



Report

Nineteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics Beirut, 26-28 November 2018

Summary

The nineteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was held at the United Nations House in Beirut from 26 to 28 November 2018. Discussions focused on several topics, notably progress in the implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme of work, of technical cooperation activities and of recommendations made by the Committee; progress in implementing a project on geographic information systems (GIS) for transport networks between Arab countries; assessing Arab economic integration: trade in services as a driver of growth and development; logistics performance in the Arab region; maritime transport in the Arab region: does liberalization matter?; and the technological revolution and its impact on the future of the transport sector in the Arab region.

A high-level panel discussion was held on developments in the field of transport since the eighteenth session of the Committee, attended by regional experts in the transport and logistics sector. The session also included a regional workshop on road safety management in Arab countries, held in collaboration with the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety and attended by representatives of interior ministries.

The Committee made several recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat and to member States. The present report contains a brief summary of discussions on each agenda item and the recommendations emerging from the session.

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1-2	3
<i>Chapter</i>		
I. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS AT ITS NINETEENTH SESSION	3-5	3
A. Recommendations to member States	4	3
B. Recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat.....	5	4
II. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION	6-46	5
A. Progress made in the field of transport and logistics	6-25	5
B. Assessing Arab economic integration: trade in services as a driver of growth and development.....	26-28	8
C. Logistics performance in the Arab region.....	29-30	8
D. Maritime transport in the Arab region: does liberalization matter?	31-33	8
E. Round-table discussion: The technological revolution and its impact on the future of the transport sector in the Arab region	34-39	9
F. Regional workshop: Road safety management in the Arab countries.....	40-43	9
G. Date and venue of the twentieth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics.....	44	10
H. Other matters.....	45	10
I. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport and Logistics at its nineteenth session	46	10
III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK	47-53	11
A. Date and venue.....	47	11
B. Opening.....	48-49	11
C. Attendance	50	11
D. Election of officers.....	51	11
E. Agenda	52	12
F. Documents	53	12

ANNEXES

I. List of participants.....	13
II. List of documents	16

Introduction

1. The Committee on Transport and Logistics of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) held its nineteenth session pursuant to ESCWA resolution 213 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 on the establishment of a Committee on Transport within the Commission, which was endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1997/11 of 18 July 1997; and in accordance with ESCWA resolution 229 (XXI) of 11 May 2001 on the frequency of the sessions of the Committee.
2. The present report sets out the recommendations issued by the Committee on Transport and Logistics at its final meeting, and summarizes the discussions under each agenda item.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS AT ITS NINETEENTH SESSION

3. The Committee commended efforts by the secretariat to support member States in their work on transport and logistics, especially its efforts to link between normative activities, advisory services, consensus-building and integration activities, and its endeavours to develop the Integrated Transport System between the Arab States (ITSAS) to support and facilitate transport and trade between Arab countries and achieve regional integration. The Committee also praised progress in implementing recommendations adopted at its eighteenth session.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEMBER STATES

4. The Committee made the following recommendations to member States:

(a) Take note of technical cooperation activities undertaken by the secretariat in the transport and logistics sector, especially in planning activities related to transport and logistics and road safety, and submit requests for support via official mechanisms;

(b) Take note of the establishment of the United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund, and propose projects to the Fund to benefit from its services in improving road safety and management in the Arab region;

(c) Continue efforts to improve the transport and logistics sector in Arab countries, given their importance in enhancing connections to global value chains, while focusing on striking a suitable balance between their role in strengthening infrastructure, updating and formulating transport policies and overcoming obstacles to achieving those goals, on the one hand, and the role of the private sector in those efforts, on the other;

(d) Work on facilitating trade by simplifying procedures in accordance with available resources and by using modern techniques, so as to reduce trade costs to increase competitiveness. The necessary measures to achieve this include the following:

- (i) Developing policies on border crossings, examining ways to increase the efficiency of border processes, facilitating border inspections, and reducing red tape;
- (ii) Optimizing benefits from logistics areas adjacent to land borders to rationalize investment and ensure complementarity of efforts;
- (iii) Considering the feasibility of reducing the need for physical inspection of goods, given that it is the main cause of extended clearance periods; and increasing the use of risk analysis systems;

(e) Focus more on maritime transport and logistics to increase countries' capacity to integrate in the global economy; and consider the feasibility of port specialization at the regional level to increase the Arab region's competitiveness in view of the comparative advantage of its strategic location;

(f) Encourage innovative financing initiatives to reduce reliance on public budgets to fund transport and logistics projects;

(g) Continue implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to transport and logistics at the national level;

(h) Appoint national focal points for the project on geographic information systems (GIS) for transport networks in Arab countries; identify the routes of road and railway networks and their crossings; cooperate with project managers to determine the location of land-based logistics terminals and border crossings that States wish to see included in the project; and provide information and data on those terminals and crossings through national focal points, in line with the consolidated table of characteristics, on the completion of which training will be provided;

(i) Continue building national systems to manage road safety, especially national traffic management authorities and related coordination mechanisms, to increase efficiency in implementing policies, strategies and workplans on road safety;

(j) Benefit from educational opportunities provided by education and research institutes in Arab countries in the field of transport, logistics and road safety, and disseminate information on those opportunities through the ESCWA secretariat;

(k) Involve specialists and experts in all events and activities related to transport and logistics undertaken by ESCWA so as to optimize their benefits.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ESCWA SECRETARIAT

5. The Committee made the following recommendations to the ESCWA secretariat:

(a) Continue forging partnerships with international and regional organizations working in the field of transport and logistics in the Arab region, to strengthen coordination and optimize member States' benefit from available capacity;

(b) Continue providing technical support to member States to build their trade facilitation capacity, in accordance with country requests and available resources;

(c) Continue developing the vision of ESCWA, which was fleshed out by the Committee at its eighteenth session, on establishing a multimodal transport system in the Arab region, with support from financing institutions such as the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, and by holding expert group meetings to consider the vision's dimensions, such as the geography-energy-environment nexus and the political situation and conflicts in the region and their impact on the transport sector;

(d) Continue keeping pace with technological developments in the transport sector and their impact on Arab countries, inform member States of them, and hold a meeting to exchange expertise and successful experiences at the global and regional levels;

(e) Continue preparing a study on trade costs in the Arab region and the contribution of transport to those costs, and present it to the Committee at its next meeting;

(f) Examine the various dimensions of trade in transport and logistics services given their growing role in the global economy, especially in improving countries' competitiveness; and provide suggestions on the optimal use of logistics infrastructure, such as airports, sea ports and logistics areas, so as to support Arab integration efforts;

(g) Monitor progress in implementing ITSAS components and present a report thereon to the Committee at its next meeting, invite non-signatory States to accede to ITSAS and provide technical support to countries in line with their needs and available resources;

(h) Continue working on the project on GIS for transport networks between Arab countries to facilitate updating ITSAS data, pursue collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank to implement the project, and continue following up on the identification of national focal points for the project and the provision of required data;

(i) Hold a training session for GIS national focal points to build their capacity in using and benefiting from the system;

(j) Continue implementing a project to establish a regional road safety observatory for Arab countries to improve the collection of data on road safety and ensure their consistency, given the importance of this project to increasing the efficiency of policies, strategies and workplans aimed at improving road safety in Arab countries;

(k) Provide technical support to member States upon request to establish or operationalize integrated national systems for road safety management, and to benefit from the ESCWA guide on the topic.

II. TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

A. PROGRESS MADE IN THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS

(Agenda item 4)

1. *Implementation of transport and logistics activities under the ESCWA programme of work*

6. The representative of the secretariat made a presentation on progress in the field of transport and logistics since the eighteenth session of the Committee. He reviewed the activities undertaken by the secretariat in that area under the ESCWA programme of work, notably following up on the implementation of ITSAS components. He said that the secretariat had received reports and updated data from only five countries, which indicated lack of progress in that regard.

7. He also considered technical issues, including trade and transport costs and maritime transport in the Arab region, in the context of discussions on liberalizing the sector; logistics performance in the Arab region; technical cooperation activities undertaken by ESCWA, such as organizing workshops, providing technical support, preparing memorandums, holding conferences, and implementing cooperation activities to support and develop the transport and logistics sector and road safety. He discussed progress in implementing recommendations made by the Committee at its eighteenth session, including organizing a training workshop for Iraq on the single window system and a regional advisory meeting on vital connectivity corridors in the Arab region. He said that ESCWA was making efforts to follow up on international conferences and resolutions and to study their expected impact on Arab countries, and to begin implementing the project on a multimodal transport system in the Arab region and present it to the Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank, which had pledged to partially finance the project.

8. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Egypt said that his country was undertaking several programmes to support the transport sector, which other Arab countries could benefit from, including a master's degree in transport safety engineering. It was a joint programme provided by the engineering department at Cairo University in collaboration with the University of Milan in Italy. He stressed that the transport sector serviced all sectors that contributed to development, especially trade, indicating the importance of strengthening linkages between those two sectors. He expressed his wish to include an item on trade and exchanges between Arab countries on the agendas of future meetings and conferences.

2. Action taken by member States

9. Several State representatives gave an overview of developments in the transport and logistics sector in their countries, and of progress in implementing recommendations made by the Committee at its eighteenth session at the national level. The Committee agreed that States should send electronic copies of their presentations to the secretariat for publication on the Committee's webpage.

10. The representative of Libya said that his country was regaining strength and requested ESCWA technical support in the following three areas: (a) reviewing a recent study on planning the transport sector in Libya, which required updating and revision; (b) establishing a national committee on trade and transport facilitation; and (c) developing a system to organize road safety in Libya, given that the number of road accidents in the country is among the highest globally.

11. The representative of Jordan discussed some issues and challenges in the transport sector, including financing, political and regional situations, institutional structures, and population and economic growth. He said that the Ministry of Transport was aiming to facilitate transport, improve road safety and protect the environment. Jordan was also preparing a study on structuring the transport sector. He added that it was necessary to retackle the issue of railway links between Arab countries, given that it did not receive continual attention.

12. The representative of Iraq discussed the measures taken by his country in the field of transport and logistics, such as enacting a new transport law and working to accede to the International Road Transport Union. He said that efforts were being made to maintain road and bridges in Iraq, establish new railroads, and implement various projects to establish an industrial city, build pavements and dig sea lanes. He added that his country was conducting talks on maintaining motorways.

13. The representative of the State of Palestine thanked ESCWA for its solidarity with the Palestinian people, especially since the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People coincided with the current Committee session. He said that it was vital for the State of Palestine to continually communicate with other Arab countries and to play an effective role in the region. The State of Palestine was working on improving public transport through implemented and proposed activities, and was closely following the issue of railroads in view of Israeli efforts to build a railway from Haifa to Jordan, the Gulf and Iraq.

14. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic said that the Ministry of Transport was striving to ensure security and sustainability in the transport sector, which was the sector most damaged by the war. The Ministry was also aiming to improve safety in all transport modes. She reviewed the recommendations made at the thirtieth ESCWA session on lifting unilateral sanctions on the Syrian Arab Republic, given their impact on achieving the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

15. The representative of Tunisia discussed key indicators for the transport and logistics sector and the challenges it posed in Tunisia, indicating that logistics costs constituted 20 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) compared with 15 per cent in countries with similar economies. He said that Tunisia had made several accomplishments in 2018, including continuing work on a fast rail project and implementing several projects on road transport and railway transport between cities.

16. The representative of the Sudan reviewed efforts to develop the transport sector and his country's achievements in that area, including stimulating passenger transport services, and rehabilitating and updating lines and mobile units. He discussed a plan that his country was working to implement in the future, aimed at operationalizing river transport for tourism purposes and opening joint river ports with neighbouring countries.

17. The representative of Qatar said that the transport sector was a key non-oil sector in his country, and that the Ministry of Transport was developing a comprehensive plan on land freight, increasing awareness on

road safety, and providing an inclusive and balanced transport system. The Ministry had completed the preparation of legislative and regulatory laws for the transport sector and logistics services.

18. The representative of Mauritania discussed maritime transport and improving airline safety, highlighting efforts to resolve price issues concerning land transport in view of the numerous economic and security challenges facing his country. He requested that ESCWA assist his country in rehabilitating various transport facilities.

19. The representative of Egypt reviewed the measures taken by his country, including launching a project for an electric trainline; developing infrastructure and ports, and building berthing facilities.

20. In response, the representative of the secretariat said that the aim of the present item was to share information on the latest developments in the field of transport and logistics in member States. He requested that representatives periodically report to the secretariat on those developments and on related strategies, which could either be presented to delegations, included in ESCWA publications or published on the Committee's webpage. Regarding technical cooperation between ESCWA and member States, he said that technical cooperation was not limited to studies prepared by the secretariat and knowledge shared with countries, but also included direct support to countries upon needs-based requests.

3. Project on geographic information systems for transport networks between Arab countries

21. The representative of the secretariat made a presentation on developments in establishing an ITSAS e-platform. She said that the Committee, at its fifteenth meeting held in Rabat on 27 and 28 January 2015, discussed progress in implementing components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM). Participants recommended that States parties to the transport agreements should update information contained in the survey on those agreements, and that the secretariat should develop an e-platform to enable national focal points to periodically update information in the future.

22. In April 2018, the ESCWA secretariat, the Islamic Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Europe and the Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean had held a coordination meeting to establish GIS, aimed at reviewing various experiences in establishing GIS for network systems and facilities in different areas. Participants had stressed the importance of the project proposed by ESCWA to link GIS for transport networks and facilities in the Arab region with a project implemented in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Europe to establish GIS for transport in countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation (OEC) and GIS for the Western Mediterranean.

23. The Islamic Development Bank had reconfirmed its interest in funding the ESCWA project to establish GIS for transport networks and facilities in the Arab region, and adding two new layers for inland logistics terminals and border crossings, provided that a unified table of GIS features was established combining the tables used in the three trials conducted in the Arab region, the Western Mediterranean and OEC countries.

24. The representative of the secretariat also discussed submitting a request to the Islamic Development Bank to fund the project, and the measures that needed to be implemented by member States.

25. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Egypt said that GIS was important, stressing its benefits and the need to expand it to include road service stations. Participants recommended that work continue on the project in collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank to implement it and present the required data; and that project focal points be appointed at the national level, who would later be invited to participate in a capacity-building workshop on using and benefiting from GIS.

**B. ASSESSING ARAB ECONOMIC INTEGRATION: TRADE IN SERVICES
AS A DRIVER OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
(Agenda item 5)**

26. The representative of the secretariat made a presentation on Arab economic integration: trade in services as a driver of growth and development. He reviewed Arab countries' priorities and challenges faced in negotiating agreements on trade in services. He discussed the effects of liberalizing trade in services in the Arab region, and the impact of a free trade area agreement between Arab countries and the European Union on the SDGs. He focused on the importance of the services sector and its role in the global economy, given its contribution to achieving the SDGs, especially in enhancing gender equality, empowering women, driving development, and increasing countries' competitiveness and capacity to secure development gains by benefiting from trade opportunities worldwide.

27. The Secretary-General of the Arab Union of Land Transport said that maritime transport was almost non-existent between Arab countries, as was the case with rail transport.

28. The representative of Tunisia said that before discussing trade liberalization, it was necessary to focus on overcoming obstacles that impeded the development of logistics services within and between Arab countries.

**C. LOGISTICS PERFORMANCE IN THE ARAB REGION
(Agenda item 6)**

29. The representative of the secretariat gave an overview of logistics performance in the Arab region, based on widely adopted international indicators. He discussed key developments in that field and identified performance strengths and weaknesses to highlight ways to increase logistics efficiency in the Arab region. He indicated the significant challenges faced by Arab countries that had joined the World Trade Organization and the loss of competitiveness caused by logistics, stressing that the Arab region's performance was better than that of most other regions.

30. In the ensuing discussion, participants focused on the need to pay particular attention to logistics and their role in enhancing Arab countries' connectivity to global value chains, especially the customs component; to examine ways to implement trade facilitation measures; to strengthen bilateral ties between Arab countries; to enhance regional maritime links; to assess the feasibility of relaxing the physical inspection of goods given that it was a major factor in delaying clearance; and to promote the use of risk analysis systems.

**D. MARITIME TRANSPORT IN THE ARAB REGION: DOES LIBERALIZATION MATTER?
(Agenda item 7)**

31. The representative of the secretariat reviewed the importance of maritime transport, which was considered a primary transport mode in international trade and a key element in increasing countries' capacity to integrate in the global economy. He said that maritime transport was of particular importance to Arab countries given their strategic position and in view of various global developments that would significantly impact the Arab region. He analysed the levels of trade regulation and liberalization in the maritime transport sector in the Arab region, based on available indicators. He also considered international and regional agreements signed by Arab countries in the area of maritime transport services.

32. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of the Sudan said that the public sector played a key role in infrastructure investment, and enquired whether it was possible to involve the private sector in that field.

33. The representative of the secretariat said that it was difficult to involve the private sector, stressing that Governments would need to play a major role by developing appropriate policies.

**E. ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION: THE TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT
ON THE FUTURE OF THE TRANSPORT SECTOR IN THE ARAB REGION
(Agenda item 8)**

34. The representative of the secretariat reviewed key features of the current technological revolution and structural transformations resulting from it in the transport sector. He said that the technological revolution had opened up various possibilities for the future of the transport sector, such as replacing fossil fuels with solar generated electricity, developing hyperloop railway systems, producing driverless cars, and combining advanced communication technologies with high-speed computing, the Internet, global positioning systems (GPS) and smart mobile applications, to facilitate direct communication between transport service users and providers.

35. The representative of the World Bank said that the Arab region was on the brink of the technological revolution. However, the desired revolution in the field of transport had not yet taken place, although Arab countries had shown their ability to accomplish achievements in various sectors. The transport sector had not witnessed significant improvements and was lagging behind other sectors. It was therefore necessary to keep pace with expected developments over the next 20 years, given that the Arab region was at the centre of those developments and should benefit from them.

36. The executive manager of TMS Consult said that several obstacles arose from the environment in Arab countries. The transport sector was not subject to regulation or a clear governance system. The main challenge faced by Arab countries in benefiting from the technological revolution was their lack of readiness to adopt and benefit from current technologies.

37. The Secretary-General of the Arab Union of Land Transport said that it was necessary to examine the outcomes of the digital revolution and address some of its aspects, including the possibility of higher unemployment rates. It was vital to standardize infrastructure between Arab countries and to encourage automation, so as to meet efficiency standards. He said that the ESCWA initiative to examine the impact of the technological revolution on the transport sector was highly professional and accurate. He expressed his hope that the idea would be adopted by the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport and the League of Arab States to begin collaboration in that regard, and added that the Union was prepared to contribute to the initiative.

38. The representative of the State of Palestine said that political circumstances were affecting his country's endeavours to achieve development. The Palestinian Government lacked the necessary resources and the State of Palestine was suffering from instability because of pressures exercised by Israel. The representative of Jordan said that it was necessary to provide solutions to that issue, stressing the importance of pre-empting legislation to avoid a legislative vacuum.

39. In response, the representative of the secretariat said that the secretariat had taken note of representatives' comments, especially those on the need to ensure countries' readiness to adopt technologies; the importance of collaboration with Arab transport ministers, of avoiding legislative vacuums and of setting priorities for public spending; on behaviours and their relationship to governance and participation in the sector; on paying attention to human cadres when addressing the necessary requirements to adopt technologies; and on managing the reform of the sector.

**F. REGIONAL WORKSHOP: ROAD SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES
(Agenda item 9)**

40. ESCWA co-organized a regional workshop on road safety management in Arab countries with the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety, Mr. Jean Todt, and in collaboration with the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Europe. The workshop was held at the United Nations House in Beirut on 27 and 28 November 2018.

41. The workshop aimed to raise awareness of the importance of road safety among participants from various specialized government bodies and agencies; to increase knowledge needed to adopt comprehensive evidence-based approaches for improving road safety; to facilitate consensus between participants on practical recommendations; and to identify key elements of a regional workplan aimed at improving road safety management.

42. The workshop's sessions covered issues related to national road safety management systems; necessary strategies and workplans and success requirements; information systems on road safety; and the role of United Nations treaties and conventions. Participants discussed the necessary institutional reforms to improve road safety management in the Arab region, the status of national strategies on road safety and the way forward, and financing issues. The workshop concluded with a set of conclusions and recommendations.

43. Participants included two high-level officials from each member State, representing the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Discussions were moderated by high-level international experts from various institutions, such as the Economic Commission for Europe, ESCWA, the World Health Organization, the International Automobile Federation and the World Bank. Participants also included representatives of national and regional organizations and institutions concerned with transport and road safety, including the League of Arab States and the Arab Union of Land Transport, in addition to representatives of non-governmental organizations and academia.

G. DATE AND VENUE OF THE TWENTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE
ON TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS
(Agenda item 10)

44. The representative of the secretariat proposed holding the twentieth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics at the United Nations House in Beirut in late 2019. Participants supported the proposal.

H. OTHER MATTERS
(Agenda item 11)

45. Member States did not discuss any issues under this item. The representative of the secretariat said that ESCWA was preparing a report on trade and transport costs in Arab countries, which was divided into two parts. The first estimated trade costs in Arab countries, and the second estimated transport costs as a share of trade costs to assess the contribution of transport costs to trade costs, and to examine whether those costs posed challenges for Arab countries and whether they increased or reduced trade costs. He said that accurate and reliable data on transport costs was lacking, but that partial and disaggregated data on transporting a container, for example, from one country's port to another country's port could be used to carry out estimates. He invited member States to provide the secretariat with any figures and data that gave a more complete picture of transport costs, and that would enable the secretariat to provide reliable material and guidance to each country, based on a detailed country-specific table of all components and required cost data. The secretariat would send the table to member States in electronic format.

I. ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT
AND LOGISTICS AT ITS NINETEENTH SESSION
(Agenda item 12)

46. At its final meeting held on 28 November 2018, the Committee on Transport and Logistics adopted the recommendations made at its nineteenth session.

III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. DATE AND VENUE

47. The Committee on Transport and Logistics held its nineteenth session at the United Nations House in Beirut from 26 to 28 November 2018. The session was held over six meetings.

B. OPENING

48. The representative of Mauritania, in his capacity as Chair of the eighteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, made an opening statement in which he welcomed participants and stressed the importance of transport and logistics as drivers of development and of the role of ESCWA in strengthening international trade and regional and global integration and in achieving the SDGs. He said that ESCWA had undertaken follow up on the implementation ITSAS components, and that the secretariat had prepared studies on trade and transport costs in the Arab region, logistics performance, liberalizing land transport, and trends in the transport sector worldwide and in the Arab region. He also reviewed ESCWA training activities and advisory services provided to Iraq, Lebanon and Oman, and consultations on transport projects, vital connectivity corridors in the Arab region and road safety. He confirmed the importance of communication and collaboration between member States and the ESCWA secretariat.

49. The Acting Executive Secretary of ESCWA made a statement in which he welcomed participants and stressed the importance of continued interaction between member States and ESCWA with regard to its work in the field of transport and logistics, give that it was a key area for sustainable development with a growing role in international trade, in regional and global integration, and in achieving the SDGs. He indicated technological and economic developments currently witnessed worldwide, which could alter the transport and logistics landscape. He focused on the Arab region's key role in the international transport sector, given its geographic location, oil wealth and proximity to major shipping channels. He said that it was vital to keep pace with such developments, which were at the core of the region's strategic interests and provided major opportunities to expand economic activities. ESCWA was working tirelessly to monitor Arab States' efforts to develop the sector. He added that regional integration was vital to facing challenges and benefiting from opportunities.

C. ATTENDANCE

50. The nineteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics was attended by representatives of fifteen ESCWA member States, namely Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen. Algeria also participated as an observer, in addition to several regional organizations, experts and university students. The list of participants is set out in annex I to the present report.

D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

51. In accordance with rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), member States shall chair the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations. In conformity with the practice in this regard, Yemen chaired the nineteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, following Mauritania which chaired the eighteenth session from 20 December 2017 to 25 November 2018. The representatives of Mauritania and Jordan were appointed vice-chairs, and the representative of the United Arab Emirates was appointed rapporteur.

E. AGENDA

52. At its first meeting, the Committee on Transport and Logistics adopted the agenda of the nineteenth session, set forth in document E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/L.1. It also adopted the proposed organization of work as set out in document E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/L.2. The agenda was adopted as follows:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
4. Progress in the field of transport and logistics since the eighteenth session of the Committee:
 - (a) Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme of work, of technical cooperation activities and of recommendations made by the Committee;
 - (b) Action taken by member States (briefings by State representatives);
 - (c) Project on geographic information systems (GIS) for transport networks between Arab countries.
5. Assessing Arab economic integration: trade in services as a driver of growth and development.
6. Logistics performance in the Arab region.
7. Maritime transport in the Arab region: does liberalization matter?
8. Round-table discussion: The technological revolution and its impact on the future of the transport sector in the Arab region.
9. Regional workshop: Road safety management in the Arab countries.
10. Date and venue of the twentieth session of the Committee.
11. Other matters.
12. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport and Logistics at its nineteenth session.

F. DOCUMENTS

53. Annex II to the present report contains the list of documents submitted at the nineteenth session of the Committee on Transport and Logistics.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. ESCWA MEMBER STATES

Egypt

Mr. Sayed Mohammed Mohammed Metwally
Head of the Central Department for Roads
and Bridges
Ministry of Transport

Iraq

Mr. Hilal Qureshi
Executive Secretary
Iraqi National Commission for Transport
and Trade Facilitation in the ESCWA region
Ministry of Transport

Jordan

Mr. Anmar Fouad Al Khasawneh
Secretary-General
Ministry of Transport

Lebanon

Mr. Ali Al-Masri
Head of Maritime Trade Affairs Section
Department of Land Transport and Guardianship
Ministry of Public Works and Transport

Mr. Khalid Shmayt
Head of the Execution Department
Roads Directorate
Ministry of Public Works and Transport

Libya

Mr. Bashir Daou Barkata
Head of the Land Transport Authority
Ministry of Communications and Transport

Mr. Abdel Nasser Lafi
General Directorate of Traffic and Licensing
Ministry of the Interior

Mauritania

Mr. Mahab Sayidi
Director of Land Transport
Department of Transport
Ministry of Equipment and Transport

Morocco

Ms. Dounia Hussaini Sakli
Chief of Strategic Studies Department

Oman

Mr. Ahmad bin Sulayman al-Yarobi
Director of Land Transport
Ministry of Transport and Communications

State of Palestine

Mr. Ammar Yassin
Undersecretary
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Qatar

Mr. Hamad Issa Abdullah
Road Asset Manager
Road Transport Sector
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Mr. Nayef Mohamed bin Abdelrahman al-Thany
Acting Director of the Land Transport Licensing
Department
Department of Land Transport Licensing
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Ghassan Faiz Abdel Jawad
Director-General of International Cooperation
Director-General of Strategic Planning
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Ahmed Othman al-Otaibi
Roads Planning Engineer
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Walid Mosaid al-Dargham
Director-General of Surveys and Evaluation
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Mohamed IbnMasfar al-Abbud
Director-General of the Road Safety Department
Ministry of Transport

Saudi Arabia (continued)

Mr. Ibrahim Abdullah al-Mudayhim
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Public Transport Authority

Mr. Fahd Mubarak al-Qahtani
Civil Engineer
Public Transport Authority
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Muhammad Abdullah Samman
Maritime Inspector
Maritime Affairs
Public Transport Authority

Mr. Thamer Shakir Ali al-Nahas
Director of Transport in Mecca
Public Transport Authority

Sudan

Mr. Hamad Mohamed al-Sharif
Managing Director
General Directorate of Planning, Policy
and Research
Ministry of Transport and Urban Development
Focal point for the e-platform for an integrated
transport system in Arab countries

Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. Mayad Skaykir
Director of Planning and International Cooperation
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Geryes Jamil Bshara
Director of the Office for Follow-up
Ministry of Transport

Ms. Nabila Nabaa
Director of Planning and International Cooperation
Ministry of Transport

Tunisia

Mr. Wissam Qayde Mahjoub
Director-General of Multimodal Transport
and Logistics
Ministry of Transport

Yemen

Mr. Saleh Abdullah Ahmed al-Wali
Advisor to the Minister of Transport
Acting Head of the Land Transport Authority
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Mohammed Ghazi Yusuf
Director-General of the General Authority
for Land Transport
Land Transport

B. STATES NON-MEMBERS OF ESCWA

Algeria

Mr. Ahmad Nayet al-Hassani
Director of the National Centre for Prevention and Road Security
Ministry of the Interior

C. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

World Bank

Mr. Ziad al-Nakat
Senior Transport Expert
World Bank Group

Islamic Development Bank

Mr. Omar Mehyar
Project Manager
Department of Economic and Social Infrastructure
Riyadh

Arab Federation of Shipping

Mr. Mohamad Mustapha Itani
Secretary-General
Beirut

Mr. Hassan Mahla
Director-General of the Syrian General Authority
for Maritime Transport
Damascus

Union of Arab Chambers

Ms. Hoda Taher Kashfa
Director of the Union of Arab Chambers
Beirut

Ms. May Dimashqiya Serhal
Director of Economic Research
Beirut

Ms. Alya Noukari
Economic Researcher
Beirut

Arab Union for Merchants and Logistics

Mr. Nassir al-Mekdad
Assistant Secretary-General
Damascus

Arab Union of Land Transport

Mr. Mahmoud Hamad Al-Abdallat
Secretar-General
Amman

Mr. Malek Haddad
Union President

Mr. Carlos Salim al-Hashim
International Arbitrator
Deputy Chairman of the Council of the Arab
Union of Land Transport

International Road Transport Union

Mr. Rani Wehbe
First Counsellor
Middle East and North Africa
Geneva

D. GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

Presidency of the Council of Ministers

Mr. Ramzi Salama
Secretary of the National Council for Road Safety
Beirut

E. EXPERTS

Mr. Rami Semaan
Executive Director
TMS Consult

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Title	Item	Symbol
Information note		E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/INF.1
Provisional agenda and annotations	3	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/L.1
Organization of work	3	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/L.2
Progress in the field of transport and logistics since the eighteenth session of the Committee	4	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/3
Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme of work, of technical cooperation activities and of recommendations made by the Committee	4 (a)	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/3(Part I)
Project on geographic information systems (GIS) for transport networks between Arab countries	4 (c)	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/3(Part II)
Logistics performance in the Arab region	6	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/4
Maritime transport in the Arab region: does liberalization matter?	7	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/5
Round-table discussion: The technological revolution and its impact on the future of the transport sector in the Arab region	8	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/CRP.1
Regional workshop: Road safety management in the Arab countries	9	E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/CRP.2
List of documents		E/ESCWA/C.5/2018/INF.2