REPORT

EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON THE INTERREGIONAL TRANSPORT LINKAGES BETWEEN ESCWA, ECE AND ESCAP

UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT PROJECT ON CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING LAND AND LAND-SEA INTERREGIONAL TRANSPORT LINKAGES (2002-2006)
AMMAN, 30 MAY - 1 JUNE 2005

Summary

This Expert Group Meeting was aimed at discussing the proposed transport linkages between the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and two other regional commissions, namely, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Additionally, the Meeting addressed the topic of current border crossing formalities and explored ways to improve them; and investigated the proposed methodologies for conducting economic feasibility studies in order to determine the most viable routes that will be part of the final, adopted linkages.

Specifically, discussions focused on the following: (a) national reports by concerned countries of the three regions, which presented concepts of the transport routes that will form part of the connecting linkages; (b) a description of the current border crossing formalities; (c) the proposed methodology for economic feasibility studies; and (d) the steps that will be taken in due course within the framework of the United Nations Development Account Project and in line with its requirements.

Agreements were reached with regard to land and land-sea linkages; and a list of steps to be undertaken by the three regional commissions was approved.
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I. RECOMMENDATIONS ISSUED BY THE MEETING

1. The Meeting highly appreciated the unique opportunity provided by the United Nations Development Account Project to the participating countries of the ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP regions to review existing international transport linkages, and to share national perspectives and views of international organizations on interregional transport linkages connecting ECE and ESCAP to the ESCWA region.

2. Designated national focal points and experts from participating countries updated the Meeting on the policies and plans for the development of international transport linkages in their respective countries, and made proposals for further development and cooperation with regard to these transport linkages.

3. The Meeting highlighted the importance of existing international transport agreements developed under the auspices of ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP, namely: The Agreements on International Roads and Railways in the Arab Mashreq; the Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries; the Agreement on Main International Railway Lines; and the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway. The Meeting agreed that these agreements and the respective networks could be considered as the basis for identification of the major interregional linkages connecting ECE and ESCAP to the ESCWA region.

4. Participants noted that the development of transport infrastructure was a long-term exercise and, within the framework of this Project, agreed to focus on the most vital issues related to development and operation of interregional transport linkages.

5. After active and constructive deliberation, the Meeting endorsed the most important road and rail transport routes connecting ECE and ESCAP to the ESCWA region (see tables 1 to 6 below).

6. Furthermore, the Meeting identified the following joint and related ESCWA-ECE-ESCAP project activities to be undertaken in close cooperation with concerned countries:

   (a) Corridor studies from June to December 2005, which are set to comprise the following: (i) technical and economic assessments of major land and land-sea linkages/routes; (ii) estimation of transport demands/traffic flows along the linkages/routes; (iii) identification of existing and planned investment projects along the linkages/routes; and (iv) relevant maps;

   (b) Second expert group meeting on interregional transport linkages between ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP: technical and economic assessment, which has been set for spring 2006;

   (c) Facilitation studies from December 2005 to May 2006, which consist of the following: (i) identification of operational, procedural and regulatory obstacles; (ii) recommendations of trade and transport facilitation measures; and (iii) implementation of the most relevant existing international conventions;

   (d) Third expert group meeting on interregional transport linkages between ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP: transport and trade facilitation, which has been set for summer 2006;

   (e) National facilitation seminars from June to December 2005.

7. The Meeting noted with appreciation the readiness of the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme/Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile (AIT/FIA), the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) to support the activities of the Project and to assist countries in areas of their expertise and aimed at facilitating international transport in the regions.

8. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to the Ministry of Transport in Jordan for hosting this Meeting and to the secretariats of ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP for organizing the Meeting.
9. The major conclusions and recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting were adopted on 1 June 2005 in Amman.

II. ADOPTED INTERREGIONAL TRANSPORT LINKAGES

10. Subsequent to a broad discussion with regard to interregional routes, the participants adopted the following interregional linkages: (a) road and sea/road routes (see table 1); (b) rail, rail/sea routes and rail/road/sea routes (see table 2); (c) potential rail routes (see table 3); and (d) interregional port connections (see tables 4 to 6).

### TABLE 1. ROAD AND SEA/ROAD ROUTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International reference</th>
<th>Itineraries</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a E90/M10</td>
<td>Nusaybin – Kamishli – Yaaroubia – Rabieyyah – Mosul</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b E95/E80/E90/AH5/AH1</td>
<td>Samsun (port) – Merzifon – Gerede – Ankara</td>
<td>Connect to Black Sea ports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a M40/M35</td>
<td>Amman – Al Azraq – Omari – Hadithat – Sakakah – Ha’il – Buraydah – Riyadh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 E90/M10/Iranian national highway/AH1</td>
<td>Lattakia (port) – Aleppo – Kamishli – Mosul – Irbil – Haji Omran – Tamarchin – Tabriz – Qazvin – Tehran</td>
<td>AH1 currently does not connect to the border with Iraq. Tamarchin (Iran) is not now a formal border crossing point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 M30/M51/M40/AH12</td>
<td>Beirut (port)/Tripoli (port) – Damascus – Tanf – Al Walid – Ramadi – Baghdad – Munthareya – Kosravi – Hamadan – Tehran</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 M80</td>
<td>Jeddah (port) – Riyadh – Dammam (port) – [sea link to Iranian/Pakistani ports]</td>
<td>Direct link between Riyadh and Jeddah (not via Mecca)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 1 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International reference</th>
<th>Itineraries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 M70/M05/Iranian national highway/AH8</td>
<td>Yanbu (port) – Medina – Buraydah – Artawiyah – Hafar El Batin – Al Ruqi – As Salmy – Abdully – Safwan – Basrah – Shalamcheh – Khorramshahr – Ahvaz – Safafhegan – Saveh – Tehran</td>
<td>AH 8 currently connects Ahvaz to Bandar Emam. The link between Ahvaz and Khorramshahr is currently not part of the Asian Highway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b AH1/AH75</td>
<td>Tehran – Semnan – Mashhad – Sarakhs – [Sarafs]</td>
<td>Connect to Turkmenistan/ Central Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Sea/AH8/AH72/AH70/AH75</td>
<td>[Sea link from ESCWA ports] – Bandar Emam/Bushehr/Bandar Abbas/Chabahar – Sarakhs – [Sarafs]</td>
<td>Connect to Turkmenistan/Central Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Sea/Pakistan national highway -</td>
<td>[Sea link from ESCWA ports] – Gwadar (port) – Sorab – Chaman – [Speemboldak]</td>
<td>Connect to Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2. RAIL, RAIL/SEA ROUTES AND RAIL/ROAD/SEA ROUTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International reference</th>
<th>Itineraries</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a E97/E70/TAR</td>
<td>Samsun (port) – Kalin</td>
<td>Connect to Black Sea ports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2 (continued)

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<tr>
<th>International reference</th>
<th>Itineraries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Sea/R80/M80</td>
<td>[Sea link from Iranian/Pakistani ports] – Dammam (port) – Riyadh – [change to road] – Jeddah (port)</td>
<td>Direct link between Riyadh and Jeddah (not via Mecca)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Sea/TAR/Road</td>
<td>Karachi (port) – Rohri – Quetta – Chaman – change to road – [Speenboldak]</td>
<td>Connect to Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Table 3. Potential Rail Routes

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<tr>
<th>International reference</th>
<th>Itineraries</th>
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III. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

11. The Expert Group Meeting on the Interregional Transport Linkages between ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP (Amman, 30 May – 1 June 2005) was jointly organized by ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP. The agenda and programme of the Meeting are attached in annex II.

12. The Meeting was attended by the national focal points and experts from the following nine countries and territories: Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and United Arab Emirates. Additionally, the Meeting was attended by representatives from AIT/FIA, IRU and ITF (see annex I for the list of participants).

13. The Meeting was jointly opened by H.E. Mr. Saud Nseirat, Minister of Transport in Jordan; Ms. Thouka al-Khalidi, Chief of the Globalization and Regional Integration Division in ESCWA; Mr. Michalis Adamantiadis, Regional Advisor for the Transport Division in ECE; and Mr. Madan Bandhu Regmi, Economic Affairs Officer in the Transport and Tourism Division in ESCAP.
Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Annex II

AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

Day 1: Monday, 30 May 2005

10:00 – 11:00 Registration of participants

11:00 – 14:00 Item 1 Opening of the Expert Group Meeting by ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP

   Item 2 Introduction by ESCWA of the United Nations Development Account Project on Capacity Building Through Cooperation in Developing Interregional Land and Land-Sea Transport Linkages and objectives of the Meeting

   Item 3 Review of existing international transport networks and initiatives in the ESCWA, ECE and ESCAP regions:

       (a) Presentation by ECE on a number of international agreements, including, among others, the Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries and the Agreement on Main International Railway Lines

       (b) Presentation by ESCAP on the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway

       (c) Presentation by ESCWA on the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM) and the Related Agreements on International Roads and Railways in Arab Mashreq

       (d) Presentation by ECE and ESCAP on the Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project and experiences to-date

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch break

15:00 – 17:00 Item 4 National perspectives on interregional transport linkages: presentations by national focal points from Jordan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey and United Arab Emirates

Day 2: Tuesday, 31 May 2005

9:00 – 13:00 Item 5 Presentation on the ESCWA/ECE transport linkages and border crossing formalities:
(a) Presentation by ITF of the proposed transport linkages

(b) Overview by ECE of current transport linkages

(c) Intermodal perspective by ECE of proposed transport linkages, including major sea ports, transhipment points, and border crossing facilities

(d) Discussion and finalization of agreed transport linkages between ESCWA and ECE

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

Day 2: Tuesday, 31 May 2005 (continued)

14:30 – 16:30 Item 6 Presentation on the ESCWA/ESCAP transport linkages and border crossing formalities:

(a) Overview by ESCAP of current transport linkages

(b) Discussion and finalization of agreed transport linkages between ESCWA and ESCAP

16:30 – 17:00 Item 7 Private sector perspectives by FIA and IRU on interregional transport linkages

Item 8 Strategy for further development of interregional transport linkages connecting ECE and ESCAP to the ESCWA region

Day 3: Wednesday, 01 June 2005

10:00 – 13:00 Item 9 Adoption of the report of the Expert Group Meeting
Annex III

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft Agenda and Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Note</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Report on Inter-Regional and Land-Sea Transport Linkages and the Border Crossing Formalities between ESCWA and ESCAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regional Report on Inter-Regional and Land-Sea Transport Linkages and the Border Crossing Formalities between ESCWA and ECE</td>
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<td>E/ESCWA/TRANS/2002/1/Rev.2</td>
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<td>Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq Map</td>
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