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Sixty-first session

Geneva, 19-21 November 2018

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Report of the Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics on its sixty-first session

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I. Attendance

1. The Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) held its sixty-first session from 19 to 21 November 2018 in Geneva. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Massimo Costa (Italy), Vice-Chair of the Group.
2. The session of the Working Party was attended by the following Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States: Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Switzerland and Turkey. The following United Nations specialized agency was present: the International Labour Office (ILO).
3. The European Union (EU) was represented.
4. The following intergovernmental organization was represented: Eurasian Economic Commission and the Trans-European Railway (TER) Project.
5. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean (CETMO), Groupement européen du transport combiné (GETC), The International Cargo Handling Coordination Association (ICHCA) International, International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, International Road Federation, International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the International Union of Combined Road/Rail Transport Companies (UIRR).
6. The following attended the meeting at the invitation of the secretariat: ETS Consulting International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Freight Village RU, Hupac Intermodal SA, Interdisciplinary Scientific and Practical Center for Identification Systems and e-Business, Moscow University of Transport, School of Business and Management of Technology of the Belarus State University and Transcontainer Europe, GmbH.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

7. The Working Party adopted the agenda as contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/142.

III. Workshop – Operational challenges of regional intermodal transport and innovative solutions (agenda item 2)

8. Following a decision of the sixtieth session, WP.24 held at the sixty-first session a workshop on operational challenges of regional intermodal transport and innovative solutions to these challenges. The programme of the workshop was provided in Informal document No. 1.
9. The workshop was founded on the following considerations: Intermodal Transport contributes to the realization of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development since intermodality leads to economic, environmental and social sustainability. Intermodal transport can lead to border crossing facilitation, further increase the competitiveness of railways and short haul shipping and enhanced cooperation among the different stakeholders. At current technological development, and to achieve sustainable transport, freight is recommended to be transported as far as possible with rail/inland waterways/maritime and collected or distributed by road, with the road legs being as short as possible.

10. However, intermodal transport faces different operational challenges that can vary between regions. These challenges need to be identified so that they can be addressed. Representatives of member States, international organizations and the private sector from the different regions of ECE identified and discussed various challenges and shared possible solutions as far as such were available.

11. The participants took note and discussed various operational challenges that can be grouped under the following clusters:

(a) Competitiveness:

(i) The competitiveness of rail transport on long distances is impeded by:

- Lack of common international standards related to e.g. registration of locomotives, weights on axle, train length, loading gauge lines
- Lack of common legal framework for contract of carriage, complex administrative procedures (including for border crossing) and disconnected operation management
- Lack of logistics partners
- Limited availability of return cargo

(ii) The competitiveness of rail transport on short distances (local distribution) is impeded by the lack of freight volumes that would allow it to benefit from economies of scale;

(iii) The competitiveness of waterways is impeded by its lack of efficient integration in logistics processes and the availability of multimodal hubs;

(b) Capacity and routing flexibility:

(i) There is limited capacity on the rail infrastructure therefore limiting the paths available for freight trains; this often results in poor service punctuality – freight trains get delayed as priority is given to passenger trains in the timetable and during operational disruptions;

(ii) Rail routes are often predefined and alternative routes are not always readily available; this can affect service punctuality in cases of even minor incidents on the routes;

(iii) Intermodal freight terminals lack capacity;

(iv) There is insufficient investment in rail infrastructure, freight rolling stock and locomotives in some countries and regions;

(v) Missing rail links remain;

(vi) The availability of containers is limited;

(c) The role of the polluter pays principle: the lack of implementation of the principle increases the lack of a level playing field between the various transport modes;

(d) Effective operation of freight centres/villages: legislation is not provided to distinguish the operations of freight centres/villages from freight forwarding operations;

(e) Others:

(i) Data and information in multimodal chains are not shared or shared only to a limited extent, and

(ii) The processes of digitalization of logistics is embraced only to a limited extent by operators in some countries and regions.

12. The participants further took note and discussed various solution or directions for action that may help address the operational challenges listed above under the specific clusters:

(a) Competitiveness:

(i) Rail corridors should be established (or further improved) with the same technical standards to ensure interoperability including the use of the same wagons and locomotives along the whole corridor, train drivers being allowed to operate across borders and the use of common signalling systems;

(ii) Cooperation should be strengthened between rail entities and across national borders along corridors;

(iii) Electronic documents should be implemented (digital single window);

(iv) Innovation should be promoted (e.g. to simplify the composition of trains, to reduce technical inspection requirements);

(v) Development of new approaches for internalising external costs should be encouraged;

(b) Capacity and routing flexibility:

(i) Guarantees for the long-term use of rail paths (right of way) should be implemented for both freight and passengers in an equitable way;

(ii) Investment should be encouraged and intensified to create additional rail paths for freight transport (also for fast freight transport) and build or expand intermodal freight terminals of different sizes ensuring the development of standardized installations;

(iii) Loans for the construction of intermodal facilities and other support should be made available as appropriate and necessary;

(iv) Land-use planning policies should consider the evolution of rail, road and port infrastructure and as such should be aligned to overall development goals;

(v) Automated solutions (web-based) for path request authorisation should be developed/encouraged;

(c) The role of the polluter pays principle:

(i) Compensation payments reflecting lower emissions may be provided to freight operations shifting away from road to waterways and/or rail (e.g. linked to number of kilometres avoided on the road as is already available in some member States);

(ii) Eligibility conditions for support measures, if any, should be clarified to promote investment in transshipment terminals;

(d) Effective operation of freight centres/villages: through the introduction of specific regulations for operations of freight villages;

(e) Others: Digitalisation should be encouraged to achieve better information flows and a better integration of logistics processes.

IV. European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (agenda item 3)

A. Status of the agreement and adopted amendment proposals

13. The secretariat informed WP.24 of no change to the status of the AGTC that had 32 Contracting Parties at the time of the sixty-first session.¹ Detailed information on the AGTC Agreement, the consolidated text of the agreement (ECE/TRANS/88/Rev.6), a map on the AGTC network, an inventory of compliance with AGTC standards as well as relevant Depository Notifications were available at www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

14. The secretariat further informed that it had been working on the consolidation of the amendments made in the last nine years to the agreement and that the new consolidated version of the agreement should be made available in the near future.

B. Amendment proposals (updating and extending the network)

15. At its last session, the Administrative Committee had endorsed the amendment proposals submitted by the Government of Germany as contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2017/1 and Corr.1. These proposals were further amending amendment proposals contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2009/4. The Administrative Committee had agreed that these amendments were to be submitted to the Depository. The secretariat had been initially unable to submit the amendments as translation in all official ECE languages was not provided. For this reason, and to ensure three language translation, ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2018/1 had to be submitted for the present session. However, due to the fact that the translation had become available prior to the present session, the secretariat had submitted the three-language version of the endorsed amendment proposals to the Depository prior to the present session. Therefore, the ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2018/1 was not issued.

16. The secretariat informed WP.24 that the endorsed amendment proposals submitted by the Government of Kazakhstan as contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2017/2 and Corr.1 had been submitted to the depository.

17. The Russian Federation submitted Informal document No. 4 proposing the inclusion in the agreement of: (i) an important railway line for intermodal transport; (ii) new important terminals; (iii) new border crossing points; and (iv) a gauge interchange station. WP.24 took note of the document and requested the Russian Federation to submit a formal document to the next session.

¹ Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.

V. Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the AGTC Agreement (agenda item 4)

A. Status of the Protocol

18. The secretariat recalled that the Protocol to the AGTC (ECE/TRANS/122/Rev.1)² had come into force on 29 October 2009 and had been signed by 15 countries. So far, nine countries have ratified the Protocol.³ The detailed information and the text of the Protocol and relevant Depositary Notifications are available on the website of the Working Party.⁴

19. The secretariat reiterated that the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) had encouraged concerned Contracting Parties to the AGTC Agreement to accede to the Protocol, as soon as possible.

B. Amendment proposals

20. The secretariat to the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) informed WP.24 of a series of amendments made to the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN) during its sixty-first session (4-6 October 2018, Geneva), such as the new waterway E 40-01 and E-50-01-01 and the update of the list of inland navigation ports of international importance. These amendments, following the established procedure under the AGN Agreement entered into force on 6 November 2018. The secretariat also presented a map providing the updated network of the waterways as per the latest amendments of the AGN Agreement. The SC.3 secretariat invited WP.24 to take into account the amendments and consider possible steps to align the Protocol based on them.

21. The WP.24 secretariat proposed that a document be prepared setting out the differences between the AGN and the AGTC Protocol that could serve as a basis for identifying the alignments desired. This work could be then taken up by the Contracting Parties to submit to the subsequent session amendment proposals to the Protocol. WP.24 welcomed this suggestion.

22. The SC.3 secretariat informed WP.24 that a census on the waterways network was to be started in 2018 and that SC.3, supported by the Working Party on Transport Statistics, was expected to commence working in 2019 on reviewing terminology used in inland waterways. WP.24 took note of this additional information. It requested the secretariat to report on the results of the terminology review at future sessions, in particular, with regard to terminology of relevance to the combined transport.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2017/3, C.N.56.2018.TREATIES-XI.D.5

² It should be noted that only the text kept in custody by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as depositary of the AGTC Agreement, constitutes the authoritative text of the agreement.

³ Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Romania, Serbia and Switzerland.

⁴ www.unece.org/trans/wp24/welcome.html.

VI. Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (agenda item 5)

23. The Working Party at its previous session had recognised that the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU code) was mainly used by the private sector. At the same time, no statistics were available on who (in which country and sector) was using the code and for what reasons. This made it difficult if not impossible for the secretariat or other bodies to collect statistics on the CTU code's application in handling incidents. To this end, the secretariat suggested exploring two different options for collecting information on the use of the CTU code contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2018/2. Option 1 suggested collection of information through a registration form. This form would appear upon initiating the download of the code and would permit the download in any of the code's language versions upon completing a short three question survey. Option 2 suggested the development of a mobile application that by detecting the cargo type (through the device's camera), would direct the user to the appropriate section of the CTU code on packing such cargo, while at the same time collect data on the use of the code.

24. WP.24 discussed the options and agreed that option two could be especially helpful in allowing better access and use of the CTU code, which would be very important to decreasing safety incidents due to poorly loaded cargo. At the same time, WP.24 recognised that funding was needed to develop the application and that efforts would be made by the secretariat to find donors. In this context, WP.24 requested the secretariat to implement option one, as a simple solution, and to identify the budget necessary and possible donors for the development of the mobile application in option two and report back at the next session.

25. WP.24 reflected then on the request of ITC during its last session (eightieth session, 20-23 February 2018, Geneva) (ECE/TRANS/274, para. 71) to consider updating the CTU code, including technical requirements. In this context, WP.24 considered Informal document No. 5 from the Russian Federation, Informal document No. 6 from ICHCA International and Informal document No. 9 from ISO.

26. These documents highlighted some deficiencies in the CTU code that could be eliminated by updating the code and including additional standards, among others, such as:

- (a) Load distribution calculation and selection of methods for cargo fastening;
- (b) Packing of dangerous goods in bulk into general purpose bulk containers;
- (c) Review of friction factors in the context of new developments in securing cargo;
- (d) Discrepancies between responsibilities of packers and drivers; and
- (e) Review of Quick Lashing Guide in view of new European standard on transport stability of packages – minimum requirements and tests.

27. The secretariat presented Informal document No. 7 suggesting the establishment of the Group of Experts on the CTU code. Such an expert group would consider the deficiencies of the code and make a proposal for its update.

28. ILO supported the fact that WP.24 seemed interested to initiate the process to updating the CTU. Yet, ILO warned WP.24 that IMO and ILO should receive mandates from their constituents to assist the work of the proposed group of experts. Thus, timelines for the operation of the group of experts would need to be revised to reflect this fact.

29. WP.24 decided to establish the Group of Experts on the CTU code and adopted its terms of reference with the changes proposed by ILO. The adopted terms of reference are provided in the annex. It also requested the secretariat to submit the terms of reference to ITC for their approval.

30. WP.24 further encouraged the member States to continue promoting the CTU code so that it becomes widely known and used.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2018/2, Informal document WP.24 No. 5 (2018), Informal document WP.24 No. 6 (2018), Informal document WP.24 No. 7 (2018), Informal document WP.24 No. 9 (2018)

VII. Climate change and intermodal transport (agenda item 6)

31. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat on the work of the Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Transport Networks and Nodes.

32. The Group of Experts focuses its work on:

(a) Identifying and establishing, if possible, inventories of transport networks in the ECE region which are vulnerable to climate change impacts, if possible in a geographic information system (GIS) environment;

(b) Using/developing models, methodologies, tools and good practices to address potential extreme hazards (e.g. high temperatures and floods) to selected inland transport infrastructure in the ECE region under different scenarios of climate change;

(c) Identifying and analysing case studies on the potential economic, social, and environmental consequences of the climate change impacts and provide a cost/benefit analysis of the adaptation options.

33. The Working Party took note of the information provided and requested the secretariat to provide more information on this topic at its next session.

VIII. Intermodal issues along Euro-Asian Transport Links (agenda item 7)

34. The ITC during its eightieth session requested the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/274, para. 71) to address the topic of the intermodal issues along the Euro-Asian Transport Links on a regular basis.

35. The Working Party took note that the ECE Euro-Asian Transport Links project (EATL), Phase I (2002-2007), Phase II (2008-2012) and Phase III (2013-2017) made transport between Europe and Asia a reality. The identification of routes, the prioritization of infrastructure investment projects, the development of a GIS database, the analysis of non-physical obstacles to transport, the comparison study between maritime and inland transport, the organization of a number of national capacity-building workshops on transport facilitation as well as the efforts to operationalize those corridors by preparing common time schedules and tariffs, had all helped to lay the foundation for an operational Euro-Asian transport network. The project had also paid particular attention to the specific needs of Landlocked Developing Countries and made a significant input to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

36. The Working Party was also informed about the development of the International Transport Infrastructure Observatory financed by the Islamic Development Bank. Once developed, it should be an innovative tool for illustrating transport infrastructure with both its hard and soft components, trade flows on this infrastructure and even estimated costs of the sections of infrastructure to offer benchmarking tools for the financing of new projects.

37. The Working Party took note of the information provided and requested the secretariat to update it on new developments in this topic at its next sessions.

IX. Review of National Transport and Logistics Systems (agenda item 8)

38. The secretariat in recent years had received funds, in order to prepare studies that evaluate the current transport and logistics systems of different countries. To this end, the Working Party was informed about studies that had been prepared for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan for improving their transport and logistics systems. The Working Party took note of the information provided and requested the secretariat to provide more information on this topic at its next session.

X. Intelligent transport systems and technological developments in intermodal transport (agenda item 9)

39. In line with the ECE road map for promoting the use of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) that contains 20 global actions for 2012-2020 (ECE publication “Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) for sustainable mobility”, 2012), the Working Party should be regularly informed about, and may wish to discuss, how modern information and communication technologies can assist in making intermodal transport systems attractive and “seamless” among different modes of transport.

40. The secretariat provided information on the activities undertaken by the Sustainable Transport Division and its working parties in order to promote ITS in transport. In particular, information was provided on the Symposium of Future Networked Car which was co-organized by International Telecommunication Union and ECE, and which brought the telecommunications and automotive industries together to discuss challenges such as the DSRC/ITS – G5 and 5G automotive applications, the connected and automated vehicles, cyber security and artificial intelligence.

41. The Working Party took note of the information provided and requested the secretariat to continue updating on ITS work at its future session.

Documentation

ECE publication “Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) for sustainable mobility” (2012)

XI. Annual themes on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (agenda item 10)

42. The Working Party discussed themes for its sixty-second session in 2019. The Working Party considered secretariat’s proposal on city logistics as the main contributor to the implementation of SDG 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. The Working Party agreed to hold its one-day workshop during the sixty-second session on “Intermodal transport and logistics’ role in making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”

XII. Intermodal transport terminals (agenda item 11)

43. The Working Party recalled that during its fifty-seventh session it decided to have a specific study prepared by the secretariat on mapping and categorizing the types of terminals that exist in the ECE region and on the available facilities.

44. During its last session the Working Party decided that the secretariat, in preparing this study, should use all existing information and material. The secretariat should cooperate with UIRR and Europlatforms in order to prepare a common template/questionnaire for collecting all relevant data. This template should be used by the secretariat for collecting information and data from countries where they had not been made publicly available. It was agreed that UIRR and Europlatforms would provide the secretariat with all available information from their members in order to facilitate the finalization of this study.

45. The Working Party considered formal document ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2018/3 that includes the template/questionnaire. This template/questionnaire as it was explained by the secretariat requests exactly the same data already available and collected by UIRR and Europlatforms from their members. Since it was decided that this template should be used by the secretariat for countries where information is not already publicly available, the secretariat, for comparison reasons, should make sure that same data with the one collected by UIRR and Europlatforms will be collected for the rest of the ECE countries. The data should be provided to the secretariat by UIRR and Europlatforms where relevant ECE countries are covered. UIRR informed the working party that a study is currently underway, involving UIRR, the EU and member States looking into the obligation for transparency in rail facility information and practices. The study will be completed in 2019 and then UIRR will be ready to provide the secretariat with relevant information.

46. The Working Party took note of the information provided and requested the secretariat to provide an update on this topic at its next session.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.24/2018/3

XIII. Preparing National Master Plans on freight transport and logistics (agenda item 12)

47. The Working Party, at its last session, agreed on the main principles for the handbook for preparing national master plans on freight transport and logistics. This handbook should take advantage of all information available including of the national policy measures to promote intermodal transport provided to the secretariat by the ECE member States. The main objective of this handbook would be to create awareness of the value that such master plans could bring to national freight transport and logistics sector and therefore to national economies. Furthermore, this handbook should summarize the principles based on which different countries from different regions had prepared their national master plans and it should be enriched with as many case studies/good practices as possible. The Working Party, having agreed on the above-mentioned principles, had requested the secretariat at its sixtieth session to start preparing this handbook and, if it was possible, to present a first draft at the sixty-first session.

48. The secretariat presented Informal document No. 2 which includes the annotated outline of the handbook with the main chapters as follows:

- Chapter 1: The role of governments in freight transport and logistics

- Chapter 2: The importance of logistics sector for the national economies
- Chapter 3: Analysis of good practices from ECE member States
- Chapter 4: Guidelines for the development of national master plans for freight transport and logistics
- Chapter 5: Policy measures foreseen or already implemented in support of the implementation of the national master plans
- Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations.

49. The Working Party approved the suggested structure and requested the secretariat to prepare the first draft of the handbook for its next session for its consideration.

Documentation

Informal document No. 2

XIV. New developments and best practices in intermodal transport and logistics (agenda item 13)

A. Trends and performance in the industry

50. The Working Party was informed by the representative of UIRR of ongoing developments in intermodal transport and logistics. Ten priorities set forth by the freight CEO task force were explained:

- (a) Timetable Redesign project (TTR);
- (b) Concepts for capacity offer on RFCs
- (c) Improvements to Coordination on Temporary Capacity Restrictions (TCRs);
- (d) Enhancement to the use of Path Coordination System (PCS);
- (e) Improvement to harmonisation of processes at borders;
- (f) Train tracking and Expected Time of Arrival (ETA);
- (g) Prioritisation, funding instruments, monitoring of TEN - T parameters;
- (h) Facilitation of concrete ERTMS Implementation;
- (i) Monitoring quality of freight services with implemented/shared KPIs ;
- (j) Harmonisation of Corridor Information Document (CID).

51. Two principles were upheld: (a) user-pays and (b) polluter-pays.

52. Furthermore, the representative of GETC presented the challenges and the trends concerning transport and the environment. These included the establishment of a global, unified, and seamless transport system in order to eliminate CO₂ emissions being generated by cargo transportation.

B. Activities of the European Commission and other United Nations entities

53. The Working Party was informed by the representative of the European Commission about recent activities and plans for future work of the European Commission (DG MOVE) on intermodal transport and logistics.

54. The representative of the European Commission mentioned that the main goals of the amendments to the Combined Transport Directive were to clarify the definition, to facilitate enforcement, to enable digitalisation and to update the incentives. The definition used in the Directive in force had caused a lot of difficulties both for authorities as well for industry due to its ambiguity. It did not foresee any effective measures for proving the eligibility of the special regime applicable for the road legs which created loopholes for the circumvention of cabotage and social rules of road transport. The proposal established very detailed conditions proving the eligibility of operations in the form of pre-established documents to be checked at the road side, on paper or electronically, thus helping to solve the problem of circumvention. An obligation was included for EU member States to take measures to support terminal building and capacity increasing where necessary. The long-term aim was to have, across the EU (where transport demand exists), the possibility to carry out the short road leg (maximum 150 km) as part of combined transport operations. Member States would also be able to use other support measures for combined transport but should review them every 4 years and amend as appropriate. Furthermore, improved reporting and cooperation was also foreseen to allow for the better assessment of success (or lack thereof).

C. Pan-European developments in policies

55. At the current session there were no specific developments in pan-European policies presented.

D. Intermodal transport statistics

56. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat about the latest developments in transport statistics. In particular, the ongoing efforts to visualize road and rail traffic volumes collected through the E-Road and E-Rail censuses, and the potential that this has to track Euro-Asian transport links and to identify potential opportunities for modal switching, were discussed. The secretariat also explained that the fifth edition of the Glossary for Transport Statistics was expected in 2019.

XV. National policy measures to promote intermodal transport (agenda item 14)

57. In accordance with a decision of ITC, the Working Party should continue the work of the former European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) in: (a) monitoring and analysis of national measures to promote intermodal transport; and (b) monitoring enforcement and review of the ECMT Consolidated Resolution on Combined Transport (ECE/TRANS/192, para. 90).

58. The Working Party decided at its fifty-sixth session to continue ensuring that the information was kept up-to-date and requested that the questionnaire be resent to member States in 2015. In 2015 and 2016 the secretariat received a number of responses to this questionnaire and updated the online database accordingly. Comparable information for 16

ECE member States is available in English, French and Russian (<http://apps.unece.org/NatPolWP24/>) and was presented at the fifty-ninth and the sixty-first sessions.

59. The Working Party agreed that the questionnaire should be sent out again in 2019.

XVI. Intermodal transport and the TIR Convention (agenda item 15)

60. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat and the representative of IRU about the ongoing work within the TIR Executive Board on the use of the TIR procedure for intermodal transport and possible approaches for the future. The TIR Convention allows for the intermodal transport of goods provided that at least one leg of the journey is carried out by road. During a non-road leg, the TIR guarantee can be either suspended or continued. When suspended, TIR transport can be resumed at the customs office situated at the end of the non-road leg. TIR is most frequently used in intermodal operations in Roll on-Roll off transport (RoRo) through ferry services, however the interest and volumes of transport of containers under TIR started to grow. There are several benefits of the use of TIR in intermodal transport:

(a) Security: sealed load compartments, possibility to track the transit of containers via TIR- Environmental Product Declarations (TIR-EPD);

(b) Possible preferential treatment of containers/RoRo under TIR in the ports (e.g. Aktau and other to come) – time saver;

(c) Access to the network of trusted road transport operators via TIR Associations (facilitation of such access via TIR -EPD in the future);

(d) No physical cargo inspection along the route (only at departure to destination).

61. Furthermore, concrete pilot tests were presented and discussed. The Working Party took note of the information.

XVII. Activities of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies (agenda item 16)

62. The Working Party was informed about the main decisions of the eightieth session of ITC (20-23 February 2018) on issues of interest to the Working Party. The Working Party was also informed about the draft ITC Strategy that the ITC Bureau, supported by the secretariat, had elaborated for the period until 2030 (Zero Draft of ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1). In line with ITC decisions (ECE/TRANS/274, para. 17), the Bureau requested that (a) the discussion of the ITC strategy becomes part of the agendas of the meetings of the Working Parties until the end of the year; and (b) that the draft strategy document be circulated accordingly to governments to facilitate the consultations. Against this background, the secretariat presented ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1 and sought the comments by the Working Party.

63. The Chair informed the Working Party about the input he provided to the secretariat on the draft ITC Strategy until 2030. This included:

(a) Transporting people and freight causes externalities that effect people's well-being and environment. The more these externalities are reduced, the more sustainable becomes the transport;

(b) These externalities need to be evaluated in relation to the economic benefit desired or obtained through freight or people's transportation;

(c) In addition to the improvement of performance on pollutants' emissions (the values of intensity of pollutants emitted by internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles), it is fundamental to reduce the overall quantitative level of Greenhouse Gas Emissions;

(d) This is a key challenge in the perspective of limiting the absolute value of pollutants' input, without altering the expected economic benefit;

(e) Optimizing logistics is fundamental. The best mathematic models should be implemented to optimize routes of any transport modes, and to improve the load factor of vehicles;

(f) At the same time, it is important to choose the optimal mix of different modalities of transportation. Also, this optimization action must be based on mathematical models and on strategic policies aimed at reducing, where possible, the transport of additional masses (vehicles' tare) when not strictly necessary for transportation.

64. The Working Party took note of this information.

XVIII. Election of officers for 2019-2020 (agenda item 17)

65. The Working Party elected Mr. Massimo Costa as its Chair and Ms. Julia Elsinger as its Vice-Chair for its sessions in 2019 and 2020.

XIX. Other Business (agenda item 18)

66. There were no issues raised under this item.

XX. Date and venue of next session (agenda item 19)

67. The Working Party was informed that its sixty-second session was scheduled to take place in Geneva from 30 October to 1 November 2019.

XXI. Summary of decisions (agenda item 20)

68. The Chair summarized the main decisions taken at the sixty-first session.

Annex

Terms of Reference of the ECE Group of Experts on IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)

I. Scope of issues and achievements expected

1. In line with the decision of the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/274, para. 71) on 20-23 February 2018, as well as with the current version of the Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units prepared by IMO/ILO/UNECE in 2014, the Group during its mandate will focus its work on the following issues:

(a) Enhance the provisions of the CTU Code on the necessary technical requirements (for instance transportation by containers by rail) in order to ensure if possible completion of those requirements;

(b) Examine all possible options and identify and analyse the most efficient and convenient one in order to prepare an electronic version of the CTU Code that would be:

(i) Source/library of different case studies (good practices/incidents);

(ii) Source of statistics/data not only regarding the use of the code but also on the reasons why the code is being used and by whom;

(iii) A mechanism that automatically updates/suggests updates of the technical requirements based on good practices implemented;

(iv) A daily tool for the market (i.e. smartphone application).

II. Methods of work

2. The Group of Experts will be established and function in accordance with the ECE guidelines for teams of specialists approved by the Executive Committee of ECE on 31 March 2010 (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1). At its first meeting, the Group of Experts will adopt a work plan, clearly defining its objectives and activities, including a time schedule for their implementation.

3. The Group should start working on its tasks only when the other two partners of the consortium, i.e. the IMO and the ILO, would also have approved the terms of reference for this Group in accordance with their administrative procedures. A tentative time schedule for the work of the Group could be as follows: two meetings in year one, at least three meetings in year two and at least two meetings in year three at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, before concluding its activities with the transmission of its final report to WP.24 at its session taking place in the project's year three as well as to the relevant bodies at ILO and IMO. This report shall also contain proposals for monitoring procedures and follow-up activities.

4. Translation of documents and simultaneous interpretation of its sessions in English, French, and Russian shall be provided by United Nations services (UNOG) for the sessions held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

5. Participation in the Group of Experts is open to all concerned United Nations member countries and experts. Concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, concerned railway companies, freight and forwarding industries are invited to participate and provide expert advice in compliance with United Nations rules and practices.

III. Secretariat

6. ECE will provide secretariat services for the Group of Experts and shall ensure close cooperation with all stakeholders, including the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the European Commission and concerned regional commissions of the United Nations.
