

Report

9th Meeting of the Transit Transport Coordination Council (TTCC) (Islamabad, 15th February 2018)

The 9th Meeting of the Transit Transport Coordination Council (TTCC) was held on 15th February 2018 in Islamabad, Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The meeting was attended by representatives of ECO Member States namely Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Republic of Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Turkey. Representative of IRU and delegation from ECO Secretariat also attended the meeting. List of participants is attached at **Annex-I**.

Agenda Item No.1

Inauguration of the Meeting

2. Mr. Altaf Asghar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Islamic Republic of Pakistan expressed satisfaction with the proceedings of first two days and hoped concrete discussion in today's session will be helpful in achieving the desired goals.

Agenda Item No. 2

Election of the Chairman

3. The Meeting elected Mr. Altaf Asghar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Communications, Islamic Republic of Pakistan as Chairman.

Agenda Item No. 3

Adoption of the Agenda

4. The Meeting adopted its Agenda as proposed by the ECO Secretariat with minor amendments proposed by ECO Secretariat. A copy of the Draft Agenda is enclosed as **Annex-II**.

Agenda Item No. 4.

Appointment of the Drafting Committee

5. An open-ended Drafting Committee was established to prepare the Report of the Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 5:

Consideration/approval of the Reports of the technical committees of the TTCC and TTFA related events:

6. The Meeting considered and approved the reports of the following Meetings of the technical committees of the TTCC:

a. The Report of the 9th Meeting of the Road Committee

7. The Meeting considered and unanimously approved the Report of the 9th Meeting of the Road Committee, which preceded the 9th TTCC Meeting in Islamabad on 13th February 2018.

b. The Report of the 6th Meeting of the Customs Transit Committee

8. The Meeting considered and unanimously approved the Report of the 6th Meeting of the Customs Transit Committee, which preceded the 9th TTCC Meeting in Islamabad on 14th February 2018.

c. The Report of the 13th Meeting of Heads of ECO Railway Authorities/7th Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC

9. The Meeting considered and unanimously approved the Report of the 13th Meeting of Heads of ECO Railway Authorities/7th Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC held on 17-18 April 2017 in Baku.

10. The Meeting also took note of the reports of the following meetings:

a. The Report of the meeting of the ECO Heads of Railways enroute the railway connecting Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI)

11. The Meeting took note of the meeting of the ECO Heads of Railways enroute the railway connecting Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran (KTI), held at the ECO Secretariat on 6th February 2017.

b. The reports of the 3rd & 4th Meeting of the High Level Working Group on Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran)- Astara (Azerbaijan) Railway Project

12. The meeting took note of the meetings of 3rd & 4th Meeting of the High Level Working Group on Qazvin-Rasht-Astara (Iran) - Astara (Azerbaijan) Railway Project held on 18th April 2017 in Baku and on 23rd August 2017 in Tehran, respectively.

c. The report of the 9th High Level Working Group Meeting of ECO Container Train on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) route

13. The meeting took note of the 9th High Level Working Group Meeting of ECO Container Train on Islamabad-Tehran- Istanbul (ITI) route, held on 12th July 2017 in Islamabad.

Agenda Item No. 6

Approval of the Work Programme of the TTFA Fund for 2018

14. The Representative of the ECO Secretariat briefed the Meeting about the performance of the TTFA Fund in 2017 and also shared the views regarding the financial constrains being faced regarding the financial resources of the Fund. The meeting requested Secretariat to take up the matter with the CPR for allocation of US\$ 50000 (US dollar fifty thousand) to TTFA Fund. Based on concerns raised by the Representative of the ECO Secretariat, the meeting requested the Member States to consider voluntary contributions for the TTFA fund as it has been anticipated in the Modality of TTFA Fund. The meeting also requested IRU to consider voluntary contributions to the Fund.

15. The meeting discussed and approved the Programme of the TTFA Fund for 2018/2019, to cover the following:

- i. Partial coverage of the next meetings of the TTCC and its auxiliary bodies, namely, Road Committee, Railway Committee, Customs Transit Committee and the Insurance Committee/ECO Council of Bureaux (ECO-CB).
- ii. The 2nd/3rd Meetings of the Senior Consular Officials on Facilitation of Visa for

- Drivers.
- iii. Meeting of ECO Heads of Reference Marine Organizations.
 - iv. National Capacity Building Workshops for Pakistani officials on TIR Convention and ADR.
 - v. National Capacity Building Workshops on Road and Railway instruments upon request of the Member States, for acceding or newly acceded Member States, including Afghanistan.
 - vi. Allowances of Project Monitoring Unit (PMU) Project Officer to follow up the implementation of the 5-years Action Plan on Customs for 2018-2019.
 - vii. Regional Workshop on Road Safety.
 - viii. Partial coverage of the ECO/IRU Regional Conference on TIR Convention.
 - ix. Regional and international conferences/meetings involving ECO, UNESCAP, UNECE, OSJD, OTIF and UIC and other relevant entities.

16. The representative of the Republic of Turkey requested the representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to organize workshops on TIR and ADR side by side with the next TTCC events to be held in Kabul in 2019.

17. The representative of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan agreed to the proposal.

Agenda Item No. 7

Ways and means of enhancing the implementation of the international conventions mentioned in the TTFA

a. The status of the accession of the Member States to the TTFA

18. The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the meeting that despite all the efforts had been done by ECO Secretariat, there is no progress update under this particular agenda item. As regards Turkmenistan's ratification the meeting was informed that the ECO Secretariat has taken up the matter with the higher authorities of Turkmenistan several time through official and unofficial channels. He further informed the ECO is planning to continue to take up the matter with higher officials of Turkmenistan i.e. President and Foreign Minister during the upcoming visit of ECO Secretary General to Turkmenistan last week of February 2018.

19. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran emphasized upon the importance of Uzbekistan's accession to TTFA as it would accelerate and facilitate the movement of cargo in the ECO region.

20. The representative of ECO Secretariat informed the Meeting that ECO will raise this issue with Uzbek authorities at a higher level and expressed hope to resolve the issue. The Secretariat also requested the ECO Member States to raise this particular issue with Uzbek authorities in their bilateral or multilateral negotiations.

21. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran supported the proposal of the Secretariat.
22. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan also supported the proposal of the Secretariat and emphasized that in order to achieve the goals and objectives envisaged in the TTFA document and successful implementation of TTFA all Member States should consider joining TTFA on priority basis. He also proposed that this matter may be raised at the level of Ministers of Transport in order to have appropriate decision.
23. The meeting requested Turkmenistan to ratify TTFA. The meeting also requested Uzbekistan to accede to TTFA.

b. Accession to the relevant International Conventions

24. The Member States briefed the meeting on the status of implementation of, or accession to, the following conventions and agreements as well as other concerned conventions and agreements mentioned in the TTFA.
 - i. Convention on Road Traffic, 1968
 - ii. Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1968.
 - iii. Rules of use of wagons in international traffic (PPW) (OSJD).
 - iv. Agreement governing the exchange and use of wagons between Railway Undertakings (RIV).
 - v. Agreement governing the exchange and use of coaches in international traffic (RIC) (UIC).
 - vi. Agreement on the International Passenger Transport by Rail (SMPS);
 - vii. Agreement on the International Goods Transport by Rail (SMGS);
 - viii. Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF).
 - ix. Uniform Rules concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Goods by Rail (CIM).

 - x. Uniform Rules concerning the Contract for International Carriage of Passengers and Luggage by Rail (CIV Uniform Rules).
 - xi. Regulations concerning International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID) (Appendix C to COTIF).
 - xii. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975).
 - xiii. The International Green Card System on Motor Vehicle Third Party Liabilities Insurance Policy;
 - xiv. Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR), 1956, and the Protocol to this Convention (1978)
 - xv. European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1957
 - xvi. Customs Convention on Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)
 - xvii. International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982
 - xviii. Customs Convention of Temporary Importation of Vehicles (1954)
 - xix. Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs (ATP), 1970)

25. The representative of IRU reiterated proposal for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to join CMR and e-CMR simultaneously. He also emphasized upon the importance of ADR, ATP and Harmonization Convention in order to harmonize international transport in the region. He strongly recommended that ECO Member States who have not acceded to these conventions may do so in order to have efficient and effective international transport in the region.

26. The representative of Islamic Republic of Iran informed the meeting that Iran has already acceded to the e-CMR convention and the relevant instruments of accession have already been handed over to UN.

27. The representative of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan also reiterated his stance that the major impediment in the way of proper implementation of TIR in Afghanistan is delay in visa issuance from the Central Asian States namely Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. He sought help of the ECO Secretariat in order to remove this barrier which would subsequently increase the number of TIR carnets from Afghanistan.

c. Cooperation with other international organizations

28. The representative of the ECO Secretariat briefed the meeting about the latest status of ECO's cooperation with other international organizations, including UNECE, UNESCAP, UNCTAD, IRU, OSJD, OTIF, CIT, TRACECA and IDB, on implementation of the TTFA.

29. The representative of the ECO Secretariat informed the meeting about trilateral cooperation between UNESCAP, IDB and ECO for commercialization of KTI railway corridor. He informed that for this purpose a study would be conducted which would be implemented by UNESCAP and financed by IDB. He also informed about cooperation with IRU in operationalizing the already identified ITI and KTAI road corridors.

30. The meeting appreciated the financial support provided by IRU for ITI and KTAI road corridors. The meeting requested IRU to continue its support for operationalization of these corridors.

31. The representative of ECO Secretariat informed the meeting that GIS is a mechanism created/designed by UNECE for collection of data. He updated the meeting that as mandated by the 13th Heads of Railways/7th Meeting of the Railway Committee of the TTCC held in Baku in 2017, the Secretariat requested Member States to nominate focal points for GIS. He also informed that so far nine Member States have shared nominations of focal points. He added that Secretariat has also shared questionnaires/templates prepared by the International Consultant assigned by the UNECE, with the Member States. He appreciated Kyrgyz Republic and Republic of Azerbaijan for providing the data and requested other member states to provide the information as deadline has already surpassed.

32. The meeting requested the national consultants who did not provide data/contribution to the project to do so within two months time.

Agenda Item No. 8

Any other business

33. The representative of the Republic of Turkey informed the meeting that in the 9th HLWG meeting of ITI Container Train held in Islamabad last year, Pakistan requested to renew

the MoU with BALO. He informed the meeting that in order to renew the MoU BALO requires some technical information from enroute countries e.g. regular rail time and current capacity of the railway lines. He requested to create a proper correspondence channel through BALO and TOBB for sharing the information.

34. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan informed the meeting that during 7th HLWG of ITI Container Train it was decided that for this particular route a study to determine commercial viability should be conducted. He also informed that meeting that Pakistan has already reduced running time from Pakistan (Quetta) to Iran (Zahidan) from 10 to 8 days and it cannot be reduced further for the time being.

35. The representative of BALO informed that BALO requires certain information regarding current situation of rail transport between Iran and Pakistan and after obtaining the information BALO will assess the feasibility of project on its own terms. The representative of Republic of Turkey requested the enroute countries to provide nominations of focal points for exchanging the information.

36. The delegations of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Republic of Turkey introduced their focal points as follows:

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Agha Wasim Ahmad
Director General (Ops), Ministry of Railways
4th Floor, D Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad
Mob: 0303-9888821
Email: kommoner@hotmail.com

Republic of Turkey

Mr. Ahmet Karakas
Expert, TOBB (Turkish Union of Chambers of Commerce and Exchange Commodities)
Tel: + 90 312 218 22 48
Fax: + 90 312 218 22 44
e-mail: ahmet.karakas@tobb.org.tr

37. The meeting requested Islamic Republic of Iran to nominate focal point and convey the same to the ECO Secretariat in order to start regular run of the train on ITI route.

Agenda Item No. 9

Date and venue of the Next Meeting

38. The representative of Ministry of Commerce and Industries of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan volunteered to host the 10th Meeting of the Transit Transport Coordination Council (TTCC) in 2019 for which exact dates will be communicated to the Secretariat through official channels. The meeting appreciated the offer.

Agenda Item No. 10

Adoption of the Report

39. The Meeting unanimously adopted its report.

Agenda Item No. 11

Vote of thanks and closing of the Meeting

40. The participating delegations offered a vote of thanks to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the ECO Secretariat for holding the Meeting.
41. The Chairman announced closing of the meeting.
