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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Seventieth session
Geneva, 19-21 February 2008
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

TRANSPORT AND SECURITY

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its sixty-ninth session (Geneva, 6-8 February 2007), the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) reviewed its work in the area of transport security and, stressing the importance of this issue, agreed to establish a multidisciplinary group of experts and to adopt the Group's terms of reference. The ITC also requested further endorsement by the UNECE Executive Committee.
2. Subsequently, the UNECE Executive Committee, at its thirteenth session, held on 7 March 2007, endorsed the decision of the Inland Transport Committee to establish a Multidisciplinary Group of Experts on Inland Transport Security and approved its Terms of Reference. (http://www.unece.org/commission/EXCOM/2007/EXCOM_March_07_index.htm).
3. The Terms of Reference stipulate that the Expert Group is to be composed of experts in transport security matters appointed by Member States of the UNECE as well as representatives of relevant international governmental and non-governmental organizations.
4. The Terms of Reference point at four major areas of work: a. Transport safety and transport security; b. Inventory of regulatory initiatives at the national level; c. Inventory of regulatory initiatives at the international level; d. Inventory of standards, initiatives, guidelines, best practices by the private sector.
5. The Terms of Reference also stipulate that the Group is "to prepare in a coordinated manner recommendations and/or proposals to the UNECE Governments for consideration by the ITC for improving inland transport security in inter alia the following areas of activity: infrastructure, personnel, goods, transport means, information exchange and borders." Moreover, the Terms of Reference state that "the above recommendations and/or amendments to

existing legal instruments should, inter alia, be aimed at minimizing the risk of terror attacks in the field of inland transport...”

6. According to the Terms of Reference the Group of Experts is expected to complete its work and submit a final report by the end of January 2008.

7. Following the endorsement by the UNECE Executive Committee on 7 March 2007, the Director of UNECE Transport Division requested on 15 March 2007 the heads of delegations to the ITC, permanent missions to Geneva and various international organizations to nominate focal points/experts for this Expert Group.

8. Some governments and international organizations responded and, as a result, the experts from Belgium, France, Germany, Russia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom have participated as members of the Expert Group. In addition, international organizations and NGOs such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, International Atomic Energy Agency, International Container Security Organization, Organisation intergouvernementale pour les transports internationaux ferroviaires, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, International Federation for Freight Forwarders Associations, International Organization for Standardization, International Road Federation, International Road Transport Union and International Union of Railways have participated. The European Commission has also participated.

9. To-date (at the time of writing – early November), the Group of Experts has met twice. The first session was held on 24-25 May 2007 and the second on 9-10 October 2007. The next session of the Expert Group is planned for 26 November 2007.

10. One of the key objectives of Expert Group’s discussions was to make progress towards developing three inventories of regulatory initiatives at the national, international and private sector levels as stipulated in the Group’s terms of reference. To this end, the Group has made some progress. The Secretariat prepared preliminary drafts based on publicly available sources. These drafts are expected to be modified and validated upon receiving national submissions and/or comments.

11. The Secretariat has created a dedicated website where agendas, reports, presentations and informal documents can be accessed <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/its/its.html>.

12. The Expert Group will provide a report of its activities and possible recommendations to the ITC Bureau in February 2008.

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