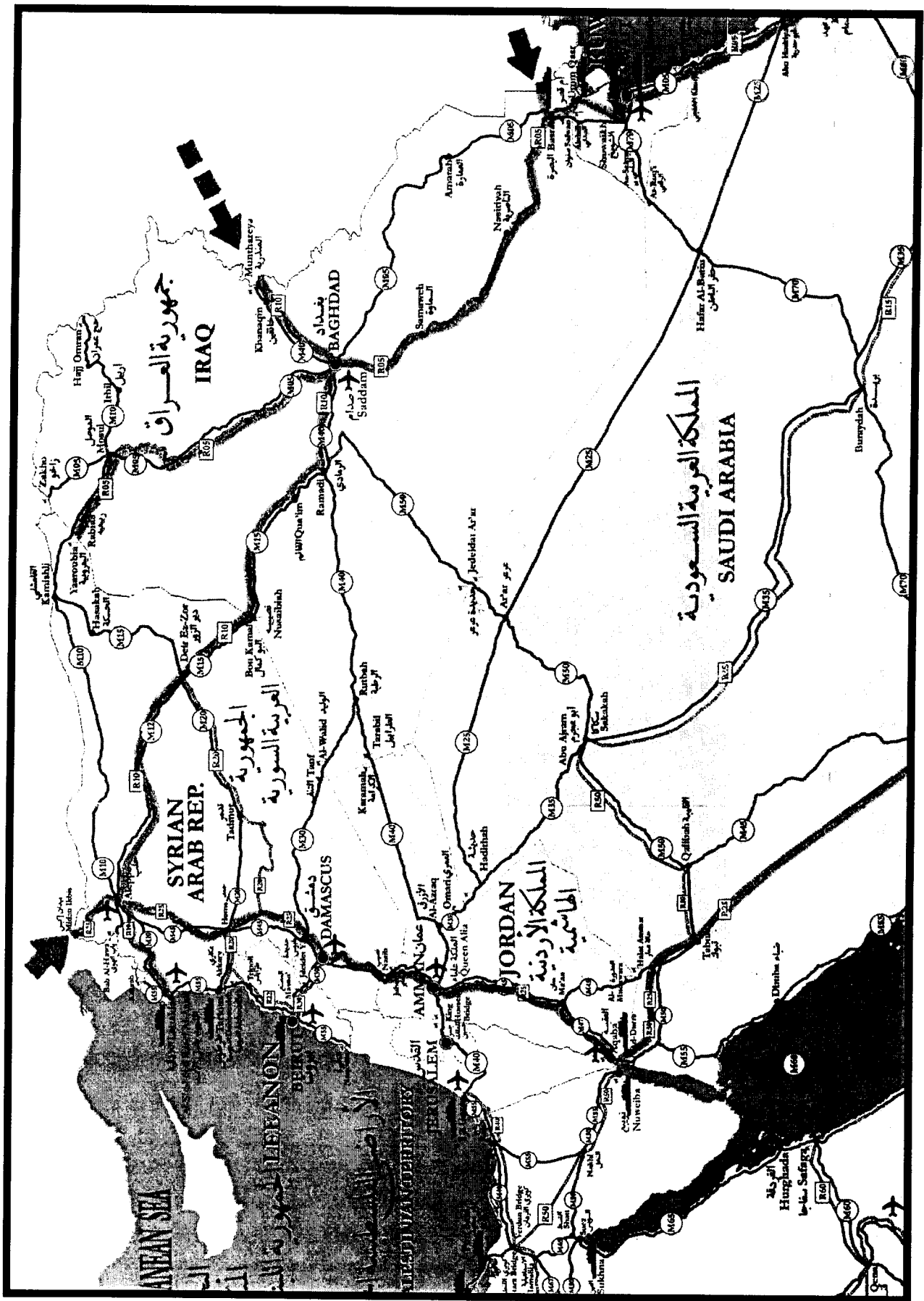
- TAR LINKS (1676 MM)
- - - TAR LINKS (1520 MM)
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- - - · · · · · NEW TAR LINKS (PLANNED)
- · · · · POTENTIAL TAR LINKS
- BREAK - OF - GAUGE POINT
- - - · · · · · FERRY CROSSING

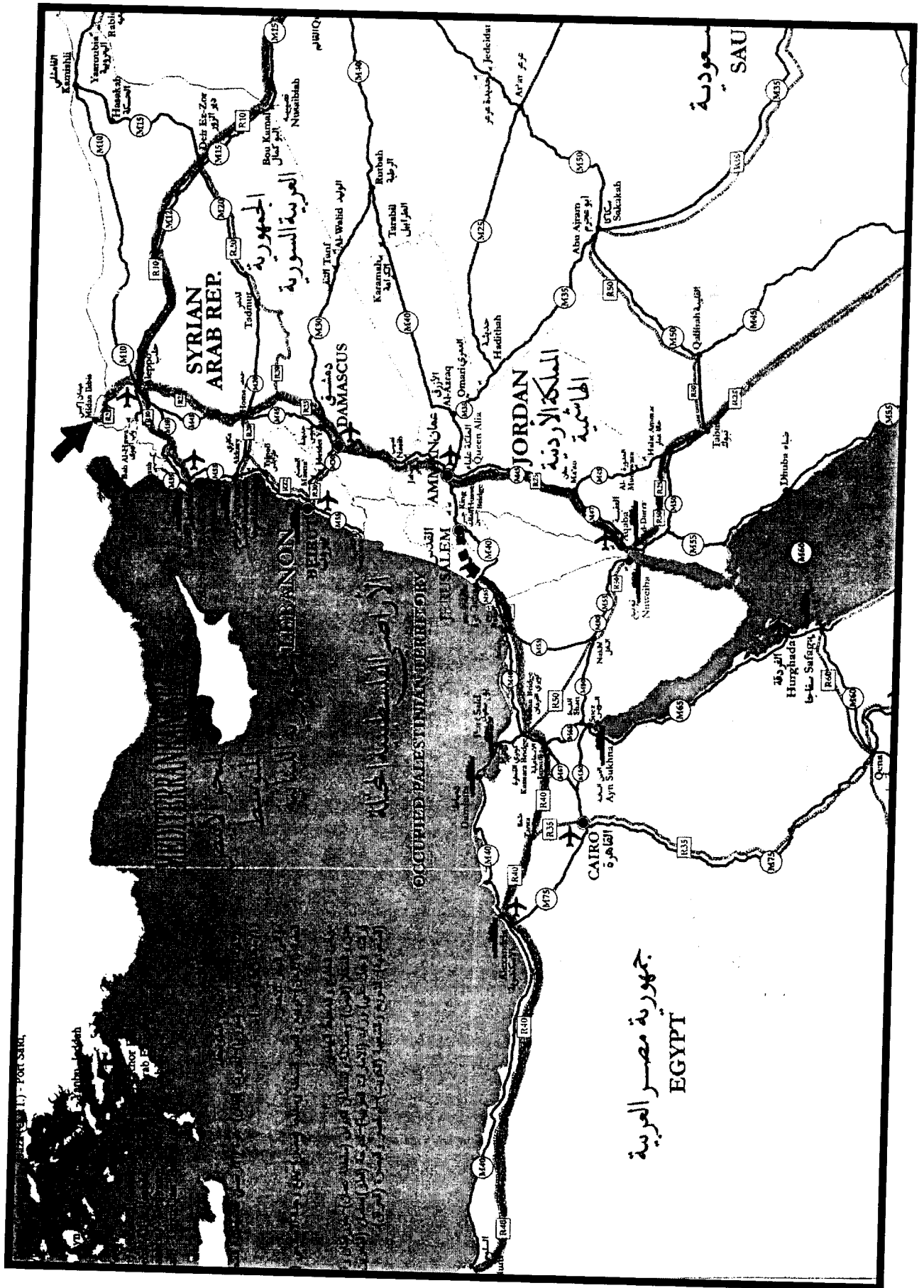


The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

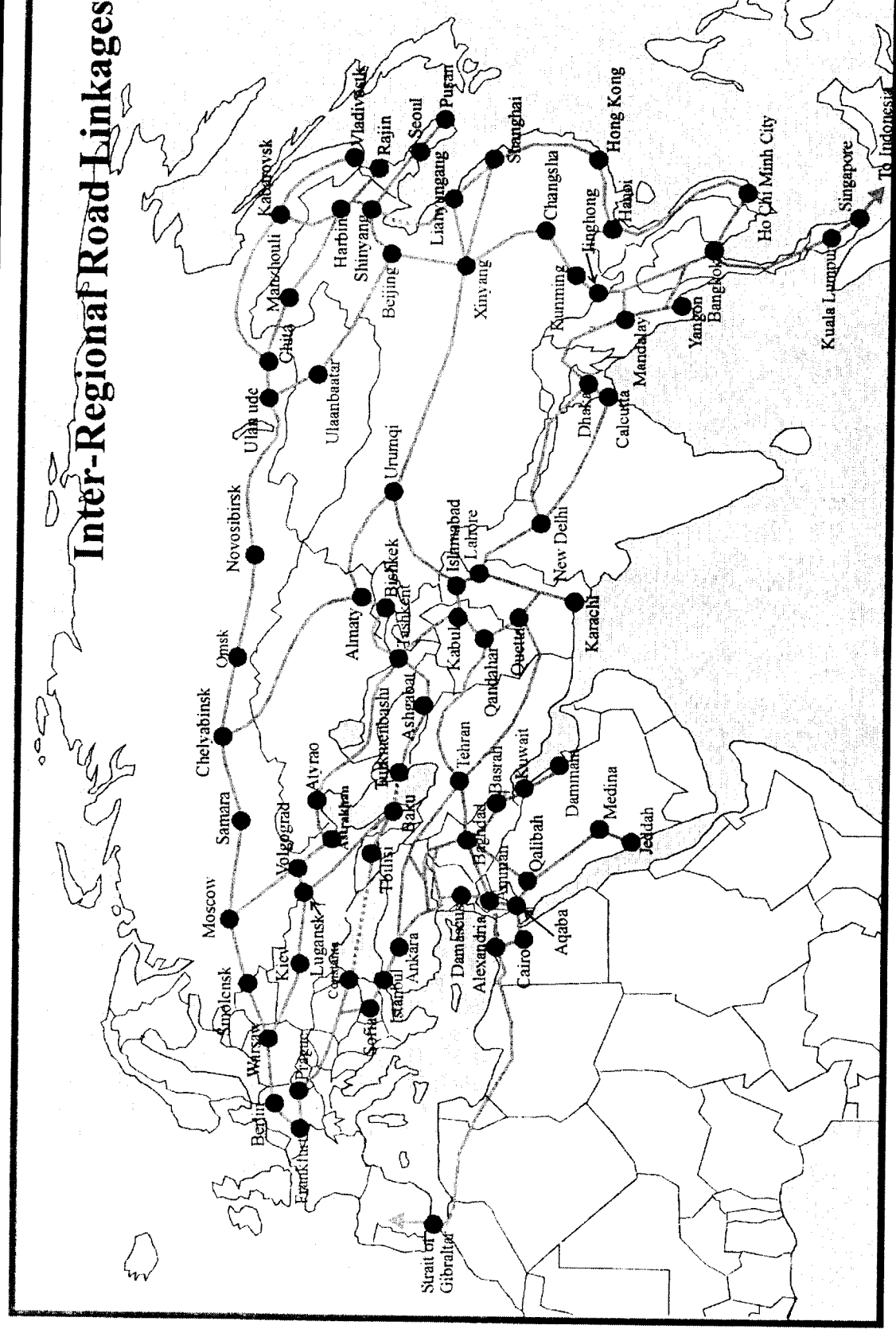
Dotted lines in Japan and Kashmir represent approximately the lines of control agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not been agreed upon by the parties.



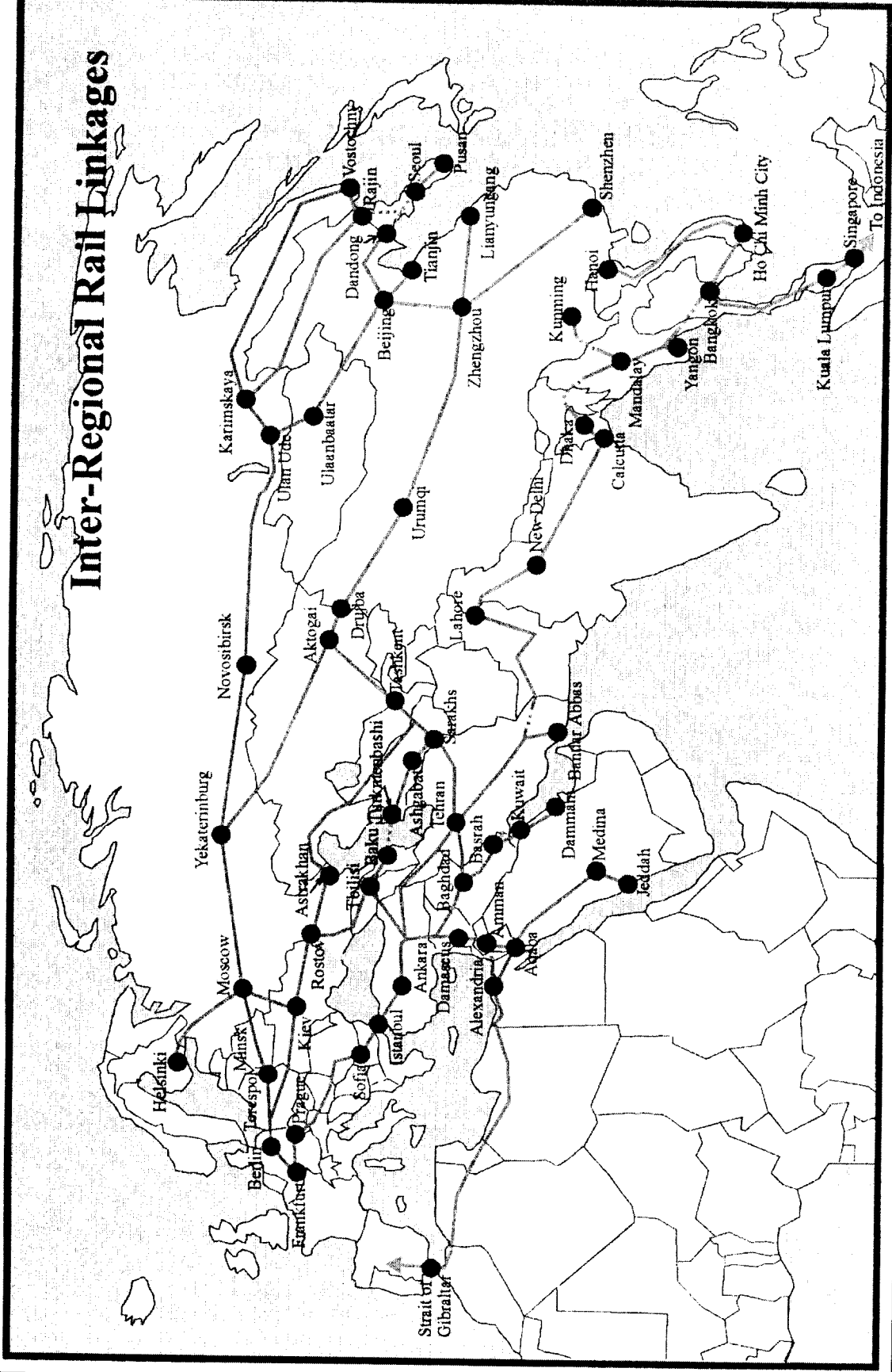




Inter-Regional Road Linkages



Inter-Regional Rail Linkages

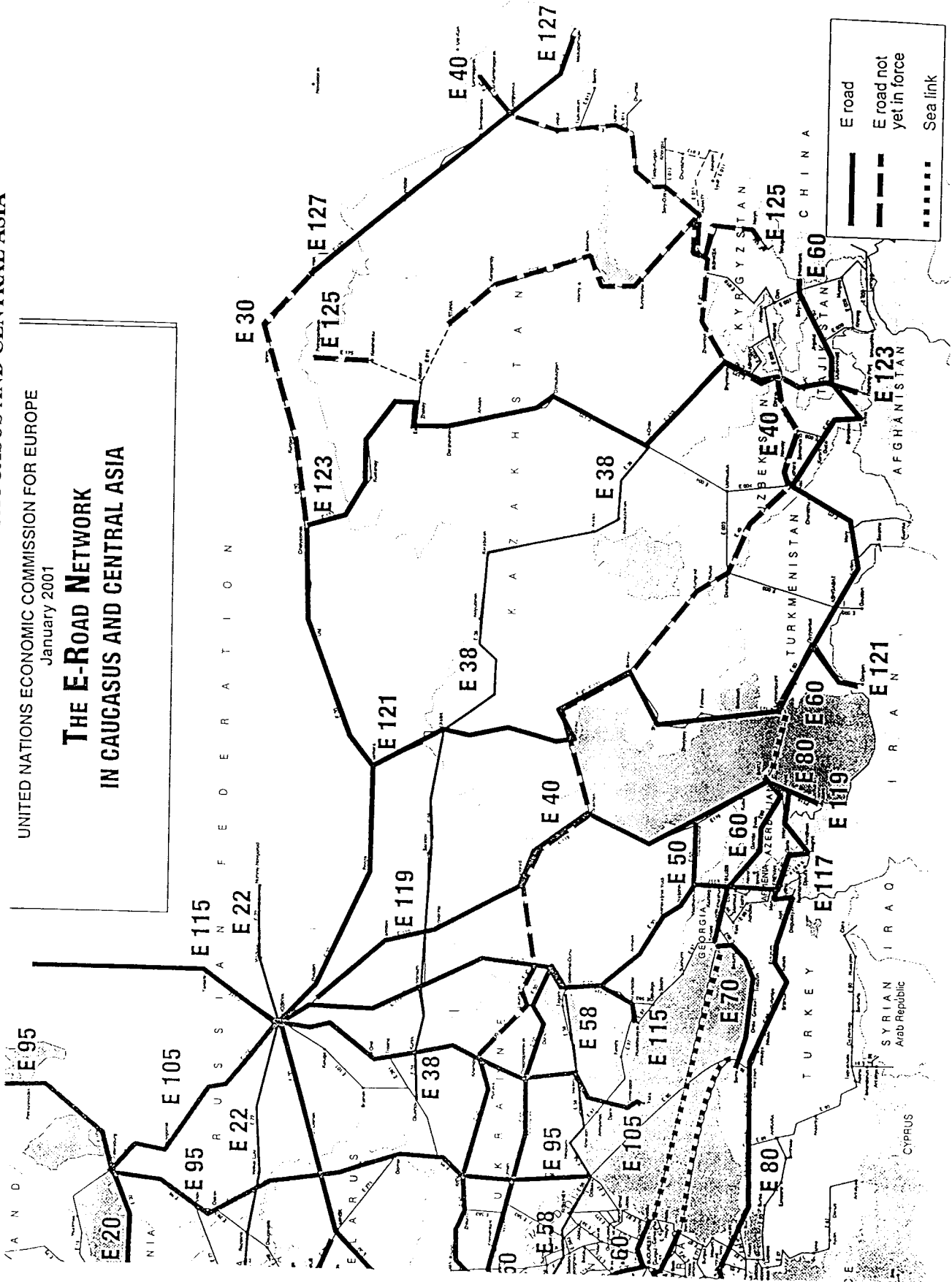


Annex IV

MAPS OF THE E-ROAD NETWORK IN THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
January 2001

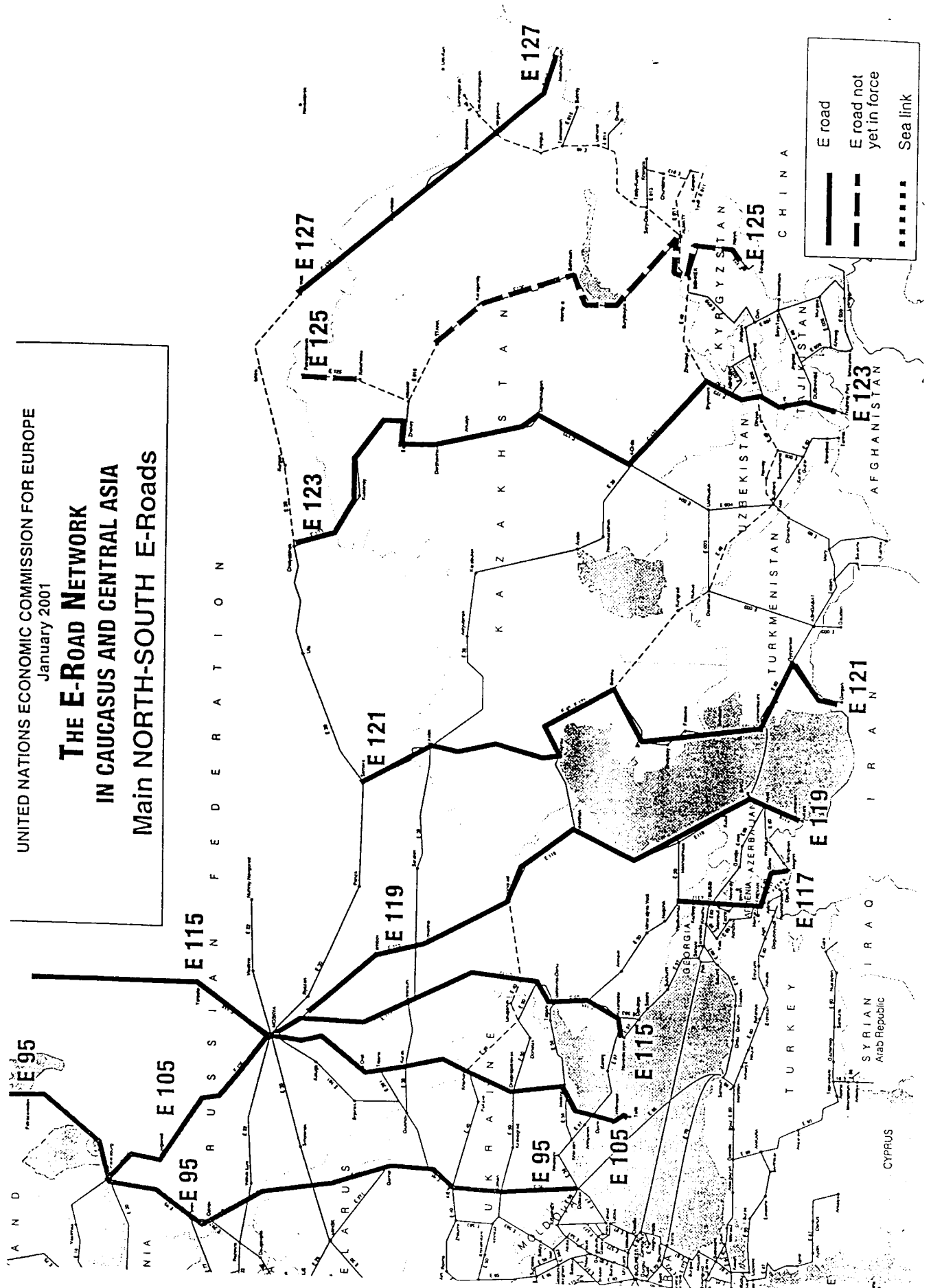
**THE E-ROAD NETWORK
IN CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA**



UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
January 2001

THE E-ROAD NETWORK IN CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

Main NORTH-SOUTH E-Roads



UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**The E-Road Network
IN CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA
Main WEST-EAST E-Roads**

