



**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED
E/ESCWA/EDID/2016/IG.1/3(Part I)
31 August 2016
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Transport and Logistics
Seventeenth session
Cairo, 23-24 January 2017

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Progress achieved in the field of transport since the sixteenth session
of the Committee on Transport**

**Implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee
at its sixteenth session**

Summary

The Committee on Transport of the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA) held its sixteenth session in Cairo, on 23 and 24 November 2015. At the conclusion of the session, the Committee issued a set of recommendations for follow-up by the Economic Development and Integration Division. The recommendations focused on the harmonization of institutional structures and legislation in the transport sector in the Arab region, the components of the Integrated Transport System between the Arab States (ITSAS), road safety, and other topics related to the ESCWA programme of work in the field of transport. The recommendations are set out in the report of the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport (E/ESCWA/EDID/2015/IG.3/6/Report).

The present document reviews progress in implementing these recommendations: the text of a recommendation is given, followed by the measures taken to follow up on its implementation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT
AT ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION AND MEASURES TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THEM**

**A. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE
ON TRANSPORT AT ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION**

Recommendation

Take note of the information contained in the secretariat report on the implementation of recommendations issued by the Committee on Transport at its fifteenth session, as set out in document E/ESCWA/EDID/2015/IG.3/4(Part I); update that information as necessary; and submit it, together with any comments, to the secretariat by 30 March 2016 on the understanding that, should no comments be received from member States, the document will be adopted as is.

Implementation follow-up

The report was adopted as is given that no comments thereon were received by 30 March 2016.

**B. IMPLEMENTATION OF TRANSPORT-RELATED ACTIVITIES
UNDER THE ESCWA PROGRAMME OF WORK**

Recommendation

Take note of the activities undertaken by the secretariat in the field of transport under the ESCWA programme of work since the fifteenth session of the Committee, as set forth in document E/ESCWA/EDID/2015/IG.3/4(Part II); and welcome the secretariat's efforts to develop and support transport systems in member States.

Implementation follow-up

This recommendation was implemented at the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport.

C. COMPONENTS OF THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SYSTEM BETWEEN THE ARAB STATES*

Recommendation

The ESCWA secretariat is requested to invite member States that have not yet acceded to the two agreements or Memorandum of Understanding in the field of transport to accelerate the accession process.

Implementation follow-up

The secretariat has taken the necessary legal measures to amend the two agreements and the Memorandum. Consequently, it has decided to postpone inviting member States to accede and ratify them pending an announcement by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs that the amendments have been endorsed and officially deposited. This is expected to take place in September 2016.

Recommendation

Signatories to those agreements are requested to update the information in the questionnaire on their follow-up processes and submit it to the secretariat by 15 June 2016.

* The Integrated Transport System between the Arab States (ITSAS) is the new name of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM). It was adopted upon the request of States members in the Committee on Transport to include countries of the Arab Maghreb, which have lately joined ESCWA.

Implementation follow-up

When the present document was under preparation, ESCWA had received updates from Iraq and Palestine.

Recommendation

The secretariat is requested to provide technical support to facilitate accession to the transport agreements and Memorandum for countries that have not yet done so, upon their request.

Implementation follow-up

ESCWA is prepared to provide technical support to countries wishing to accede to any of the agreements, upon their request.

The Committee on Transport made detailed recommendations on each ITSAS component, as follows:

1. Agreement on International Roads between the Arab States

Recommendation

Take note that the States parties to the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq agreed to participate in the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport to vote on the proposed amendments to the Agreement and to review consequent legal procedures.

Implementation follow-up

The recommendation was implemented at the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport.

Recommendation

States parties to the Agreement are requested to update the information in the questionnaire on its implementation and submit it to the secretariat by 15 June 2016.

Implementation follow-up

On 13 April 2016, ESCWA sent member States a communication on following up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport at its sixteenth session, progress in implementing the ITSAM components, and developments in the field of transport in member States in 2015. The communication contained several attachments, including a questionnaire on the implementation of the Agreement on International Roads. The following countries completed the questionnaire and submitted it to ESCWA:

- (1) Iraq: 27 April 2016;
- (2) Palestine: 15 May 2016;
- (3) Jordan: 11 May 2016;
- (4) Saudi Arabia: 26 May 2016.

2. Agreement on International Railways between the Arab States

Recommendation

Note that States parties to the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq agreed to participate in the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport to vote on the proposed amendments to the Agreement and to review consequent legal procedures.

Implementation follow-up

The recommendation was implemented at the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport.

Recommendation

States parties to the Agreement are requested to update the information in the questionnaire on the implementation of the Agreement and submit it to the secretariat by 15 June 2016.

Implementation follow-up

On 13 April 2016, ESCWA sent member States a communication on following up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport at its sixteenth session, progress in implementing the ITSAS components, and developments in the field of transport in member States in 2015. The communication contained several attachments, including a questionnaire on the implementation of the Agreement on International Railways. The following countries completed the questionnaire and submitted it to ESCWA:

- (1) Iraq: 27 April 2016;
- (2) Palestine: 15 May 2016;
- (3) Jordan: 11 May 2016;
- (4) Saudi Arabia: 26 May 2016.

3. Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Transport Cooperation between the Arab States

Recommendation

Take note that States parties to the Memorandum agreed to participate in the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport to vote on the proposed amendments to the Memorandum and to review consequent legal procedures.

Implementation follow-up

The recommendation was implemented at the sixteenth session of the Committee on Transport.

Recommendation

Take note of a presentation by the secretariat on navigation lines for maritime and pluvial connections between Arab countries. The secretariat is requested to prepare a technical working paper on the issue, to be presented at the seventeenth session of the Committee.

Implementation follow-up

The secretariat prepared the requested technical paper on navigation lines for maritime and pluvial connections between Arab countries. It will be presented at the seventeenth session of the Committee on Transport.

4. National committees for transport and trade facilitation

Recommendation

Member States that have not yet established national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade are invited to accelerate the process using the guide for the establishment of national committees for transport and trade facilitation in the region prepared by ESCWA in 2003, and the technical support provided by ESCWA in that area.

Implementation follow-up

No information has been received from relevant countries on the implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation

Member States that have already established national committees are called to accelerate their activation by drafting and adopting action plans for each committee and by making use of the technical support provided by ESCWA in that regard.

Implementation follow-up

No information has been received from relevant countries on the implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation

The secretariat is requested to continue providing technical support to member States for trade and transport facilitation, especially regarding the monitoring and evaluation of constraints related to long delays and complexity of commercial operations; and to study the best practices employed globally. Member States are also requested to include the chairs of national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in the Committee delegations.

Implementation follow-up

ESCWA is prepared to provide the necessary support upon request. Member States are requested to include the chairs of national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in the Committee delegations.

Recommendation

Participating member States are requested to complete questionnaires from the secretariat so as to evaluate the status of transport procedures, including trade.

Implementation follow-up

On 13 April 2016, ESCWA sent member States a communication on following up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport at its sixteenth session, progress in implementing the ITSAS components, and developments in the field of transport in member States in 2015. The communication contained several attachments, including the amended questionnaire on the establishment and activation of national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade between the Atab States.

5. Road safety

Recommendation

Take note of the proposed guide developed by the secretariat on the establishment of integrated national systems for road safety management (national lead agencies and councils and related coordination committees); and request the secretariat to publish and disseminate the guide to member States for guidance in establishing road safety systems.

Implementation follow-up

Steps are underway to publish and disseminate the guide to member States for guidance in establishing road safety systems.

Recommendation

Member States are requested to complete the questionnaire on road safety and submit it to the secretariat by 30 January 2016, to allow the secretariat to publish the data in a report on the Global Plan for the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020.

Implementation follow-up

It was agreed to resend the questionnaire to member States for completion (and to add data for 2015), to allow the secretariat to collect the data. The issue is expected to be reviewed at the eighteenth session of the Committee on Transport, to be held in 2017.

Recommendation

Member States are invited to implement the recommendations of the second Global High-Level Conference on Road Safety, held in Brasilia on 18 and 19 November 2015, especially regarding the development of policies, strategies and action plans to improve road safety in line with national goals and specificities; and to vote in favour of the impending General Assembly resolution on the adoption of the Brasilia Declaration on Road Safety.

Implementation follow-up

ESCWA followed the vote at the seventieth session of the General Assembly on its resolution 70/260 on improving global road safety, which endorsed the Brasilia Declaration.

Recommendation

The secretariat is requested to continue providing technical support to member States in implementing activities to improve road safety.

Implementation follow-up

ESCWA is prepared to provide technical support to member States upon request.

D. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation

The secretariat is requested to continue applying the methodological framework for the development and implementation of an integrated transport system between Arab countries, and promote cooperation and coordination between all national and regional organizations, bodies, union, enterprises, centres of expertise, experts, advisors and international organizations concerned with implementing the Trade Facilitation Agreement, so as to benefit from their expertise.

Implementation follow-up

ESCWA continues to cooperate with regional and international organizations working in the field of transport and other areas. In this context, on 28 June 2016, a memorandum of understanding was signed between ESCWA and the International Road Transport Union to support member States in facilitating and developing road transport, so as to strengthen economic development and regional integration in the region.

Recommendation

Member States are requested to submit the following two reports to the secretariat by 15 June 2016: the first on implementing the recommendations of the fifteenth session of the Committee on Transport and the second on transport developments in member States from 1 January to 31 December 2015, to enable the secretariat to prepare its comprehensive report and publish it on the ESCWA website to facilitate access for member States.

Implementation follow-up

On 13 April 2016, ESCWA sent member States a communication on following up on the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport at its sixteenth session, progress in implementing the ITSAS components, and developments in the field of transport in member States in 2015.

Recommendation

Member States are requested to appoint national focal points to work with the secretariat on an electronic platform for an integrated transport system in Arab States, and to inform ESCWA of their names by 15 January 2016, noting that some countries have already appointed focal points to follow up on the implementation of the transport agreements and Memorandum of Understanding.

Implementation follow-up

The data structure of the electronic platform is ready, and 90 per cent of the maps are complete (pending checking of some links with national focal points upon their appointment). ESCWA has invited member States to appoint national focal points, and has received the names of focal points from the following seven countries: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan and Tunisia. The secretariat is organizing a training workshop for national focal points, to be held in September 2016, on entering transport data for their respective countries.

Recommendation

Member States are urged to integrate projects and strategies for the development of transport networks in their inclusive economic development strategies and policies and national trade orientations, following the example of countries that have already done so.

Implementation follow-up

No information has been received from member States in that regard. ESCWA hopes to receive the required data.

Recommendation

Welcome the secretariat's efforts to hold sessions of the Committee on Transport sequentially with sessions of related committees, such as the committees on trade and on statistics, to discuss issues that are jointly relevant to those committees; and to invite the secretariat to consider including representatives of civil society and the private sector in those sessions in accordance with United Nations procedures and regulations.

Implementation follow-up

ESCWA is considering the possibility of organizing the next session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics concurrently with the session of another committee. The current session of the Committee on Transport is being held concurrently with an expert group meeting on the role of transport in connecting to global value chains.
