



Inaugural Meeting of the Steering Committee for the development of the Core Transport Network of the MoU

Minutes of Meeting

April 26th 27th 2005, Tirana Republic of Albania

Objectives of meeting

- Holding the inaugural meeting of the Core Network Steering Committee in accordance with MoU item 9.
- Electing a chairman and deputy chairman
- Agree on the operation of Secretariat SEETO

Present:

Members (Voting)

- **Izet M Bajrambasic** Assistant Minister, Ministry of Communications and Transport Bosnia and Herzegovina Subsequently elected **Chairman**
- **Eduard Prodani** Secretary General, Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications Albania, Subsequently elected **Deputy Chairman**
- **Mr Edgar Thielmann**, EC DGTREN, **Co Chairman**,
- **Mate Jurisic**, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development, Croatia
- **Gezim Pula**, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport & Telecommunications, UNMIK/Kosovo
- **Svetlana Gligorovska**, Head of Department for International Investments and Integration, Ministry of Transport & Communications, Macedonia
- **Angelina Zivkovic**, Advisor to Minister, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Transport, Montenegro
- **Miodrag Jovic**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Capital Investments, Serbia

Deputy Members (Non Voting)

- **Nikola Sego**, Secretary Minister, Ministry of Communications and Transport, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Jozef Zuallaert**, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Transport & Telecommunications, UNMIK/Kosovo
- **Melaim Ademi**, State Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Macedonia
- **Amna Redzepagic**, Advisor for European Integration, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Transport
- **Gordana Lazarevic**, Assistant Minister, Ministry of International Economic Relations, Serbia
- **Mr Graeme Preston**, EC DG TREN Deputy Co Chairman

SEETO Manager and Advisor to the Steering Committee (non voting)

- **Douglas Rasbash**, SEETO Manager, Advisor to the Steering Committee, **Secretary**

Apologies for absence from

Davor Cilic Assistant Minister, Ministry of European Integration, Croatia



1. **Introduction:** (Acting Chairman, Mr E Thielmann)

- Expressed pleasure that the MoU has moved into a concrete phase.
- Explained the relationship between High Level Process and work of the Steering Committee. Noted that objectives for proposed International Transport Axis and those of Pan TEN and Core network were different.
- Confirmed that each were equally important and inter-dependent, that the Regional Core Network was essential as it is connected with the proposed Axis.

2. **Election of Chairman and Deputy Chairman**

- The Acting Chairman called for nominations for the positions of Chairman and Deputy Chairman.
- Mr Izet M Bajrambasic, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Communications and Transport Bosnia Herzegovina was elected unopposed as **Chairman**.
- Mr Eduard Prodani, Secretary General, Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications Albania, was elected unopposed as **Deputy Chairman**.
- The Chairman and Deputy Chairman accepted the positions
- The Chairman thanked the Members, promised to do his best for the development of the Core Regional Network and wished success to the SC.

3. **Acceptance of Steering Committee Agenda**

- The Draft Agenda was accepted without comment

4. **Constitution and Modus Operandi of the Steering Committee**

The members referred to supporting document item 1, Proposed Draft Constitution. The related discussions:

- The name of the SC was asserted
- Membership, that each signatory to the MoU has one voting member, making 8 in total; also there are 8 non-voting deputy members
- Authority – that members should have delegated authority was reaffirmed.
- Term of office shall be 2 years desirably, although members acknowledged that their destiny was not always in their hands
- That the working language should be English. The Member from Croatia asserted that the Croatian language shall be used if it was decided that national languages prevailed
- There was agreement that the SEETO General Secretary shall be the Secretary to the Steering Committee.
- The decision making Quorum requires representation of all signatories. It was also acknowledged that should any member fail to attend for an urgent and unforeseen reason that the SC would remain in quorate, that the non-attending member would be sent minutes within 2 weeks and would have 2 weeks to object to any decision made.
- All members accepted that SC attendance expenses are to be financed by the signatory, including travel and accommodation. It is noted that the Member from Montenegro observed that delegate attendance expenses for the ISG and HLG were paid by the EC. The EC noted that this was not the case for Corridor Steering Groups and that this activity fell into that category.



- The Secretary noted that minutes of meeting shall be made available 2 weeks after the meeting.

Members modified the proposed draft constitution to a mutually acceptable form. (It is to be noted that the evolving draft constitution was projected for all members to see the changes being made). There being no acceptations or reservations the Constitution may be considered as final without vote.

- The agreed Steering Committee constitution is annex A

5. Establishment of the Secretariat.

- The Chairman and Co-chairman determined that the priority for the remainder of meeting was the establishment of the modus operandi for its Secretariat SEETO.
- Various items of supporting documentation had been prepared by the Secretariat and distributed to the members immediately prior to the meeting.

SEETO Agreement

- Referred to supporting document item 12
- The SEETO manager advised that it will be necessary to legalise SEETO and proposed that the draft protocol item 12 is used as the most appropriate instrument to establishing and financing a Secretariat.
- The Committee determined that an agreement was necessary.
- The Committee determined that the instrument of the agreement shall be called an agreement.
- Conceptual issues to be addressed when drafting the agreement shall include the jurisdiction.
- Members agreed to send written comments on the Agreement to the Secretariat by 15th May 2005. The Secretariat to prepare a consolidate text with cooperation of EC if needed.
- The members undertook to comment on the consolidated version within 2 weeks of receipt.
- The Secretariat will prepare a final version for ratification at the next Steering Committee meeting.
- Members agreed that the agreement would be sufficient to justify government commitment and budget.

Financing SEETO

- Referred to item 10
- The EC Co-Chairman advised that there is no EC financing beyond the contract, i.e. 31st December 2007.
- The Co-chairman confirmed that beyond that date SEETO will need to be financed by its Members.
- The issue of supporting National Coordination was raised. It was observed that Governments will be required to supply and resource the National Coordination.
- It was noted that the Government of Serbia is providing the office and other resources for the SEETO
- The basis of the budget was not discussed
- Members agreed to the principle of funding its Secretariat
- Acknowledging the lead time for establishing new budget lines, Members understood the reasoning behind initiating funding in 2006
- Some members also acknowledged that the amount of the contribution estimated did not appear problematic.



- Members reserved the right to discuss the budget at the next session.

Legalising SEETO

- Noted that a prerequisite to funding SEETO will be its legalisation.
- The member from Serbia confirmed that essential steps to legalise Secretariat in Serbia are advanced and that it will provide an acceptable legal basis for Member Governments to transfer funds as well as employ personnel, etc.

Budget allocation

- Referred to item 11
- The basis for budget allocation between members was discussed in general.
- Options discussed included allocation according to per capita GDP and allocation according to population
- The member from Croatia observed that because the allocation according to per capita GDP was much higher than based on population, it would not be acceptable to Croatia
- The Chairman maintained that GDP was the normal basis.
- The discussion became general, no conclusion was reached.
- A decision on the basis for allocation of the SEETO Budget is expected at the next meeting

Timing of first contribution

- The Member from Serbia advised that for a 2006 budget line to be secured, the latest date for so doing would be September 2005.
- Most agreed that it would be possible to secure a budget line for 2006

Language

- It was agreed that the language of the MoU, English, will be the *de facto* working language of the Steering Committee, the Secretariat and working documents.

Objectives and Mission Statement

Referred to item 3

Agreement was reached as follows:

- that the wider objective will be ***to promote cooperation in the development of regional transport.***
- to the specific objectives proposed should be added...
- ***To provide a platform for efficient use of funds and know-how provided by public and private sources.***
- The proposed mission Statement was determined to be ***Improving and modernising the core transport network of South East Europe for social and economic development.***
- The finally agreed Mission and Objectives is attached as annex B



Scope of Work

Referred to item 13

- The scope of work proposed was accepted with the following changes
- Amend heading to Scope of Work ... related to the development of the Core Network
- Add: promotion of projects and general reform in the sector
- Include 'regional' in various places
- Amend Monitoring... 'of Core Network'.
- Replace harmonise with advise
- Delete entirely international problem solving
- Amend catalysing investment to cover both 'public and private'
- Add: publicity of all aspects of regional cooperation

General comments are noted as:

- The member from Croatia expressed that care was needed when prioritising projects to avoid interference with national planning.
- The Chairman emphasised the importance of helping to catalyse private investment

The amended scope of work item is attached as annex C.

SEETO Logo

Referred to item 4

- The SC required that the map in logo to be eliminated
- The Co-Chairman suggested that the logo should reflect the MoU and that perhaps a bridge would be an acceptable symbol
- The secretary was to prepare a brief for a logo design competition. This should be approved by the Chairman.

Recruitment

Referred to items 6 & 7

- Secretary reported that all positions have been advertised publicly since March in all countries and promoted through NCs and SCs since February but despite best efforts, there have been few applicants from outside Serbia.
- The member from Montenegro questioned if the jobs had been advertised in Montenegro – the Secretary advised that they had been advertised in Politika. The member advised that it was not the most appropriate newspaper.
- The Secretary indicated that the Secretariat could be fully staffed by Serbians -This was not acceptable to the members, that he was aware of the need to ensure that all posts were advertised throughout the region and the need for transparency in the selection procedure, hence its prominence on the agenda.
- The NCs and SCs were asked by the Secretary to try to identify again staff.
- The SC was advised by the Secretary that interviews will take place in Belgrade in the second week in May.
- The post of Secretary General was considered to be the most important. It was noted that more applicants are needed, members agreed to try harder to identify candidates.

The process of recruitment was discussed briefly.



- Members accepted the proposal made by the Secretary that technical positions will be selected by the EU TA team only.
- Recognising the importance of ensuring objectivity and transparency for the selection of the top position, members agreed that the post of Secretary General should be interviewed by Chairman, EC and the Secretary.

National Coordinator

Referred to items 8 & 9

- It was stressed by the Delegate from Kosovo that the position of National Coordinator was vital, possibly as important as that of the permanent positions of the Secretariat.
- Generally members noted that although NCs had been nominated and that they had started to work, it was clear that support and resources are needed at National Level for the role to be effectively performed.
- In a presentation prior to the SC meeting, members were advised that the solution found in Albania was to include in the scope of work of an ongoing TA activity, to support the NC and that they should determine if the concept could be replicated.
- The scope of work of the NCs was submitted to SC as item 9
- The issue 'how to strengthen the role of NCs' will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The Secretary also advised that the matter would be raised with the EC Contract Manager at a meeting 29th April in Brussels.

6 Planning

Referred to item 17

Multi annual plan

- The need for preparation of a multi-annual plan as described in the MoU was re-endorsed by all members.
- The EC confirmed that it will be used to assist IFIs and should ensure more rationale decision making by members' governments.
- Doubts were expressed by the Member for Croatia that such a regional level plan may undermine the national plan – that had already been approved by parliament- and that was not acceptable.

Methodology

- The Secretary referred members to item 17 and reminded members that the consultants contract demanded the preparation of a plan, progress needed to be made;
- It was clear that the SC would make positive steps, recognising a role for regional planning for the Transport Sector.
- Members understood that the process and methodology will evolve over time, but that it could become a positive tool.

Comments

- Comments on the proposed planning method are to be sent to the Secretariat by 15th May before the planning process is finally approved.



7. Information

Preamble

- The relevant item 18 was not discussed due to lack of time and was postponed until the next meeting.
- A point arose under the SEETO scope of work item 4 which has been transferred to this item for agenda continuity and follow up.

Coordination between Agencies in GIS

- Referring to the proposed UNECE system, the member from Serbia pointed out that providing data for GIS was time expensive and time consuming and that it would be better if there was only one system. The member from Serbia also advised that the UNECE system would cost €10,000 per year.
- The EC Co-Chairman undertook to contact the UN to ensure that UNECE system being proposed is compatible with EC DGTREN to avoid duplication of effort and resources.

8. Annual Meeting of Ministers (AMM)

- The SC agreed that AMM should take place in the Autumn, preferably November
- The Members from Macedonia offered Macedonia as the location for the AMM
- The SC accepted the offer.
- Understanding the need to provide early advice, Members from Macedonia undertook to confirm the date and location

9. Next Meeting

Appreciating that the agenda was not completed particularly with respect to the SEETO Agreement, members agreed to meet in Bosnia, in June 3rd week. Date, location and time to be fixed by the Chairman

10. Closure

- Noted that the members from Macedonia left the meeting at 12.30 for the airport
- Meeting Closed at 13.00 with thanks to Government of Albania for their hospitality and good organisation.

Minutes Approved

Chairman

.....Date.....

Annexes:

A – Steering Committee Constitution and Modus Operandi

B – SEETO Objectives and Mission Statement

C – SEETO Scope of Work

Minutes Circulated to:

- Members and Deputy Members of SC
- EC Task Manager
- Joint Venture

First draft on May 4, 2005; Second Draft May 6, 2005