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CHL

CER Position

Revision of the Trans-European Transport Network

Report of the van Miert High-Level Group

The Community of European Railways welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the revision of the trans-European transport network and to respond to the report of the High-Level Group chaired by former Commissioner Karel van Miert.

This position paper contains CER's general comments to the van Miert report and to the ongoing revision of the TEN-T. Some member railways have specific comments on individual priority projects, which are given in the annex to this paper.

The report of the van Miert High-Level Group

CER generally welcomes the report of the High-Level Group on the trans-European transport network chaired by former Commissioner van Miert. CER finds the report an important contribution of high value to the ongoing revision of the trans-European transport network, and would like to state its clear support of most of the proposals put forward in the report.

Concerning the proposed priority projects CER would, however, like to underline that the choice of projects to be supported and their prioritisation should build on market analyses and well-documented assessments of the required and desirable development and consequences. We are disappointed to find that the report does not go very far in this direction. The lists of proposed priority projects should be reviewed on this background, while taking into account the specific comments from the railways on corridors and individual projects. CER and its members are willing to support and cooperate with Commission Services on this review.

While planning and deciding on the further development of the trans-European transport network, it should be kept in mind that overarching priority has to be given to maintaining the quality of the network. The railway network can only lay the foundation for a safe, efficient and environmentally friendly rail transport system, able to meet customers' and citizens' requirements, if it is appropriately maintained. When investing in new

infrastructure, financing plans including investment and charging mechanisms must take this aspect into account.

CER's members regard the European Rail Traffic Management System (ERTMS) as important on the European level as the Galileo System. ERTMS should be given status as priority project, and the necessary additional funding supplied without depleting the support for other projects. The costs of migration to ERTMS must be financially supported by the Community and Member States, when they are not balanced with new commercial benefits.

CER supports the report's proposal that the maximum threshold for support from the TEN-T budget line should be raised to 20% for projects of European interest. CER also agrees with the report that new or improved financing instruments, eg longer loans and raised thresholds for EIB contributions, could be very valuable, especially in the longer term. In general, the European Investment Bank could and should be requested by the Community to play an even more important role in providing the necessary finance. A European Fund is a possibility, which should be further investigated.

Corridor / axis related planning and management will bring added value to new infrastructure and to the utilisation of existing assets. Especially for a complex, interacting system like the rail transport mode, synergy effects and appropriate coordination of smaller projects can bring substantial benefits, with value-for-money often comparable to the important, large, stand-alone projects. In this context the railways are actively pursuing a corridor improvement strategy and clearly support the concept of sub-networks with specific priorities. A "dedicated rail freight network" will be realised in different ways in central and peripheral regions, balancing the available infrastructure and the different transport system requirements.

CER's major concern – in full agreement with the report – is the realisation of the trans-European transport network, finding the necessary means to transform the plans into reality. In general, projects without financing are not relevant. Member States will remain the main source of investment, but Community support plays a decisive role. The total economic envelope must be increased as also proposed by the report. The EU budget perspective must be worked out with this in mind, and care must be taken that Community support is used for projects of European relevance. The increased pressure on Member States' finances underlines the importance of cross-modal financing through charging revenues from other transport modes to supplement – or instead of – conventional public funding. To make it possible to meet fundamental transport policy objectives, this important instrument must be retained as a legitimate option for decision makers.

The Commission's proposals for revision of the TEN-T

The trans-European networks for energy, telecommunication and transport were conceived in the context of the Single Market and defined as basic Community policy concepts in the Maastricht Treaty's new Title XII on transport infrastructure. The basic objectives for action on the Community level are "within the framework of open and competitive markets to

promote the interconnection and interoperability of national networks ... and to link ... peripheral regions with the central regions of the Community". Because of their importance for economic development, mobility, and coherence and the associated internal and external economic and social benefits and costs, the TENs – and especially the transport TENs – have become areas of major concern in European Union policy.

The trans-European transport network (TEN-T) is defined and regulated through the "Guidelines Decision"¹. Community financial support to the TENs is regulated through the "Financial Regulation"². The European Commission tabled its proposals^{3 4} for revision of the TEN-T in October 2001 with later amendments from September 2002 and January 2003.

These proposals were mainly based on the Commission's White Paper⁵ from September 2001 on the Common Transport Policy, but did not yet take into account the necessary changes in connection with the EU Enlargement: The integration of the TEN-T in the EU Member States with the "Helsinki Corridors" and the "TINA Network" for the accession countries.

The tabled proposals have in general been supported by CER:

- Increase from 10% to 20% of the maximum Community project support in the case of cross-border rail bottlenecks and missing links in areas with natural barriers;
- Concentration of Community support on projects of European significance;
- Focus on supporting the continued development of the transport modes least harmful to health and environment, building on and enforcing strategic environmental assessments and socio-economic cost-benefit analyses;
- The available Community funding must be increased through the TEN budget line and other support instruments.

CER has given active support to the Commission's recent MIP ("multiannual indicative programme") instrument for financial support, targeted to "groups of coherent projects" emphasising rail and the alleviation of rail bottlenecks for both freight and passengers.

CER has also advocated the concept of a "declaration of common interest" to serve as an overall evaluation of entire TEN routes, generally involving the relevant parties from several Member States, to ensure the European added value of projects that encounter national funding difficulties and should be especially supported from the Community.

On the basis of the existing Commission proposals, the report of the van Miert High-Level Group, and the responses from the stakeholders, we are now with the highest interest expecting a revised proposal from the European Commission. CER is offering its continuing cooperation and support on this top priority issue.

¹ "Decision 1692/96 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network" as amended by Decision 1346/2001

² "Regulation 2236/95 laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of trans-European networks" as amended by Regulation 1655/99

³ COM(2002) 542: Modified proposal for a Decision amending the Guidelines Decision 1692/96

⁴ COM(2003) 38: Modified proposal for a Regulation amending the Financial Regulation 2236/95

⁵ COM(2002) 18: "European Transport Policy for 2010: Time to Decide"

Financing

Even though the original Commission proposals for revision of the TEN Guidelines by themselves do not bring new funding, European Union support often works as priming money, and can be a decisive factor in the investment decisions of the Member States. An appropriate prioritisation on the European level between projects is important to ensure best value for the available community support, but also to influence national planning. CER has consistently pointed out the need for better co-ordination between national investment plans; the TEN support mechanisms could be one of the tools to achieve this.

In closing, CER wants to underline how vital infrastructure investment is for rail. The rail mode cannot contribute significantly to sustainable development in Europe without the necessary railway infrastructure. The required increase in the volume of transport by rail and the necessity of further developing the quality and attractiveness of the rail offer, call for vital investments in railway infrastructure, within and outside the framework of the trans-European networks. In addition, the situation for the railways in the EU accession countries needs special consideration to ensure the necessary further development.

Annex

Specific comments on individual priority projects

CFL + SNCB/NMBS

“European Rail” : high speed line Brussel-Luxembourg-Strasbourg.

- The European dimension of this project is obvious.
- It makes the link between 2 capitals and 3 cities that certainly have an European character.
- It makes the link between Belgian high speed-lines (linked to the Dutch and German network) and the TGV-Est and thus between two important parts of the European high speed network.
- It is part of the important axle between the Northsea and Italy (via France and Switzerland).
- The project is sustained by not only Belgium and Luxembourg but also by France and Nederland.
- Last but not least, it will obviously contribute to the competitiveness of rail to road transport, and thus to one of the main objectives of the European transport policy (sustainable mobility).

CP

Dehors du cadre ‘grande vitesse’, CP soutien que le PP8 – Liaison multimodale Portugal/Espagne /Reste de l’Europe maintient pleine actualité et permettra resoudre presque tous les goulots d’étranglement du trafic ferroviaire (fret et voyageurs) de l’arc atlantique La Coruña-Lisbonne-Sines-Faro et aussi bien la liaison Lisbonne-Valladolid-Irun.

CP défend aussi qu’il faut compléter l’arc atlantique le prolongeant jusqu’à Seville, avec la reconstruction du tronçon Ayamonte-Huelva et la traversée du Guadiana. Ceci dépasse le cadre national mais peut concourir à l’accroissement du trafic multimodale (ferroviaire-maritime) entre les ports espagnols et les portugais. Le trafic actuel déjà identifié monte à 350 000 ton/an (minerais, gas-oil, essence, pâte à papier et clinquer) et pour qui la liaison actuel par chemin de fer n'est pas compétitif. Au delà de ce trafic, il faut tenir compte du trafic potentiel provenant du pôle chimique de Huelva et aussi bien de l'effect que le Port de Sines aura sur les ports du sudouest d'Espagne, trafic qui en ce moment n'est pas possible quantifier

En matière de grande vitesse, CP croit qu’il serait souhaitable d’établir une liaison international (de Portugal vers Madrid) soumise à deux critères : temps de voyage compétitif (environ 3 heures); et création d’un trafic potentiel de l’orde de 3 millions voyageurs/an.

DB

DB wants to point out the importance of the axis from the major northern seaports – Berlin – Warsaw, which should be represented among the priority projects.

PKP

1. Project No. 7 (list 1): High Speed Railway Line, South – West

Logical extension of former priority Essen project No 3 (List 0 now).

Opinion:

Important for a complement of existing European High-Speed Railway Line network, but against one of the main purpose of HLG works: integration rail infrastructure in existing EU with the new Member States joining the EU next year.

Suggestions:

Extension the project's scope on Poland and Czech Republic, according to finished UIC's project: "Passenger Traffic Study 2010/2020 – Extension of the study area by Poland and Czech Republic" (Working Group European High – Speed Junction Network East – West).

2. Project No. 8 (list 1): Mixed Railway Line Gdańsk-Warszawa- Brno/Zilina

Improvement of both passengers and freight transport services by upgrading existing lines.

Opinion:

Important project scheduled in the National Development Plan and as a part of the Corridor VI identified at the Crete and Helsinki pan-European Conferences.

Suggestions:

All possible support to the project.

3. Project No. 3 (list 2): Dedicated Freight Railway Line Gdańsk – Bydgoszcz – Katowice – Zwardoń.

The modernization of this rail line and it's dedication to freight trains will allow Poland to remain one of the European countries with the highest share of rail freight on a key north-south axis.

Opinion:

Important project scheduled in the National Development Plan and as a part of the Corridor VI identified at the Crete and Helsinki pan-European Conferences.

Suggestions:

All possible support to the project.

SNCF

- La réalisation du réseau transeuropéen de fret ferroviaire est impérative pour que ce mode puisse tenir la place que l'Union en attend dans les années à venir et qui est décrit dans le livre blanc de septembre 2001 sur les transports à l'horizon 2010. Il y a donc lieu de prévoir d'inscrire dans le RTE-T les opérations nécessaires à la mise en œuvre des corridors fret. Or aujourd'hui la CCFE considère qu'il existe goulet d'étranglement majeur au niveau de la région bâloise qui est un carrefour naturel entre plusieurs flux importants de transport en Europe. Ce goulet sera

encore plus important lorsque les percées alpines engagées par la Suisse seront achevées. Il est prioritaire que l'Union européenne soutienne, en étroite liaison avec la Confédération suisse, un aménagement ferroviaire spécifique permettant un écoulement fluide des grands courants de trafic traversant cette région.

- L'arc méditerranéen Barcelone–Gênes est particulièrement important pour l'acheminement du trafic tant voyageurs que Fret entre la péninsule ibérique d'une part et le nord de l'Italie et la partie sud-est de l'Europe. Cet arc est relativement sous-équipé eu égard au trafic potentiel. En Italie des aménagements sont actuellement en cours pour doubler la voie entre Gênes et Vintimille. En France la forte densité urbaine de la Côte d'Azur fait que l'essentiel de l'infrastructure à double voie est utilisé pour le transport de voyageurs aussi bien régional qu'à grande distance. La création d'une ligne nouvelle entre la vallée du Rhône et la Côte d'Azur et son éventuel prolongement en Italie recèle un fort potentiel de développement face à la concurrence routière et aérienne. Elle devrait permettre de dégager des capacités pour le fret.
- Le projet de ligne nouvelle au sud de Paris entre la LGV Sud-ouest et les autres LGV françaises (Sud-est, Nord et la prochaine LGV Est actuellement en construction) comblerait le maillon manquant permettant de relier par voie nouvelle les régions de l'Ouest de la France et la péninsule ibérique d'une part avec les pays européens voisins (Belgique, Pays-Bas, Luxembourg, Allemagne,...). Il devrait faciliter le contournement de Paris par des convois fret en dégageant de la capacité sur le réseau classique et évitant que le goulet d'étranglement actuel ne s'accroisse.
- La prochaine ouverture vers l'Est de l'Europe va rendre à terme nécessaire des aménagements permettant de relier les Etats-membres actuels avec les futurs Etats-membres. La CCFE estime que de ce point de vue il serait judicieux d'ajouter à la liste un ensemble de projets permettant de constituer un axe important dédié au trafic fret reliant les grands ports de la façade atlantique et de la mer du Nord aux régions de Berlin et Varsovie.
- Dans le même ordre d'idée la constitution d'un grand axe Nord-Sud à l'est de l'Europe reliant la région de Varsovie, la Silésie, Vienne et la mer Adriatique devrait faire partie des grands projets à réaliser à plus long terme.

SZ

The Slovenian Railways cannot be satisfied with the part dealing with connection of EU to the western Balkans (paragraph 6.5.2). Within the report only motorways and the Danube are specifically listed. There is no word about the necessity to develop the railways in this area: The south-east direction Salzburg - Ljubljana - Zagreb - Beograd - Skopje - Thessaloniki (pan European Corridor X) is important and integration into the EU planning would be the first attempt for equivalent treatment of the rail projects in this region.
