



TRANS EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER)
PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE

TER/SC/139

**Trans-European Railways (TER)
Steering Committee Meeting
21st Session
14-16 November 2005
Prague, Czech Republic**

ABRIDGED REPORT

1. The 21st Session of the TER Steering Committee took place on 14-16 November 2005, in Prague, Czech Republic.
2. The following TER countries attended the meeting: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Slovenia. Representatives of the UNECE and TER PCO also attended the meeting. The list of participants is attached (Annex 1).
3. On behalf of the Czech Authorities, Mr. Vaclav Novacek, TER National Coordinator welcomed the participants of the meeting. He underlined the importance of the extension of the TER Project for a new cycle 2006-2010 as well as of the follow up and implementation of TER Master Plan in the member countries and the wider TER region-items on the Agenda and wished the participants a successful meeting.
4. The representative of the UNECE expressed his gratitude to the Czech Authorities for hosting the meeting in Prague. He conveyed to the participants warm greetings from Mr. Jose Capel Ferrer, Director Transport Division, UNECE and reaffirmed the importance attached to the TER Project by UNECE, reiterating the commitment of the Executing Agency to continue supporting the implementation of TER Project objectives.

Election of Officers

5. The participants of the Steering Committee elected Mr. Frantisek Hep, (Czech Republic), Chairman and Mr. Radoslav Ivanov, (Bulgaria), Rapporteur.

Adoption of the Agenda

6. The participants of the Steering Committee adopted the Agenda of the Session. (Annex 2).

Report of the Project Manager

7. The Project Manager provided an outline of the major activities developed by the PCO from the last Session of the Steering Committee until now.
8. He underlined the comprehensive activity dedicated by PCO to the completion of the TER Master Plan in cooperation with TEM and the Executing Agency, the presentation of its results in various fora, the successful continuation of monitoring the progress achieved in border control facilitation and the participation of TER PCO staff in various meetings on pan-European corridors, CEI-TER Task Force, etc.
9. The Deputy Project Manager provided information on TER WP.1 Meeting on Infrastructure issues as well as on the establishment of an Ad-Hoc working group on facilitation of border crossing as a TER permanent group.
10. The Steering Committee endorsed the report of TER WP.1 as well as the proposal for the establishment of the above-mentioned TER Ad-Hoc working group.
11. The representative of the Executing Agency, on behalf of the UNECE, expressed high appreciation for the work done by the PCO and its staff outlining the tangible results obtained. He stressed the valuable contribution brought by the experts of the member countries in carrying out these important tasks and characterized the last years as a momentum reached in the activity of TER.
12. He also provided information on the presentation of TEM and TER Master Plan Report at the 7th plenary meeting of the High Level Group on the extension of trans-European transport axes to the neighbouring countries and regions, presided by Mrs. Loyola de Palacio, former vice-president of the EC, which was attended by high-level representatives from 45 countries and IFIs. Mrs de Palacio as well as other participants to this meeting expressed high appreciation for the Master Plan, its methodological, organizational framework and results and stated that the outcome of this work could be very useful to the High Level Group. In addition, he informed the Steering Committee that Mr. Luis Alfaro Lizcono, Head of Rail and Road, Division Projects Directorate, EIB, requested that EIB be invited in the follow up work of the Master Plan.
13. The representative of the Executing Agency gave detailed information on the presentation of the Master Plan results in various international meetings, including OSCE and the UN interregional transport linkages global Project. Also, on the appreciation of the UNECE-ITC 67th session as well as the WP.5 latest meeting on the accumulated experience of TEM and TER that could be useful for Caucasus and Central Asian countries and on their request to TEM

and TER Projects to consider sharing experiences with those countries with a view to assisting them integrate their transport systems and establish coherent Euro-Asian transport links.

14. The Steering Committee approved the report and activity of the Project Manager and the PCO.

Status of TER membership

15. TER Project Manager provided information on the TER membership, updating the progress of the discussions with Switzerland, Serbia and Montenegro and Ukraine as possible future members of TER.
16. The representative of the Executing Agency informed the Steering Committee on the status of the accession process to TER of Armenia and Azerbaijan. He reported that according to Article VII of the Trust Fund Agreement, the TER member countries were notified about the request for accession of the above-mentioned countries into TER Project and that no objection was expressed within the foreseen deadline. Only Turkey, in a communication with UNECE, has drawn attention to the fact that, under prevailing conditions of closed borders between Armenia and Turkey and not established diplomatic relations between the two countries, it will not be able to engage into cooperation with Armenia emanating from the TER Trust Fund Agreement. However, according with that communication, the Government of Turkey does not object to Armenia joining the TER Project.
17. The representative of the Russian Federation informed the Steering Committee on the agreement of that country with the proposed modification of Article VI Rule 11 regarding the Quorum of the Steering Committee in accordance with the decision of the 16th Session of TER Steering Committee and the letter circulated by UNECE on that subject.
18. The Steering Committee highly appreciated the statement of the Russian Federation. At the same time, the Executing Agency was requested to send a new letter to Greece, being the last country that did not communicate its consent with the change of quorum.

TER Master Plan

19. The Deputy Project Manager made a presentation of the Master Plan conclusions and recommendations and the necessary follow up actions that have been endorsed by the Steering Committee at its 20th session together with the Final Report of the TER Master Plan.
20. The representative of the Executing Agency informed the Steering Committee that the Final Report of the TEM and TER Projects' Master Plan was posted on the website of the UNECE and that the Executing Agency has taken the initiative to publish this report in one thousand high quality copies to be ready for first official distribution during the next UNECE – ITC session, to be held in

- Geneva, 7-9 February 2006. Among other publicity measures, UNECE also intends to hold a Press Conference in Geneva to present the results of the Master Plan, to send an official letter to the Governments of the countries involved in this exercise as well as international organizations and IFIs on the successful completion of the work.
21. The Steering Committee agreed with the above mentioned activity as well as with following actions detailed below: organization in the first half of 2006 of a special event for the presentation of the results; collection of missing data from countries who did not provide information; comparison of the five multimodal transport axes adopted by the High Level Group with the corresponding sections of the identified TER Master Plan backbone network; consideration of the TER backbone network within a global perspective; assessment of current status of the backbone network with a view to supporting the presentation of the Master Plan backbone network shape by 2010-2015-2020; reviewing of the Master Plan by 2008; monitoring the implementation of the TER Master Plan identified projects starting from 2006, as well as bringing the backbone network to the required standards.
 22. The Steering Committee agreed that: the EU experience of the annual project implementation report provided by countries to be used for monitoring Master Plan implementation followed by an annual consolidated report from the TER PCO; the assessment of the status of the backbone network will be followed within the framework of TER WP.1 on Infrastructure issues; the EU decision 884 will be taken into account; UNECE will invite the Governments of countries involved in the Master Plan to take all necessary political measures in order to implement the priority projects identified.
 23. The Steering Committee requested the PCO to prepare and deliver to the countries involved in this operation the complete volume of the TER Master Plan.
 24. Taking into account the complexity of the Master Plan and the tangible results obtained, the Steering Committee reiterated its high appreciation for the work done and the valuable contribution of all those involved in its elaboration namely, PCO staff, national experts, consultants, international organizations and UNECE.

Prolongation of TER Trust Fund Agreement for 2006-2010

25. Following the positive evaluation of the TER activities in the current project phase and the support of the Steering Committee for the continuation of the project in a new phase 2006-2010 expressed at its 20th session, the PCO prepared and distributed to the member countries the updated Annexes to the TER Trust Fund Agreement.
26. The Steering Committee agreed with the prolongation of TER Project in a new phase 2006-2010. The participants informed the session that the internal formalities were taking place according to the procedures required in each

country. The Trust Fund Agreement with the updated Annexes is attached (Annex 3).

27. The representative of Hungary informed the Steering Committee on the readiness of the Ministry of Economy and Transport of Hungary to prolong the Trust Fund Agreement for the period 2006-2010 including hosting the office.
28. The Steering Committee requested the Executing Agency to circulate a letter to the member countries informing them formally about its decision for the prolongation of TER Project in a new phase 2006-2010..

Status of international personnel in PCO and related issues

29. The representative of the Executing Agency informed the participants that following the call for candidates for the position of Deputy Project Manager(s) and Assistant Project Manager no eligible candidates were presented so far.
30. Taking into account this situation the Steering Committee agreed to extend the period for presentation of proposals for candidates by the end of February 2006 and requested the Executing Agency to communicate this extension to the member countries.
31. Considering the important tasks assigned to the PCO in the next period in relation with the Master Plan, its follow up work and other activities of the TER Project, the Steering Committee agreed to make use of the valuable experience and competence of Mr. Mircea Lupescu and Mr. Romeo Galbenu, and requested the Executing Agency in close cooperation with the Project Manager to establish appropriate consultancy contracts with specific tasks according to the needs.

Information on UN-HMOSS

32. The representative of the Executing Agency recalled to the participants on the need to proceed with an evaluation and required compliance report for TER PCO on the new UN Headquarters Minimum Operational Security Standards, applicable to every organization of the UN system (HMOSS).
33. The Project Manager provided information on the preliminary discussions held with the Hungarian authorities and intention to proceed further on with the required steps in the near future.

Other business

34. The Steering Committee noting the completion of the assignment of Mr. Mircea Lupescu in the TER PCO by the end of 2005, reiterated its appreciation for his outstanding performance and contribution in the development of the TER Project during the last thirteen years and its input towards European railway transport integration and regional cooperation among countries in this field.

35. The Steering Committee requested the Executive Agency to address on behalf of the TER countries a letter of thanks and appreciation to Mr. Mircea Lupescu, for the performant results obtained and management skills demonstrated during the period 1993-2005 in TER Project as Manager of Deputy Manager.
36. The representatives of Bulgaria, Czech Republic and the Executing Agency recalled the important moments in TER when the direct contribution of Mr. Mircea Lupescu has given a new impetus in the activity of TER and its integration in the European Transport context.
37. Mr. Mircea Lupescu expressed his satisfaction for the remarkable results obtained by TER during its existence and the performant developments in the activities of TER, for leaving behind him a viable and strong organisation able to respond in the future to the countries` needs and to promote the regional co-operation. He expressed his gratitude to all countries` TER National Coordinators and delegates with whom he successfully co-operated. Special thanks he addressed to the Executive Agency and personally to Mr. Jose Capel Ferrer, Director of Transport Division and Mr. Michalis Adamantiadis, Regional Transport Adviser under whose guidance TER could obtain such remarkable results.
38. The Steering Committee expressed its gratitude to Czech authorities for hosting in very good conditions the meeting.

Adoption of the report

39. The Steering Committee adopted the present report with Annexes.