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Item 6 (a-ii) of the provisional agenda

**FOLLOW-UP OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT**

**DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT
ON INTERNATIONAL RAILWAYS IN THE ARAB MASHREQ**

Summary

The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq was adopted on 14 April 2003 and entered into force on 23 May 2005. At its sixth session, the Committee on Transport recommended that ESCWA should prepare a provisional plan of action for its implementation and submit it to the seventh session of the Committee for consideration, adoption and subsequent implementation.

This report summarizes achievements since the Agreement entered into force.

Introduction

1. As part of the process of developing the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has concluded agreements on networks of international roads and railways in the region, with the aim of strengthening thereby the track between the countries of the region and achieving regional integration. With the entry into force of those agreements, it became necessary to formulate plans of action for their implementation. This document contains a draft plan of action for the implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq.

2. That Agreement* was adopted on 14 April 2003 and entered into force on 23 May 2005 after it had been ratified by four countries, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Implementation of the Agreement requires that member countries, in coordination with ESCWA, formulate the necessary plans for that purpose. ESCWA prepared a proposed plan of action that comprises general steps that will assist countries in carrying out their undertakings in respect of the Agreement: it was left up to each country to formulate detailed executive plans appropriate to their circumstances, as set forth below.

I. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

3. Figure 1 shows the steps that are required for proper implementation of the Agreement. Those steps fall into the following three main categories:

- (a) Media aspects;
- (b) The completion of economic feasibility studies on missing track;
- (c) Technical specifications of routes.

II. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

A. MEDIA ASPECTS

1. Preparation of pamphlet about and map of the Agreement

4. ESCWA undertook to prepare a pamphlet and coloured map that includes a description of the Agreement and the routes comprising the international rail network, together with an outline of Agreement goals and benefits. The pamphlet has been produced and distributed to member countries at all the relevant meetings organized or participated in by ESCWA. If member countries provide the modest sums necessary, further copies may be printed at a cost of \$1,000 per 5,000 copies.

2. The launching of a publicity campaign on the Agreement

5. As real implementation of the Agreement begins, rail users must be made acquainted with its goals and benefits. Each country must therefore carry out an awareness campaign in local newspapers, on television stations and other media, which should be launched at least one month before the date on which implementation of the Agreement is begun. It is suggested that such campaigns should be initiated in April 2006.

B. THE COMPLETION OF ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDIES ON MISSING TRACK

1. Inventory of missing track

6. In all, some 60 per cent of the total length is missing from the international rail network adopted in the Agreement. An inventory of missing track is therefore an essential step towards Agreement implementation. Table 1 sets out such an inventory, by network route.

* United Nations, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq, Beirut, 5 March 2003 (E/ESCWA/TRANS/2002/1/Rev.2).

2. Setting priorities for feasibility studies

7. At this stage, priorities are set for feasibility studies of the missing track set forth in table 1. The priorities will be identified by the ESCWA Committee on Transport in accordance with a set of standards and bases, taking into account political, technical, economic and environmental considerations.

3. The preparation of feasibility studies

8. Feasibility studies of the missing track will be prepared in accordance with the priorities set in the preceding step and subject to the availability of the funds necessary to carry out such studies.

4. The determination of priorities for the building of missing track

9. Priorities for building the missing track will be determined on the basis of the outcomes of the economic feasibility studies prepared in the preceding step and subject to the availability from a variety of sources of the funds necessary to build those track.

C. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE ROUTES

1. The preparation of a schedule of technical specifications for each section of the existing track

10. At this stage, the existing track and the technical specifications for each section thereof will be enumerated along the lines of the model in table 2, which was prepared in accordance with the specifications set forth in annex II of the Agreement.

2. The identification of specifications on each section that do not accord with the Agreement

11. Each country shall make an inventory of all the routes on its territory and identify those sections where specifications do not accord with those set forth in annex II of the Agreement. The requisite studies should then be carried out.

3. The completion of the work necessary to improve existing track

12. Each country shall undertake to carry out the work necessary to ensure that the network routes in its territory reach the requisite standard. ESCWA should be notified of the timetable to which each country intends to work in carrying out the improvements necessary to upgrade all parts of the network.

4. The building of the missing track in accordance with the priorities determined in step four and Agreement technical specifications

13. This is the final step in Agreement implementation and includes the building of the missing track in accordance with the priorities determined as a result of the economic feasibility studies and the technical specifications set forth in annex II of the Agreement (see table 3 of this document), in addition to the availability of the sums necessary for that purpose.

III. TIMETABLE FOR THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

14. Table 4 shows the timetable for the proposed plan of action for implementation of the Agreement, of which the most important dates are set forth below:

- Preparation of a pamphlet about the Agreement
(ESCWA has prepared that pamphlet)

30 January 2004

- Launch of the publicity campaign 1 April 2006
- Completion of economic feasibility studies on missing track 31 December 2008
- Completion of the work necessary to improve existing track 31 December 2012
- Building the missing track 31 December 2020

15. As soon as this plan of action is adopted, each country that is party to the Agreement must implement tables 2 and 4 and notify ESCWA by 30 December 2006 at the latest in preparation for follow-up of plan of action implementation by the ESCWA Committee on Transport.

Figure 1. Summary of the draft plan of action for implementation of the Agreement

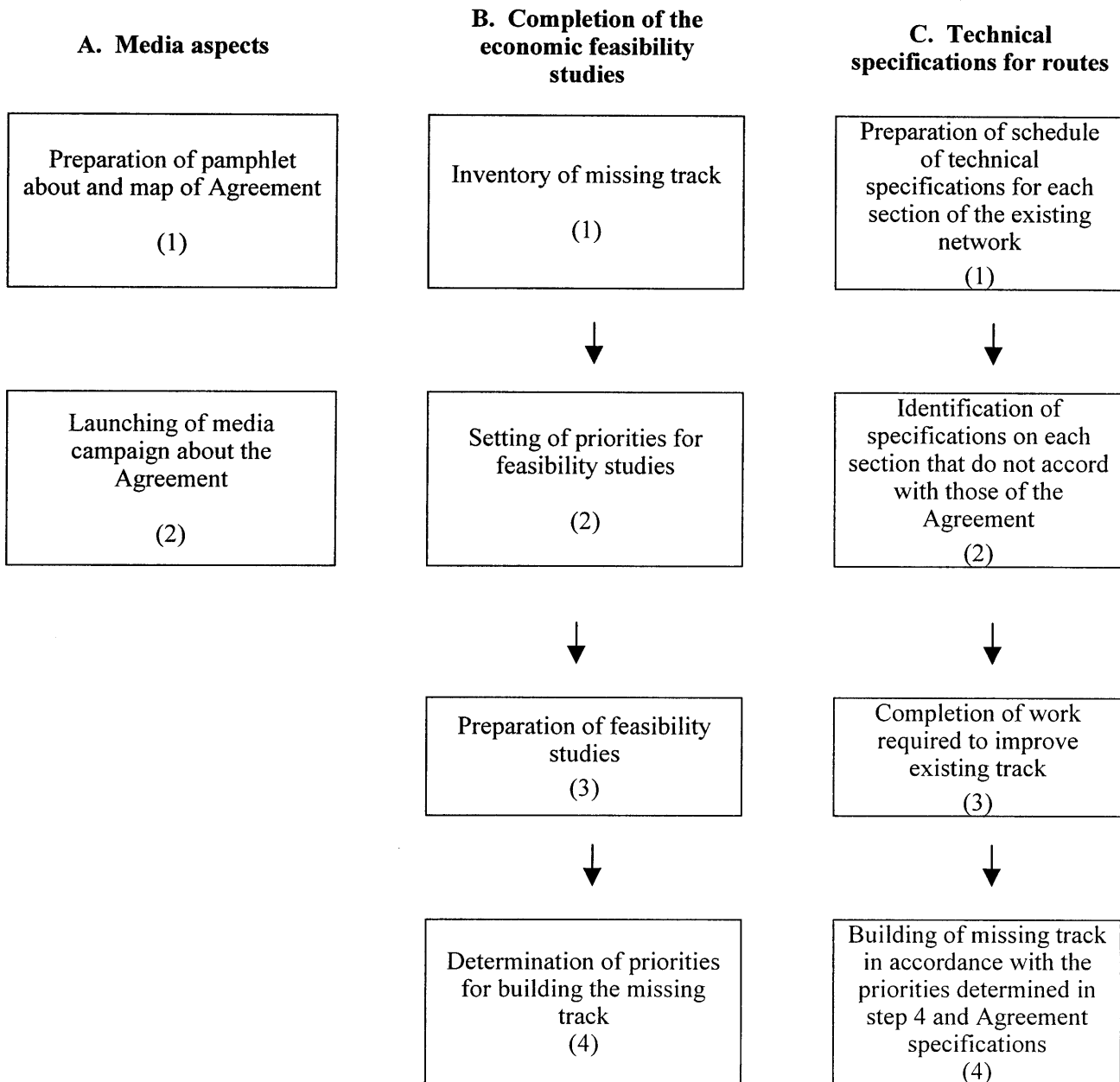


Figure 2. Load dimensions in accordance with International Union of Railways specifications

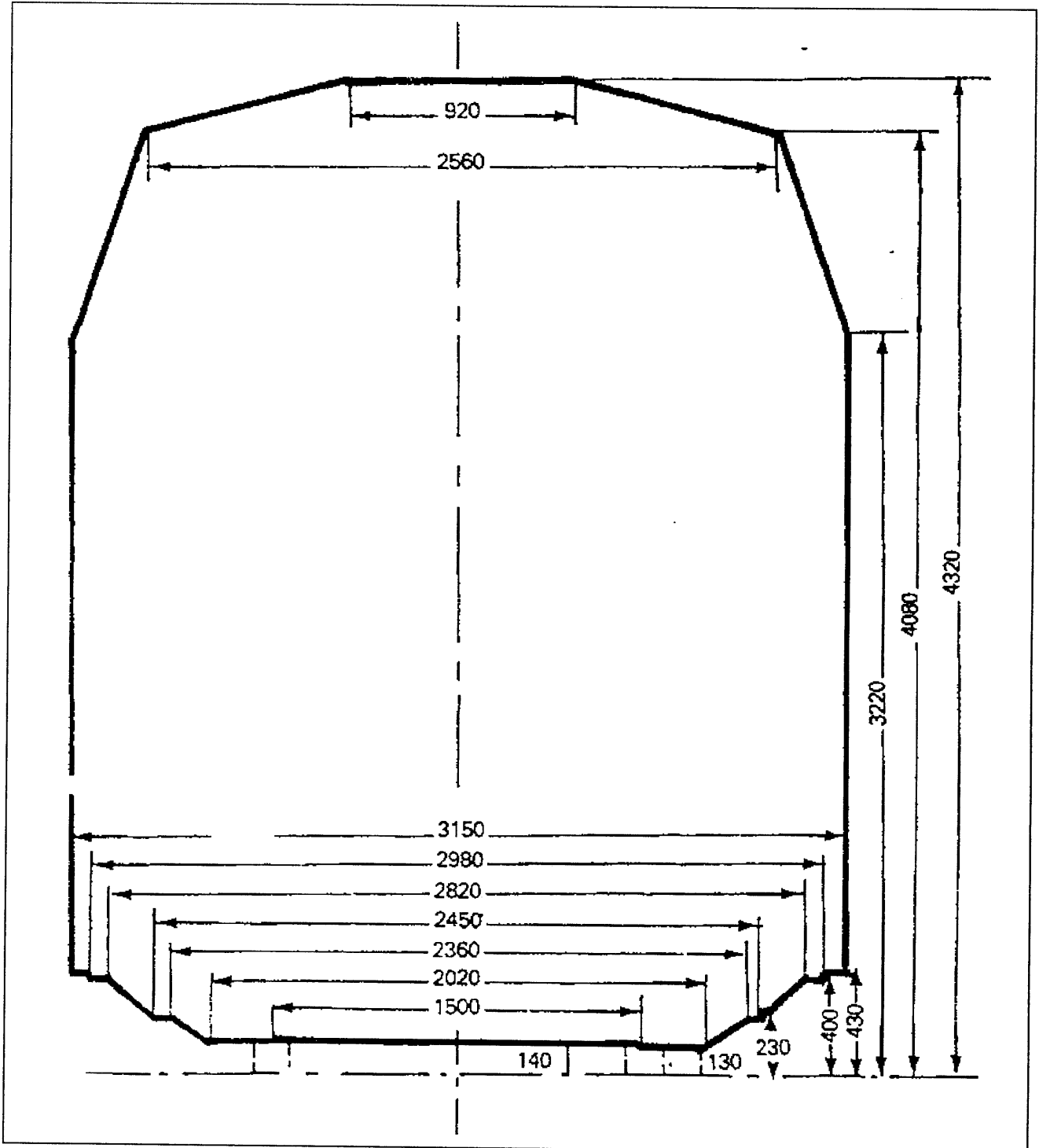


TABLE 1. TWENTY LINKS MISSING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL RAIL NETWORK

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Umm Qasr (Kuwait)	Kuwait	Kuwait	R05	138
Kuwait	Nuwayseeb border point (Kuwait/Saudi Arabia)	Kuwait	R05	105
Nuwayseeb border point (Kuwait/Saudi Arabia)	Khafji border point (Saudi Arabia/Kuwait)	Kuwait	R05	20
Khafji border point (Saudi Arabia/Kuwait)	Abu Hadriyah	Saudi Arabia	R05	145
Abu Hadriyah	Dammam	Saudi Arabia	R05	155
Dammam	Salwa	Saudi Arabia	R05	375
Salwa	Batha'a border point (Saudi Arabia/United Arab Emirates)	Saudi Arabia	R05	120
Batha'a border point (Saudi Arabia/United Arab Emirates)	Al Ghweifat border point (United Arab Emirates/Saudi Arabia)	Saudi Arabia	R05	32
Al Ghweifat border point (United Arab Emirates/Saudi Arabia)	Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates	R05	315
Abu Dhabi	Dubai	United Arab Emirates	R05	93
Dubai	Sharja	United Arab Emirates	R05	80
Sharja	Fujairah	United Arab Emirates	R05	100
Fujairah	Kalba border point (United Arab Emirates/Oman)	United Arab Emirates	R05	10
Kalba border point (United Arab Emirates/Oman)	Khatmat Malahaw border point (Oman /United Arab Emirates)	United Arab Emirates	R05	10
Khatmat Malahaw border point (Oman /United Arab Emirates)	Sohar	Oman	R05	65
Sohar	Muscat	Oman	R05	236
Muscat	Thumrayt	Oman	R05	930
Thumrayt	Salalah	Oman	R05	72
Total				3 001

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Al Azraq	Omari border point (Jordan/Saudi Arabia)	Jordan	R15	42
Omari border point (Jordan/Saudi Arabia)	Hadithah border point (Saudi Arabia/Jordan)	Jordan	R15	18
Hadithah border point (Saudi Arabia/ Jordan)	Quoryat	Saudi Arabia	R15	100
Quoryat	Dawmat al-Jandal	Saudi Arabia	R15	300
Dawmat al-Jandal	Ha'il	Saudi Arabia	R15	315
Ha'il	Buraydah	Saudi Arabia	R15	330
Buraydah	Riyadh	Saudi Arabia	R15	413
Total				1 518

TABLE I (continued)

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Al Mudawara border point (Jordan/Saudi Arabia)	Halat Ammar border point (Saudi Arabia /Jordan)	Jordan	R25	15
Halat Ammar border point (Saudi Arabia /Jordan)	Tabukk	Saudi Arabia	R25	100
Tabuk	Medina	Saudi Arabia	R25	710
Rabigh	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia	R25	460
Jeddah	Darb	Saudi Arabia	R25	500
Darb	Al Tuwal border point (Saudi Arabia/Yemen)	Saudi Arabia	R25	220
Al Tuwal border point (Saudi Arabia/Yemen)	Harad border point (Yemen/ Saudi Arabia)	Saudi Arabia	R25	17
Harad border point (Yemen/ Saudi Arabia)	Hodeidah	Yemen	R25	265
Hodeidah	Al Mukha	Yemen	R25	225
Total				2 512

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Deir-Ez-Zor	Tadmur	Syrian Arab Republic	R20	126
Total				126

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Haklania	Tarabil border point (Iraq/Jordan)	Iraq	R40	325
Tarabil border point (Iraq/Jordan)	Karamah border point (Jordan/Iraq)	Jordan	R40	5
Karamah border point (Jordan/Iraq)	Safawy	Jordan	R40	239
Safawy	Zarqa'	Jordan	R40	90
Zarqa'	Amman	Jordan	R40	40
Total				699

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Gaza	Rafah border point (Palestinian Occupied Territories/Egypt)	Palestine	R50	8
Total				8

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Ma'an	Aqaba	Jordan	R60	16
Aqaba	Nuweiba	Jordan	R60	73
Nuweiba	Nakhl	Egypt	R60	150
Nakhl	Verdun Bridge	Egypt	R60	250
Total				489

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Mecca	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia	R80	918
Total				918

TABLE 3. SCHEDULE OF TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR RAIL NETWORK

Serial No.	Technical specifications	Existing lines	New lines	
			For passenger traffic only	For passenger and goods traffic
1	Track width	Standard (1 435 mm)	Standard (1 435 mm)	Standard (1 435 mm)
2	Vehicle loading gauge	UIC/B*	UIC/B*	UIC/B*
3	Minimum distance between track centres	4 m	4 m	4 m
4	Nominal minimum speed	120 km/h	120 km/h	120 km/h
5	Authorized mass per For locomotives (≤ 200 km/hr) For wagons (≤ 120 km/hr) (≤ 140 km/hr)	22.5 tons 20 tons 18 tons	- - -	22.5 tons 20 tons 18 tons
6	Authorized mass per linear metre	8 tons	-	8 tons
7	Test train (bridge design)	UIC 71	-	UIC 71
8	Minimum platform length in principal stations	250 m	250 m	250 m
9	Minimum useful siding length	500 m	-	500 m
10	Electrical voltage	-	In accordance with UIC and Trans-European Railway Network specifications	

* See figure 2.

TABLE 4. PROPOSED TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	Preparation of pamphlet about and map of the Agreement																
2	Launching of publicity campaign about the Agreement																
3	Inventory of missing track																
4	Setting priorities for feasibility studies																
5	Preparation of feasibility studies																
6	Determination of priorities for the building of missing track																
7	Preparation of schedule of technical specifications for each section of existing track																
8	Identification of specifications that do not conform to those of the Agreement																
9	Completion of work necessary for improvement of existing track																
10	Building missing track in accordance with the priorities determined in step 4 and Agreement technical specifications																

Note: (-) indicates ideal date of completion.