

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)

**PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON
INTERNATIONAL RAILWAYS IN THE ARAB MASHREQ**

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Introduction

As part of the process of developing the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has concluded agreements on networks of international roads and railways in the region, with the aim of strengthening thereby the links between the countries of the region and achieving regional integration. With the entry into force of those agreements, it became necessary to formulate plans of action for their implementation. This document contains a draft plan of action for the implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq.

That Agreement* was adopted on 14 April 2003 and entered into force on 23 May 2005 after it had been ratified by four countries, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. Implementation of the Agreement requires that member countries, in coordination with ESCWA, formulate the necessary plans for that purpose. ESCWA prepared a proposed plan of action that comprises general steps that will assist countries in carrying out their undertakings in respect of the Agreement: it was left up to each country to formulate detailed executive plans appropriate to their circumstances, as set forth below.

I. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

Figure I shows the steps that are required for proper implementation of the Agreement. Those steps fall into the following three main categories:

- (a) Media aspects;
- (b) The completion of economic feasibility studies on missing links;
- (c) Technical specifications of routes.

II. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

A. MEDIA ASPECTS

1. Preparation of pamphlet about and map of the Agreement

ESCWA undertook to prepare a pamphlet and coloured map that includes a description of the Agreement and the routes comprising the international rail network, together with an outline of Agreement goals and benefits. The pamphlet has been produced and distributed to member countries at all the relevant meetings organized or participated in by ESCWA. If member countries provide the modest sums necessary, further copies may be printed at a cost of \$1,000 per 5,000 copies.

2. The launching of a publicity campaign on the Agreement

As real implementation of the Agreement begins, rail users must be made acquainted with its goals and benefits. Each country must therefore carry out an awareness campaign in local newspapers, on television stations and other media, which should be launched at least one month before the date on which implementation of the Agreement is begun. It is suggested that such campaigns should be initiated in April 2006.

* United Nations, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq, Beirut, 5 March 2003 (E/ESCWA/TRANS/2002/1/Rev.2).

B. THE COMPLETION OF ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDIES ON MISSING LINKS

1. *Inventory of missing links*

In all, some 60 per cent of the total length is missing from the international rail network adopted in the Agreement. An inventory of missing links is therefore an essential step towards Agreement implementation. Table 1 sets out such an inventory, by network route.

2. *Setting priorities for feasibility studies*

At this stage, priorities are set for feasibility studies of the missing links set forth in table 1. The priorities will be identified by the ESCWA Committee on Transport in accordance with a set of standards and bases, taking into account political, technical, economic and environmental considerations.

3. *The preparation of feasibility studies*

Feasibility studies of the missing links will be prepared in accordance with the priorities set in the preceding step and subject to the availability of the funds necessary to carry out such studies.

4. *The determination of priorities for the building of missing links*

Priorities for building the missing links will be determined on the basis of the outcomes of the economic feasibility studies prepared in the preceding step and subject to the availability from a variety of sources of the funds necessary to build those links.

C. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE ROUTES

1. *The preparation of a schedule of technical specifications for each section of existing links*

At this stage, the existing links and the technical specifications for each section thereof will be enumerated along the lines of the model in table 2, which was prepared in accordance with the specifications set forth in annex II of the Agreement.

2. *The identification of specifications on each section that do not accord with the Agreement*

Each country shall make an inventory of all the routes on its territory and identify those sections where specifications do not accord with those set forth in annex II of the Agreement. The requisite studies should then be carried out.

3. *The completion of the work necessary to improve existing links*

Each country shall undertake to carry out the work necessary to ensure that the network routes in its territory reach the requisite standard. ESCWA should be notified of the timetable to which each country intends to work in carrying out the improvements necessary to upgrade all parts of the network.

4. *The building of the missing links in accordance with the priorities determined in step four and Agreement technical specifications*

This is the final step in Agreement implementation and includes the building of the missing links in accordance with the priorities determined as a result of the economic feasibility studies and the technical specifications set forth in annex II of the Agreement (see table 3 of this document), in addition to the availability of the sums necessary for that purpose.

III. TIMETABLE FOR THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

Table 4 shows the timetable for the proposed plan of action for implementation of the Agreement, of which the most important dates are set forth below:

- Preparation of a pamphlet about the Agreement (ESCWA has prepared that pamphlet) 30 January 2004
- Launch of the publicity campaign 1 April 2006
- Completion of economic feasibility studies on missing links 31 December 2008
- Completion of the work necessary to improve existing links 31 December 2012
- Building the missing links 31 December 2020

As soon as this plan of action is adopted, each country that is party to the Agreement must implement tables 2 and 4 and notify ESCWA by 30 December 2006 at the latest in preparation for follow-up of plan of action implementation by the ESCWA Committee on Transport.

Figure I. Summary of the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement

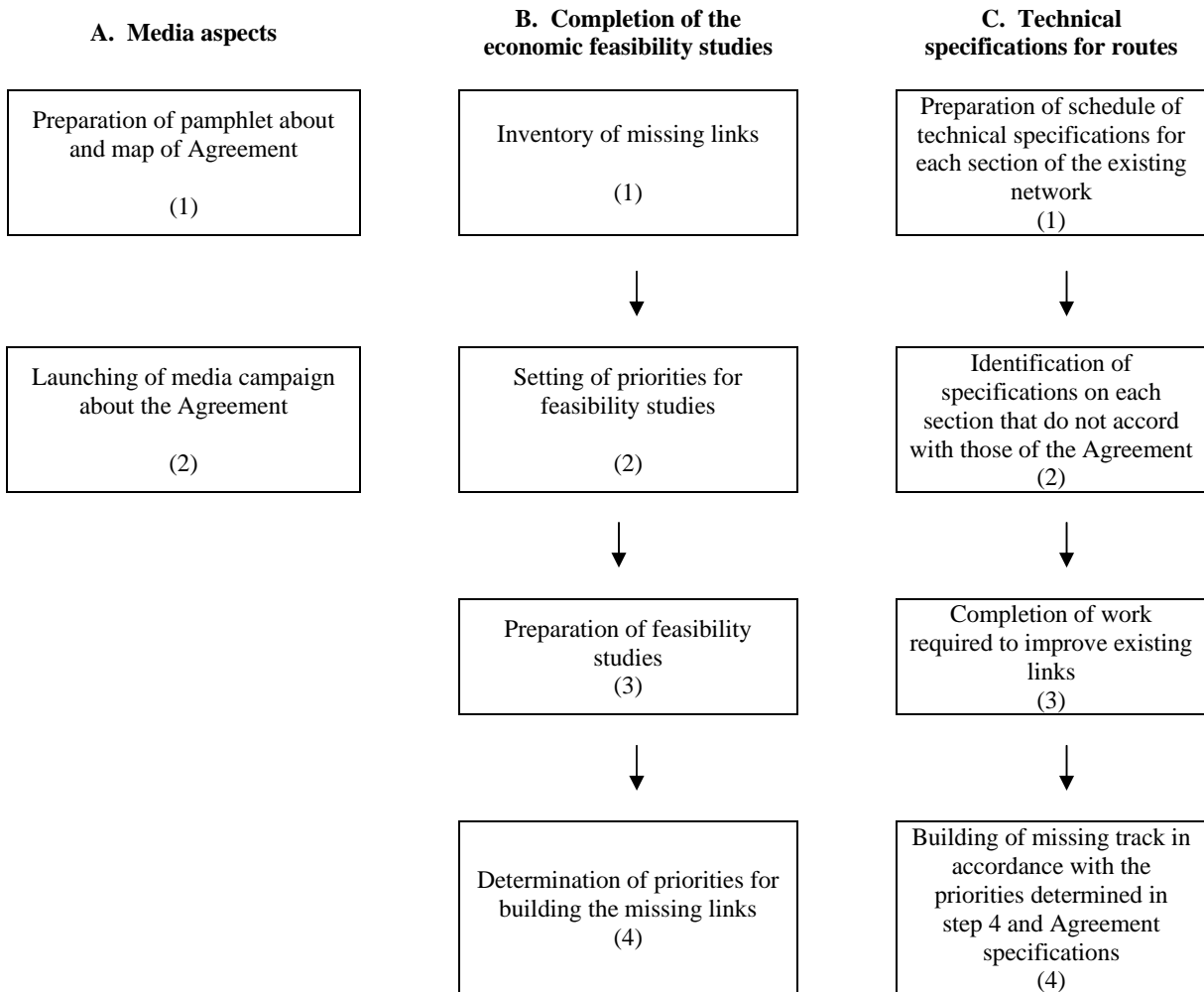


Figure II. Load dimensions in accordance with International Union of Railways specifications

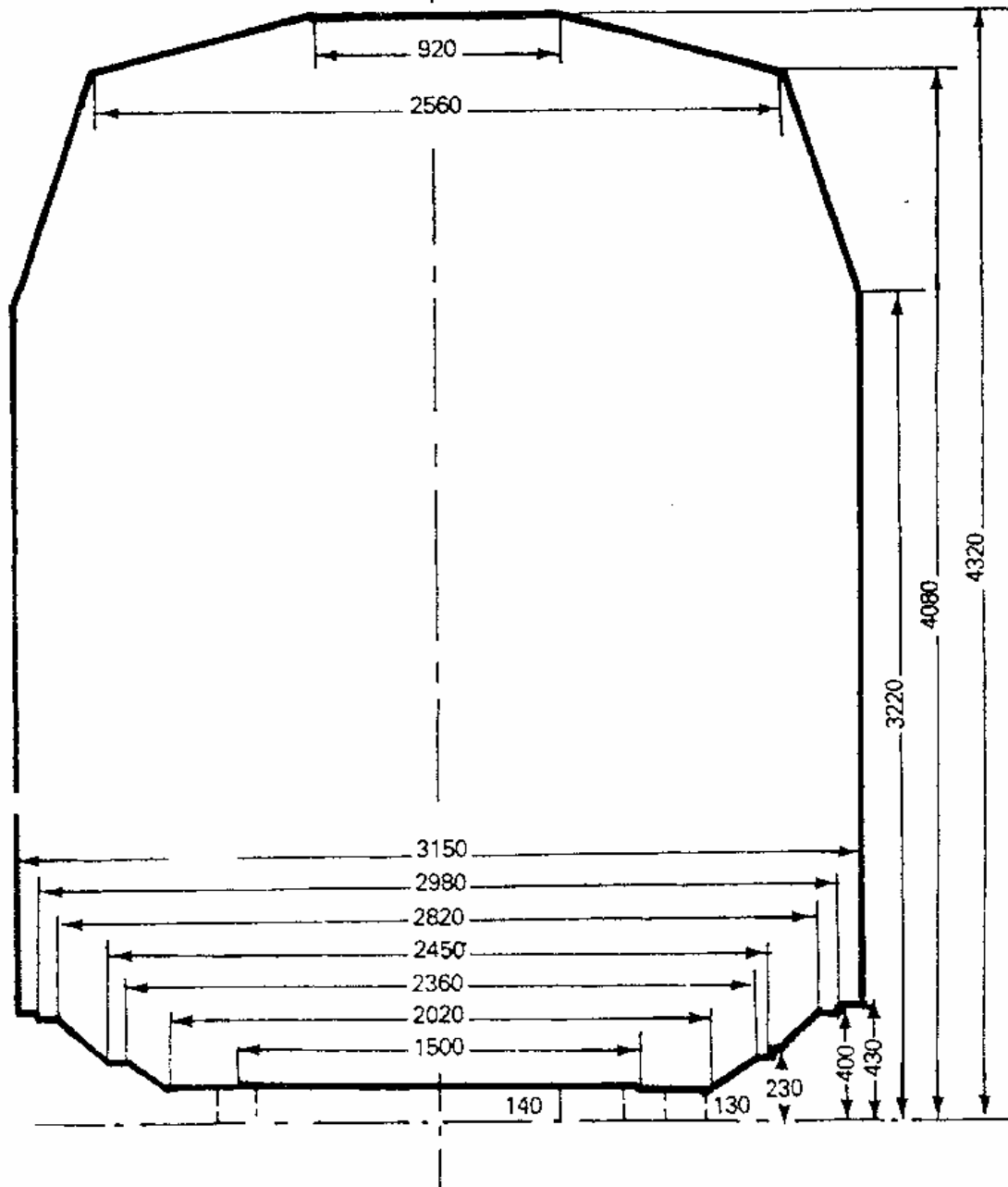


TABLE 1. LINKS MISSING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL RAIL NETWORK

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Umm Qasr (Kuwait)	Kuwait	Kuwait	R05	138
Kuwait	Nuwayseeb border point (Kuwait/Saudi Arabia)	Kuwait	R05	105
Nuwayseeb border point (Kuwait/Saudi Arabia)	Khafji border point (Saudi Arabia/Kuwait)	Kuwait	R05	20
Khafji border point (Saudi Arabia/Kuwait)	Abu Hadriyah	Saudi Arabia	R05	145
Abu Hadriyah	Dammam	Saudi Arabia	R05	155
Dammam	Salwa	Saudi Arabia	R05	375
Salwa	Batha'a border point (Saudi Arabia/United Arab Emirates)	Saudi Arabia	R05	120
Batha'a border point (Saudi Arabia/United Arab Emirates)	Al Ghweifat border point (United Arab Emirates/Saudi Arabia)	Saudi Arabia	R05	32
Al Ghweifat border point (United Arab Emirates/Saudi Arabia)	Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates	R05	315
Abu Dhabi	Dubai	United Arab Emirates	R05	93
Dubai	Sharja	United Arab Emirates	R05	80
Sharja	Fujairah	United Arab Emirates	R05	100
Fujairah	Kalba border point (United Arab Emirates/Oman)	United Arab Emirates	R05	10
Kalba border point (United Arab Emirates/Oman)	Khatmat Malahaw border point (Oman /United Arab Emirates)	United Arab Emirates	R05	10
Khatmat Malahaw border point (Oman /United Arab Emirates)	Sohar	Oman	R05	65
Sohar	Muscat	Oman	R05	236
Muscat	Thumrayt	Oman	R05	930
Thumrayt	Salalah	Oman	R05	72
Total				3 001

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Al Azraq	Omari border point (Jordan/Saudi Arabia)	Jordan	R15	42
Omari border point (Jordan/Saudi Arabia)	Hadithah border point (Saudi Arabia/Jordan)	Jordan	R15	18
Hadithah border point (Saudi Arabia/ Jordan)	Quoryat	Saudi Arabia	R15	100
Quoryat	Dawmat al-Jandal	Saudi Arabia	R15	300
Dawmat al-Jandal	Ha'il	Saudi Arabia	R15	315
Ha'il	Buraydah	Saudi Arabia	R15	330
Buraydah	Riyadh	Saudi Arabia	R15	413
Total				1 518

TABLE 1 (continued)

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Al Mudawara border point (Jordan/Saudi Arabia)	Halat Ammar border point (Saudi Arabia /Jordan)	Jordan	R25	15
Halat Ammar border point (Saudi Arabia /Jordan)	Tabukk	Saudi Arabia	R25	100
Tabuk	Medina	Saudi Arabia	R25	710
Rabigh	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia	R25	460
Jeddah	Darb	Saudi Arabia	R25	500
Darb	Al Tuwal border point (Saudi Arabia/Yemen)	Saudi Arabia	R25	220
Al Tuwal border point (Saudi Arabia/Yemen)	Harad border point (Yemen/ Saudi Arabia)	Saudi Arabia	R25	17
Harad border point (Yemen/ Saudi Arabia)	Hodeidah	Yemen	R25	265
Hodeidah	Al Mukha	Yemen	R25	225
Total				2 512

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Deir-Ez-Zor	Tadmur	Syrian Arab Republic	R20	126
Total				126

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Haklania	Tarabil border point (Iraq/Jordan)	Iraq	R40	325
Tarabil border point (Iraq/Jordan)	Karamah border point (Jordan/Iraq)	Jordan	R40	5
Karamah border point (Jordan/Iraq)	Safawy	Jordan	R40	239
Safawy	Zarqa'	Jordan	R40	90
Zarqa'	Amman	Jordan	R40	40
Total				699

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Gaza	Rafah border point (Palestinian Occupied Territories/Egypt)	Palestine	R50	8
Total				8

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Ma'an	Aqaba	Jordan	R60	16
Aqaba	Nuweiba	Jordan	R60	73
Nuweiba	Nakhl	Egypt	R60	150
Nakhl	Verdun Bridge	Egypt	R60	250
Total				489

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Mecca	Jeddah	Saudi Arabia	R80	918
Total				918

TABLE 1 (continued)

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Doha	Salwah	Qatar	R82	110
Total				110

From	To	Country	No.	Length in kilometres
Thumrayt	Mazyounah border point (Oman/Yemen)	Oman	R90	160
Mazyounah border point (Oman/Yemen)	Shahan border point (Yemen/ Oman)	Oman	R90	20
Shahan border point (Yemen/ Oman)	Gheizah	Yemen	R90	125
Gheizah	Mukalla	Yemen	R90	451
Mukalla	Aden	Yemen	R90	617
Aden	Bab al-Mandab	Yemen	R90	862
Total				2 235
Total length of rail approved for Arab Mashreq				19 528
Total length of track missing from the international rail network approved for Arab Mashreq				11 616
Percentage of missing track				59.50

TABLE 2. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR EACH ROUTE SECTION
(AS IN ANNEX II OF THE AGREEMENT)

Name of section	Track width	Vehicle loading gauge	Minimum distance between track centres	Nominal minimum speed	Authorized mass per axle (220 k per hour)	Authorized mass per axle (locomotive) (120 k per hour)	Authorized mass per axle (locomotive) (140 k per hour)	Authorized mass per linear metre	Test train (bridge design)	Minimum platform length in principal stations	Minimum useful siding length	Electrical voltage

TABLE 3. SCHEDULE OF TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR RAIL NETWORK

Serial No.	Technical specifications	Existing lines	New lines	
			For passenger traffic only	For passenger and goods traffic
1	Track width	Standard (1 435 mm)	Standard (1 435 mm)	Standard (1 435 mm)
2	Vehicle loading gauge	UIC/B*	UIC/B*	UIC/B*
3	Minimum distance between track centres	4 m	4 m	4 m
4	Nominal minimum speed	120 km/h	120 km/h	120 km/h
5	Authorized mass per axle For locomotives (# 200 km/hr) For wagons (# 120 km/hr) (# 140 km/hr)	22.5 tons 20 tons 18 tons	- - - -	22.5 tons 20 tons 18 tons
6	Authorized mass per linear metre	8 tons	-	8 tons
7	Test train (bridge design)	UIC 71	-	UIC 71
8	Minimum platform length in principal stations	250 m	250 m	250 m
9	Minimum useful siding length	500 m	-	500 m
10	Electrical voltage	-	In accordance with UIC and Trans-European Railway Network specifications	

* See figure II.

TABLE 4. PROPOSED TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
1	Preparation of pamphlet about and map of the Agreement																	
2	Launching of publicity campaign about the Agreement																	
3	Inventory of missing links																	
4	Setting priorities for feasibility studies																	
5	Preparation of feasibility studies																	
6	Determination of priorities for the building of missing links																	
7	Preparation of schedule of technical specifications for each section of existing links																	
8	Identification of specifications that do not conform to those of the Agreement																	
9	Completion of work necessary for improvement of existing links																	
10	Building missing links in accordance with the priorities determined in step 4 and Agreement technical specifications																	

Note: (-) indicates ideal date of completion.