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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

**REPORT****NINTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT  
BEIRUT, 26-28 FEBRUARY 2008****Summary**

The ninth session of the Committee on Transport was held in Beirut from 26 to 28 February 2008. Consideration was given to the items included on the session agenda. This report contains a brief account of the discussions that were held on each item and the outcomes and recommendations that resulted from the session. The report was adopted by the Committee at its final meeting, which was held on 28 February 2008.

Discussions focused on the draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq; follow-up on implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, particularly priority routes M40 and M45; and follow-up to implementation of the recommendations made during the eighth session of the Committee.

After the incorporation of all amendments which had, in the course of session discussions, received approval from the representatives of member countries, the Committee prepared the fourth version of the draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq, which was subsequently sent to member country delegations for review. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) should be informed of any views on the new amendments to the draft by 25 March 2008 at the latest, in preparation for submission of the final version of the draft convention to the twenty-fifth ESCWA session, which is to be held from 26 to 29 May 2008 in Sana'a, where the convention will be adopted and signed. The Committee also made a number of other recommendations, some of which were general, while others made specific reference to various issues covered by the agenda items.

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## Introduction

1. The ninth session of the Committee on Transport was convened pursuant to Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) resolution 213 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 concerning the establishment of a committee on transport in ESCWA, which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1997/11 of 18 July 1997; and in accordance with ESCWA resolution 229 (XXI) of 11 May 2001 concerning the frequency of the sessions of the ESCWA Committee on Transport.

2. The Committee expressed its gratitude to the Minister of Transport and Public Works of Lebanon, Mr. Muhammad Safadi, who made the opening statement of the session, in which he thanked participants for their confidence and presence in Beirut, given current conditions in Lebanon. Mr. Safadi highlighted the accomplishments of the ESCWA Committee on Transport, particularly regarding the preparation of the draft convention on international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq, which he hoped would be adopted.

### I. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE NINTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

#### A. DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED TO ESCWA FOR ADOPTION

3. The Committee recommended that ESCWA should adopt the following resolution:

#### **Adoption of the convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq**

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

*Recalling* that for more than 30 years, the United Nations has attached the greatest importance to the formulation of an international convention to regulate international multimodal transport of goods operations, and that negotiations in that regard are continuing at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law;

*Recalling also* the recommendations made in the study prepared in 2000 by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the facilitation of the international transport of goods in the ESCWA region,<sup>1</sup> which included a recommendation that a multimodal system for the international transport of goods should be adopted in the region,

*Further recalling* that laws have been promulgated and agreements regulating international multimodal transport have been signed by several countries and regional blocs, including Germany, India, Tunisia, the Andean Group, the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN),

*Noting with satisfaction* the measures that were taken in 2006 and 2007 by Jordan, with ESCWA technical support, to prepare a draft law on the international multimodal transport of goods in Jordan and the draft regulations for its implementation,

*Affirming* the important need to regulate international multimodal transport of goods operations in the countries of the region and determine the legal responsibilities of freight shippers, agents and recipients of the relevant goods, thereby increasing the competitiveness of those countries and developing their mutual and international trade in the global economic market,

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<sup>1</sup> ESCWA, Facilitation of the international transport of goods in the ESCWA region: E/ESCWA/TRANS/2000/4; E/ESCWA/TRANS/2000/4/Add.1, E/ESCWA/TRANS/2000/4/Add.2, E/ESCWA/TRANS/2000/4/Add.3, E/ESCWA/TRANS/2000/4/Add.4 and E/ESCWA/TRANS/2000/4/Add.5, all Arabic only.

*Recognizing* that the principal goal of the convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq is to boost economic development in the countries of that region and contribute to the realization of regional integration,

*Affirming* the recommendations made at the eighth and ninth sessions of the Committee on Transport, which were held in Beirut from 27 to 29 March 2007<sup>2</sup> and 26 to 28 February 2008,<sup>3</sup> respectively, and at the expert group meeting on the international multimodal transport of goods in the ESCWA region, which was held in Cairo from 4 to 6 September 2007,<sup>4</sup> with respect to the convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq,

1. Adopts the Convention on the International Multimodal Transport of Goods in the Arab Mashreq;<sup>5</sup>
2. Urges member countries to take at the earliest possible opportunity the steps necessary for signature and ratification of the Convention in accordance with the usual United Nations practice;
3. Also urges member countries to do whatever is necessary to complete the development of international multimodal transport systems, including infrastructure, operational processes, management, laws, systems, regulations, permits and the regulatory structures necessary to contribute to facilitating international transport between the countries of the region;
4. Requests the secretariat to continue to provide technical support to member countries and all the relevant parties in the implementation of the Convention and completion of the development of the integrated national and interregional international multimodal transport of goods;
5. Also requests the secretariat to follow up implementation of this resolution and present a periodic report to the Committee on Transport on the progress made in that regard.

#### B. RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE COMPONENTS OF THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN THE ARAB MASHREQ

4. The Committee on Transport issued the following recommendations regarding the components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM):

##### 1. *Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq*

5. Each country should review the data on it that is set forth in the report on follow-up of implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport at its eighth session (E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)) and convey comments and updated information to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest. Should no remarks be received, the data contained in that report will be considered to have been adopted.

6. Each country should review the data on it that is set forth in the report on the follow-up of implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq (E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)Add.1/Rev.1) and the plan of action for its implementation, and convey comments, updated data and missing information to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest.

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<sup>2</sup> ESCWA, Report of the Committee on Transport on its eighth session, E/ESCWA/GRID/2007/IG.1/5.

<sup>3</sup> ESCWA, Report of the Committee on Transport on its ninth session, E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/6.

<sup>4</sup> ESCWA, Report of the expert group meeting on the international multimodal transport of goods in the ESCWA region, E/ESCWA/GRID/2007/7.

<sup>5</sup> The adopted version of the convention is set forth in E/ESCWA/EDGD/2008/3.

7. Each country should review the data on it that is set forth in the report on follow-up to the implementation of routes M40 and M45, which have been designated as having priority in the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq (E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)/Add.2) and convey comments, updated data and missing information to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest.
8. Oman is urged to accede to the Agreement as soon as possible.
9. Iraq and the United Arab Emirates are urged to ratify the Agreement as soon as possible.
10. Those countries party to the Agreement which have not yet completed tables 1 and 2 of the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq,<sup>6</sup> namely Kuwait and Lebanon, are requested to provide ESCWA with that information by 30 June 2008 at the latest.
11. Those countries, namely, Iraq, Lebanon and Qatar, which are party to the Agreement but have not yet completed the questionnaire on follow-up thereto that was sent to countries that have ratified it, are requested to provide ESCWA with that information by 30 June 2008 at the latest.
12. All ESCWA member countries are requested to review the data on the database for roads in the ESCWA region (2007) that was recorded on CD and distributed to their representatives during the meeting. They should convey updated data and missing information to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest.
13. Item 10 of the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq should be amended to read "Diagram of routes according to classification on a scale of 1/100,000" instead of "1/10,000".
14. In response to a request made by Yemen, a decision on the amendments that it had proposed should be postponed, in order to allow for the review of all proposed amendments.
15. Saudi Arabia should submit an official request regarding its proposal to amend the end of route M70 to Sulaym instead of Yanbu', whereupon the amendment will be adopted.
16. The request made by the Syrian Arab Republic to add a domestic route Homs – Al Busayri between routes M20 and M30, to be designated M43 and considered an integral part of an international route has been approved.
17. The secretariat is requested to update the map of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq in order to include the above-mentioned latest amendments and other proposals made by member countries.

## *2. Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq*

18. Those countries, namely, Iraq, Oman and Qatar, which have not yet signed the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq should be urged to do so forthwith, while those who have signed but not yet ratified the Agreement, namely, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, are urged to do so promptly.
19. Countries party to the Agreement which have not yet completed all tables of the plan of action for the implementation of the Agreement, namely, Kuwait (table 2) and Lebanon (table 4), should be urged to do so and convey that information to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest.
20. Those countries, namely, Jordan and Lebanon, which are party to the Agreement but have not yet completed the questionnaire on follow-up thereto that was sent to countries which had ratified it, should be urged to do so as soon as possible and convey that information to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest.

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<sup>6</sup> ESCWA, Plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, 2004, E/ESCWA/GRID/2004/1/Rev.1.

21. All ESCWA member countries are requested to review the data on the database for railways in the ESCWA region (2007) that was recorded on CD and distributed to their representatives at the meeting. Updated data and missing information should be conveyed to ESCWA by 30 June 2008 at the latest.

*3. National Committees for the Facilitation of Transport and Trade  
in the Countries of the ESCWA Region*

22. Each country is called upon to review the data that concerns it in the report on follow-up to implementation of the recommendations made by the eighth session of the Committee on Transport (E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)) and, in particular, the section concerning the progress achieved in establishing and activating the national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in the countries of the ESCWA region. Data in the report should be updated and observations sent to ESCWA by 30 June 2008. Should no observations be received from any country, the data will be considered to have been adopted.

23. Those countries, namely, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, which have not yet established a national committee, should accelerate that process, using the guidelines prepared by ESCWA in 2003 and make use of the technical support provided by ESCWA for that purpose.

24. Countries that have established national committees should be urged to activate them as soon as possible by formulating and adopting a plan of action and using the technical support provided by ESCWA for that purpose.

*4. Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Cooperation in the Field  
of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq*

25. Those countries, namely, Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait, which have not yet signed the Memorandum should be urged to do so forthwith; and those which have signed but not yet ratified the Memorandum, namely, Egypt, Oman, Qatar and Yemen, should be urged to do so promptly.

26. Countries party to the Memorandum should be urged to apply the plan of action for its implementation at the national and regional levels.

*5. Regional Road Transport Information System*

27. Member countries, namely, Palestine, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, which have not yet conveyed to ESCWA the CD containing the requested information on road transport should hasten to do so by 30 June 2008 at the latest.

*6. Road safety*

28. Member countries should be urged to cooperate in order to ensure the success of the project financed by the United Nations Development Account that is being implemented by each of the regional commissions in their regions, and formulate strategic goals to reduce the number of road accidents by 2015.

29. The secretariat should be requested, in cooperation with the relevant parties, to accelerate the procedures necessary for establishing regional partnerships for road safety, by convening a regional workshop to consider the measures necessary for the establishment of such partnerships.

*7. Draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq*

30. On 28 February 2008, at the end of the meeting, the secretariat should be requested to submit to delegates the fourth version of the draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq, contained in the document E/ESCWA/GRID/2007/10/L.1/Rev.1, after including all amendments and observations that were agreed upon during the meeting. A copy should be sent to senior officials in Kuwait and Palestine via e-mail.

31. Member countries should be requested to review the fourth version and inform ESCWA of any views on the new amendments by 25 March 2008 at the latest. Should no observations be received from any country, the draft convention will be considered to have been adopted by the ninth session of the Committee on Transport in the form contained in document E/ESCWA/GRID/2007/10/L.1/Rev.1, provided that any amendment requested for inclusion by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) has been incorporated. Should any country request new amendments to that version before 25 March 2008, the secretariat will take the opinions and requirements of OLA into consideration, prepare the final version of the draft convention and send it via e-mail to the heads of member country delegations that participated in the ninth session by 26 March 2008. That version will be considered final one week after the aforementioned date.

32. The secretariat should be called upon to send the final version of the draft convention to ministers of transport and communications in member countries in order to enable them to authorize its signature and adoption at the ministerial level at the twenty-fifth ESCWA session, which is scheduled to be held in Sana'a from 26 to 29 May 2008. (See annex I for the United Nations model power of attorney for signature).

33. The secretariat should be requested to submit a draft resolution concerning adoption of the draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq to the twenty-fifth ESCWA session.

34. The secretariat should be further requested to send the final version of the draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq to the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States for presentation to the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport, with a view to considering the possibility of extending the draft convention to include all Arab States. Since 2002, the Council has adopted similar resolutions on earlier ESCWA achievements relating to the ITSAM framework, the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq, national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade and the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq.

35. Arab countries that are not members of ESCWA should be invited to accede to the Convention once it has entered into force.

#### C. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

36. The ESCWA secretariat should be congratulated for the activities that it has implemented from the programme of work of the 2006-2007 biennium in the field of transport.

37. The draft programme of work for the 2008-2009 biennium in the field of transport, as contained in A/62/6(Sect.21) which was presented to the Committee, should be noted.

38. The draft strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011 in the field of transport should be adopted as presented in the document dated 23 January 2008 which was submitted to the Technical Committee at its first meeting, held on 16-17 January 2008, after amending paragraph 33 on page 11 to read as follows:

“The subprogramme will continue to develop ITSAM, including the implementation, development and monitoring of international road, rail, maritime and multimodal transport agreements and conventions mechanisms for trade and transport facilitation, and recommendations related thereto. Special attention will be paid to the continuing establishment and activation of national transport and trade facilitation committees and related regional coordination. The subprogramme will also serve as a regional platform to raise awareness of road safety issues and provide environmentally-friendly and sustainable transport systems in response to global concerns on those issues”.

39. The Committee has taken note of the achievements of the Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with respect to the study on integrating transport systems in GCC countries, in which ESCWA played a role by preparing the initial terms of reference for the study. In that regard, the Committee underlines the need for enhanced cooperation between the GCC Secretariat General and the ESCWA

Committee on Transport, including participation by the Secretariat General in transport-related ESCWA activities.

40. By 30 October 2008, member countries should provide ESCWA with two reports, the first on follow-up to the implementation of recommendations made at the ninth session of the Committee on Transport, and the second on follow-up to the most important transport-related developments in each country during the period from 1 October 2007 to 30 September 2008.

## **II. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. GENERAL DISCUSSION ON TRANSPORT-RELATED ISSUES IN THE ARAB MASHREQ: DRAFT AGREEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE ARAB MASHREQ (Item 5 of the agenda)**

41. Participants reviewed the third version of the draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq, as contained in document E/ESCWA/GRID/2007/10/L.1.

42. A representative of the secretariat made a detailed presentation on the importance of multimodal transport and the global, regional and local efforts made to draft legislation to regulate international multimodal transport of goods operations and define the responsibilities and rights of multimodal transport forwarding agents, shippers and consignees. He also reviewed the stages through which the first, second and third drafts of the convention had passed.

43. Thorough discussion took place, in which all member countries, and regional Arab unions and organizations participated during which additional observations on various articles of the convention and the steps necessary for its adoption were put forward.

44. The issue of cooperation with the League of Arab States and the consideration of the relevant resolutions of the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport was broached. A representative of the secretariat said that there was already excellent cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States over many such transport-related issues as the ITSAM Framework, the agreements on international roads, railways and maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq and the national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade, inasmuch as the Council had adopted resolutions concerning the extension of those endeavours to include all Arab countries. He noted that the convention, after adoption by ESCWA and entry into force, would proceed along the same lines as those other agreements, in that it could be extended to include all Arab countries who so desired. It was appropriate for all aspects of international transport to be developed by the countries of the region simultaneously rather than consecutively.

45. Following that discussion, it was agreed that ESCWA would prepare the fourth draft of the convention, including all agreed amendments, and present it to delegations at the end of the meeting, on 28 February 2008. Member countries should then review the fourth draft and inform ESCWA of their views on the new amendments by 25 March 2008. The convention would then be considered as adopted in its final form, which would then be sent to ministers of transport and communications in member countries in order to enable them to seek authorization for its signature and adoption at the ministerial level at the twenty-fifth ESCWA session, which is scheduled to be held in Sana'a from 26 to 29 May 2008.

### **B. REVIEW OF ACTION TAKEN IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT SINCE THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT (Item 6 of the agenda)**

46. The Committee considered this item on the basis of document E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4, which comprises two parts. The first part deals with the follow-up to implementation of the recommendations made at the eighth session of the Committee on Transport, while the second part reviews the progress made since that session in implementing transport-related activities in the programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium.



1. *Follow-up to implementation of recommendations made at the eighth session of the Committee on Transport*

47. The Committee considered this part on the basis of document E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I), and reviewed the progress made in implementing the recommendations made at the eighth session of the Committee on Transport and activities related to the main issues. Proposals were put forward on each of the following issues:

(a) *Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq*

48. The Committee reviewed the progress made in following up ratification and implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq as set forth in E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4 (Part I)/Add.1/Rev.1, and the technical support provided by ESCWA to member countries in that regard.

49. The Committee reviewed the progress made in following up the implementation of routes M40 and M45, which were designated as having priority in the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, as contained in E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)/Add.2 and technical support provided by ESCWA to member countries in that regard.

50. Oman and the United Arab Emirates were requested to inform ESCWA of the measures taken to accede to the Agreement. Countries who had applied the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement were commended and urged to continue efforts to achieve full implementation of that plan. Progress achieved in improving the two priority routes has also been commended.

(b) *Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq*

51. The Committee reviewed the progress made in following up ratification of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq.

52. Participating delegates were informed of Agreement-related achievements and some of them explained that their country was in the process of acceding to and ratifying the Agreement, with a view to implementation.

53. Oman and Qatar, which have not yet signed the Agreement, were requested to do so forthwith, while countries which have signed but not ratified it, namely, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, were urged to do so promptly.

54. The Committee took note of action taken by the GCC Secretariat General in respect of a project to establish a railway to link GCC countries, which are parties to the Agreement.

(c) *National committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in the countries of the Arab Mashreq*

55. The Committee reviewed the progress made in establishing national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in member countries and the technical support provided by ESCWA to such countries in that regard.

56. Those countries, namely, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, which have not yet established a national committee, are requested to make use of the guidelines that ESCWA prepared in 2003 and the technical support provided by ESCWA for that purpose.

(d) *Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq*

57. The Committee reviewed the progress made in follow-up to the ratification and implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq.

58. Those countries, namely, Bahrain, Iraq and Kuwait, which have not yet signed the Memorandum, are requested to do so forthwith; and those which have signed but not ratified the Memorandum, namely, Egypt, Oman and Yemen, are urged to do so promptly.

(e) *Regional Road Transport Information System*

59. A representative of the secretariat said that ESCWA had received CDs from 10 countries, namely, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. He emphasized that the remaining countries were requested to complete their CDs for subsequent incorporation into the geographic information system which is being prepared by ESCWA.

(f) *Road safety*

60. The representative of the secretariat gave a presentation on road safety in which he reviewed the activities in which some countries had engaged during the First United Nations Global Road Safety Week, that was held from 23 to 29 April 2007, for which ESCWA was the regional coordinator. The representatives of some countries reviewed the activities undertaken by their countries in that regard.

61. The representative of the secretariat also reviewed the project financed by the United Nations Development Account aimed at achieving strategic goals for reducing global road accidents by 2020, the main aim of which is to assist member countries in formulating national goals for the reduction of road accident victims and adopting best practices to be used to 2015 with respect to road safety and the achievement of those goals.

62. Furthermore, the representative of the secretariat reviewed the resolution proposed by the General Assembly on Improving Global Road Safety and preparing for the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, which is to be held in Russia in 2009. He also reviewed the establishment of the forthcoming regional partnership for road safety in the Arab Mashreq, which will be discussed at a workshop in Doha in April 2008.

2. *Progress made since the eighth session of the Committee on Transport in implementing regular budget transport-related activities in the 2006-2007 biennium, advisory services, technical cooperation and extrabudgetary activities*

63. The Committee referred to document E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4 and reviewed the progress achieved in implementing transport-related activities in the programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium.

C. AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO THE AGREEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL  
ROADS IN THE ARAB MASHREQ  
(Item 7 of the agenda)

64. The Committee referred to document E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/5, which contains the amendments proposed by Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen to Agreement routes, taking into consideration the recommendations made in paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 of that report.

D. DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE BIENNIUM 2008-2009 IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT  
(Item 8 of the agenda)

65. The Committee considered the relevant document and reviewed the programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009 in the field of transport. A discussion ensued.

E. DRAFT STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK  
OR THE BIENNIUM 2010-2011 IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT  
(Item 9 of the agenda)

66. The Committee considered the relevant document and reviewed the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011 in the field of transport. After discussion, the Committee adopted the proposed draft strategic framework with the amendment that is set out in paragraph 38 of this report.

F. DATE AND VENUE OF TENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT  
(Item 10 of the agenda)

67. The Committee recommended that its tenth session should be held in Beirut in February 2009.

G. OTHER BUSINESS  
(Item 11 of the agenda)

68. There was no other business.

**III. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE NINTH SESSION  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT**  
(Item 12 of the agenda)

69. At its final meeting, which was held on 28 February 2008, the Committee on Transport adopted the report on the ninth session as contained in document E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/6.

**IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION**

A. DATE AND VENUE

70. The ninth session of the Committee on Transport was held in the Holiday Inn Hotel, Dunes Centre, Beirut, from 26 to 28 February 2008, and comprised six meetings.

B. OPENING

71. At the beginning of the inaugural session, Mr. Nabil Safwat, Officer in Charge of the Economic Development and Globalization Division and Transport Team Leader at ESCWA, welcomed participants and thanked them for attending.

72. Mr. Omran Radi Thani, Head of the Iraqi Delegation and Chairman of the eighth session of the Committee, made a statement in which he welcomed participants and thanked them for their efforts and sustained interest in advancing the work of the Committee. He conveyed the best wishes of the Minister of Transport of Iraq and his gratitude to all countries for their fruitful cooperation during the eighth session. Mr. Thani presented a summary of action taken by Iraq in respect of the resolutions adopted and recommendations made at the eighth session and, in particular, ratification of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq and the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq, accession to the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq, the formation of a national committee for the facilitation of transport and trade and the implementation of a road safety project. He concluded by wishing Oman, the country that had assumed chairmanship of the ninth session of the Committee, every success.

73. Mr. Bader Omar AlDafa, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCWA, made a statement in which he welcomed participants and thanked Mr. Muhammad Safadi, the Minister of Transport and Public Works of Lebanon, for sponsoring the session and attending the inaugural session. He referred to ESCWA accomplishments towards achieving regional integration by implementing the agreements on roads, railways and maritime transport and drafting multimodal transport legislation. The Executive Secretary also alluded to the goals that had been accomplished by the project for linking

continents and regions in order to facilitate international transport as part of transport-related cooperation between ESCWA and the other United National regional commissions. He mentioned the productive cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States in preparing plans for a rail network between Arab countries.

74. Mr. Safadi gave the inaugural speech in which he welcomed participants to Beirut and thanked them for their confidence in Lebanon despite the current difficulties. He referred to the accomplishments of the ESCWA Committee on Transport and, in particular, preparation of the draft convention on the international multimodal transport in the Arab Mashreq, which he stressed was of utmost importance for economic and human development.

#### C. PARTICIPANTS

75. Taking part in the ninth session of the Committee were representatives of the following 11 ESCWA member countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

76. Also attending the session as observers were representatives of the GCC, the Arab Union for Land Transport, the Arab Federation of Shipping, the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries, the Arab Sea Ports Federation and the Arab Federation of Chambers of Shipping. The list of participants is contained in annex II of this document.

#### D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

77. In accordance with the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, rule 18, which provides that member countries shall assume the chairmanship of the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations, Mr. Hassan Suleiman Majiny, representative of Oman, assumed the chairmanship of the session. In accordance with the practice followed at previous sessions of the Committee, Mr. Omran Radi Thani, the representative of Iraq, and Mr. Abdullah Al Bakir, the representative of Qatar, assumed the positions of Vice-Chairmen, and Mr. Malik Asi, representative of Lebanon, the position of Rapporteur.

78. A drafting committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, comprising Mr. Hassan Suleiman Majiny, Chairman of the ninth session, Mr. Karim Ali Ghadban (Iraq), Mr. Abdul-Karim Muhammad Salih (Yemen) and Mr. Muhammad Arif Abu Zaki (Oman).

#### E. AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

79. At its first meeting, the Committee adopted the agenda for its ninth session as it appears in E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/L.1, as set forth below:

1. Opening of the ninth session of the Committee on Transport.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of agenda.
4. Proposed organization of work.
5. General discussion on transport-related issues in the Arab Mashreq: draft agreement on international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq.
6. Review of action taken in the field of transport since the eighth session of the Committee on Transport:

- (a) Follow-up on implementation of recommendations made during the eighth session of the Committee on Transport;
  - (i) Report on follow-up of implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, in accordance with the adopted plan of action;
  - (ii) Report of follow-up of implementation of routes M40 and M45, which were designated as having priority in the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq;
- (b) Progress made in implementing regular budget transport-related activities in the 2006-2007 biennium, advisory services, technical cooperation and extrabudgetary activities.

- 7. Amendments proposed to the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq.
- 8. Draft programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009 in the field of transport.
- 9. Draft strategic framework and draft programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 in the field of transport.
- 10. Date and venue of the tenth session of the Committee on Transport.
- 11. Other matters.
- 12. Adoption of the report of the ninth session of the Committee on Transport.

80. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the proposed organization of work as it appears in E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/L.2 with the proviso that meetings on the second and third days would begin at 9 a.m.

#### F. DOCUMENTS

81. Annex III of this report comprises the list of documents that were submitted to the Committee on Transport at its ninth session.

Annex I

**Model power of attorney for signature**

**(to be signed by the Head of State, the Head of Government or the Minister for Foreign Affairs)**

**Power of attorney**

We [name and position: Minister for Foreign Affairs or Head of State or Head of Government]

Hereby empower [name and position of person empowered to sign], on behalf of the Government of [name of country], to append a signature that requires ratification\* to the convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq, that will be adopted and opened for signature during the twenty-fifth ESCWA session, which is scheduled to be held in Sana'a from 26 to 29 May 2008.

DONE at [place] on [date]

[Signature of Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Head of State or the Head of Government]\*\*

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\* The signature appended may be definitive, requiring no ratification. If that is the case, it should be clearly stated and the phrase "signature that requires ratification" should be replaced by "definitive signature that requires no ratification".

\*\* The only persons who have the authority to delegate the right to signature are the Head of State, the Head of Government or the Minister for Foreign Affairs (not the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs).

## Annex II

### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### **A. ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES**

##### Bahrain

Dr. Rasheed J. Ashoor  
Assistant Undersecretary for Telecommunications  
and Land Transport  
Ministry of Transportation

Ms. Huda Abdulla Fakhroo  
Director, Roads Planning and Design  
Ministry of Works and Housing

##### Egypt

Mr. Hassan Ahmed Muhammad Salim  
Head of Delegation  
Vice-President of Administrative Council of  
Transport Planning Authority  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Tariq Alattar  
President of Administrative Council  
General Authority for Roads, Bridges and  
Land Transport

##### Iraq

Mr. Omran Radi Thani  
Head of Delegation and Sea Captain  
Consultant and Expert, Maritime Specialist  
Representative of Iraqi Maritime Transport  
Company  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Sabah Nouri Abdulrahman  
Manager, Transport Organizational Affairs Office  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Mohammed Ali Hashim  
Director, Baghdad Railway  
Public Company for Railways in Iraq  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Karim Ali Ghodhban  
Director, Statistics and Planning Division  
Directorate of Public Roads

Mr. Sabah Abd Taqi  
Assistant Director General  
Public Authority for Roads and Bridges  
Ministry of Works and Housing

Miss Israa Abdulkarim Muhammad  
Assistant Director, Foreign Relations Department  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Almanhal Hussien Alsafi  
Consultant for the Iraqi Embassy in Lebanon

##### Jordan

Dr. Abdullah M. Shawawreh  
Director of Road Freight Transport  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Naim Kh. Hamdan  
Director of Legal Affairs  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Tayseer Al Kayed  
Director of Highway Studies Department  
Ministry of Public Works and Housing

Mr. Ammar Khasawneh  
Director of Highway Construction Department  
Ministry of Public Works and Housing

##### Lebanon

Mr. Muhammad Al Safadi  
Minister of Transport and Public Works

Mr. Abdul Hafeez Kayssi  
Head of Delegation  
Directorate General of Land and Maritime  
Transport  
Ministry of Public Works and Transport

Miss Ilhan Al Khabbaz  
Chief of Tutelage and Land Transport Department  
Ministry of Public Works and Transport

Mr. Joseph Bou Samra  
Head of Planning and Programming Division  
Ministry of Public Works and Transport

Ms. Rafif Berro  
Advisor to the Minister of Trade Information  
Center  
Ministry of Economy and Trade

Mr. Malik Awada Asy  
Director, Department of Foreign Trade  
Ministry of Economy and Trade

## Oman

Mr. Hassan bin Suleiman Almjeeni  
Head of Delegation  
Director, Office of Marketing and Development  
General Directorate of Ports and Maritime Affairs  
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Mr. Salim Bin Saeed Bin Salim Alamry  
Vice General Manager of Roads and Land  
Transport Maintenance  
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Mr. Muhammad Bin Aref Abu-Zaki  
Expert Road Design  
Accredited Arbitrator (GCC)  
Member of Centre for International Arbitrators  
Directorate general of Roads and land Transport  
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Mr. Said Bin Rashid Al Qatabi  
Economic Researcher  
Ministry of National Economy

## Qatar

Mr. Abdullah Mohammad Hijji Al-Baker  
Head of Delegation  
Director of Planning Implementation Department  
Urban Planning and Development Authority

Mr. Muhammad Abad Omar Mardas  
Officer of Roads and Roundabouts Department  
Planning and Road Safety Division

Mr. Tariq Abdullah Aljafiri  
Senior Engineer  
Office of Support for President of Maritime  
Affairs  
Customs and Ports General Authority

Mr. Muhammad Jasim Aldusri  
Unit for International Cooperation in Maritime  
Transport  
Customs and Ports General Authority

## Saudi Arabia

Mr. Ali Abdullah Al-Nuaim  
Deputy Minister for Planning and Follow-up  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Tariq M. Gosty  
Director, Road Engineering and Safety  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Sohail Bin Abdulaziz Tashkandi  
Director of Maritime Safety  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Abdulrahman I. Aldosari  
Civil Engineer  
Studies Department  
Ministry of Transport

## Syrian Arab Republic

Mr. Ihab Almawaldi  
Director of Planning and International  
Relationships  
Public Establishment for Road Communications

Ms. Mayada Skeiker  
Director, Planning and Statistic Department  
Ministry of Transport

## United Arab Emirates

Mr. Ahmed Saeed Al Yammahi  
Civil Engineer  
Roads and Utilities Department  
Ministry of Public Works

## Yemen

Mr. Faisal Amin Abu Rass  
Yemeni Ambassador to Lebanon and Cyprus

Mr. Ali Muhammad Mutafi  
Head of Delegation  
Deputy of Ministry of Transport and Sea and  
Air Transport Affairs  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Abdulkarim Muhammad Salih  
General Director of Land and Sea Transport  
Policies  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Muhammad Nassir Salim Alfadi  
General Director of Statistics  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Hussain Muhammad Hadir  
General Director of Studies and Designs  
Ministry of Public Works and Roads

Mr. Hamod Mohammed Shamsan  
Ministry of Finance  
Customs Authority



Yemen (continued)

Mr. Ali Abdullah Alkahlani  
General Director of Port Customs

Mr. Ali Thabat Harmal  
Director of Department for International  
Organizations  
Ministry of Planning and International  
Cooperation

Mr. Hussain Abdal Wasim Al-Irani  
Consultant to Yemeni Embassy in Lebanon

B. REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Gulf Cooperation Council

Mr. Khaled Hamed Al Olayan  
Assistant Director of Communications  
Department  
General Secretary of the Council  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Arab Union of Land Transport

Mr. Mahmoud H. Abdallatt  
Secretary General of the Arab Union of Land  
Transport  
Amman, Jordan

Lebanese Shipping Agents Syndicate

Mr. Samir Syriani  
President  
Union for Air, Land and Sea Transport in  
Lebanon  
Beirut, Lebanon

Arab Federation of Shipping

Mr. Anwar Ghazzaoui  
Secretary General of the Arab Federation of  
Shipping  
President of Lebanese Shipowners Association  
Beirut, Lebanon

Mr. Raymond Akl Farhot  
Legal Consultant  
Lebanese Shipowners Association  
Beirut, Lebanon

General Union of Chambers of Commerce,  
Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries

Miss Ola Sidani  
Economic Researcher  
Beirut, Lebanon

Arab Sea Ports Federation

Mr. Isam Aldin Badawi  
Secretary General of the Arab Sea Ports  
Federation  
Maritime Transport Sector  
Alexandria, Egypt

Mr. Mahmud Salhab  
Board Member of Tripoli Port Authority  
Consultancy Section of Tripoli Port Authority  
Tripoli, Lebanon

International Chamber of Navigation

Mr. Elie E. Zakhour  
President of International Chamber of Navigation  
in Beirut  
Beirut, Lebanon

Mr. Umru Jamal Aldin Ali Rushdi  
Chairman of the Board, Egyptian Navigation  
Company  
Alexandria, Egypt

Mr. Antoine Hage  
Agent, Egyptian Navigation Company  
Beirut, Lebanon

Consultants and experts

Mr. Hatem Abdel-Latif  
ESCWA consultant  
Lecturing Professor  
Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University  
Cairo, Egypt

Mr. Omar Mashhoor Aljazzy  
ESCWA consultant  
Specialized in International Law  
Amman, Jordan

Annex III

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

Title	Symbol
Information note	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/INF.1
Provisional agenda	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/L.1
Annotated provisional agenda	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/L.1/Add.1
Proposed organization of work	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/L.2
Draft convention on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq	E/ESCWA/GRID/2007/10/L.1
General discussion on transport issues in the Arab Mashreq; draft agreement on the international multimodal transport of goods in the Arab Mashreq	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/3
Review of action taken in the field of transport since the eighth session of the Committee on Transport	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4
Follow-up of implementation of the recommendations made during the eighth session of the Committee on Transport	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)
Report on follow-up to implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq and the adopted plan of action	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.14/(Part I)/ Add.1/Rev.1
Report on follow-up to implementation of routes M40 and M45, which were designated as having priority in the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part I)/Add.2
Progress made in implementing regular budget transport-related activities in the 2006-2007 biennium, advisory services, technical cooperation and extrabudgetary activities	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/4(Part II)
Amendments proposed to the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq	E/ESCWA/GRID/2008/IG.1/5
Programme of work for 2008-2009 biennium in the field of transport	No Symbol
Draft strategic framework for 2010-2011 biennium in the field of transport	No Symbol