

Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Expert Group (1)
constituted by the Coordination Council of the International “North-South”
Transport Corridor
on “Commercial and Operational matters”
1-3, December, 2003, Astrakhan, Russian Federation

The Third Meeting of the Expert Group on “Commercial and Operational matters” in accordance with the Statute of the Coordination Council of the “International North-South Transport Corridor” (INSTC) was held in the city of Astrakhan, Russian Federation from 1-3, December, 2003.

The list of delegates of the Participating countries is annexed

1. Statements by the Participating States (Parties) on the progress made in the operationalization of the INSTC

The Parties exchanged information on the progress made in the operationalization of the INSTC. It was felt that there is a need to expedite the work within the framework of the Agreement on INSTC and the respective national action plan on the matter.

2. Implementation of the Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Expert Group

The Expert Group reviewed the implementation of the Recommendations of its Second Meeting held at Tehran (Iran) from 26-28, April, 2003.

- a) It was felt that table contained in paragraph 2 (a) of the Minutes of the First Meeting (held at Mumbai from 17-18, December, 2002) should be updated and revised to depict the present position. The data relating to new ports added to the Corridor vide paragraph 3 of the Minutes of the Second Meeting (held at Tehran from 26-28, April, 2003) should be suitably incorporated in the said table. The respective States will send the relevant data to the Depository State (Iran) who will compile the information and present it before the next Meeting of the Coordination Council.
- b) It was recommended that all the Parties falling under the INSTC will employ Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) for cargo related information.
- c) The desirability of the Small Study Group making an on the spot study of the various bottlenecks on the INSTC was reiterated (paragraph 12 of the Minutes of the Second Meeting of the Expert Group may be referred to in this regard). It was decided that a two-member team from each Party (~~including~~ at least one member from the private trade) should study the route by traveling along the route and will complete the task assigned to them vide paragraph 12 of the Minutes of the Second Meeting held at Tehran. The

Group shall submit its report by the 31.01.2004. The traveling and living expenses in this regard will be borne by the Participants.

3. Port and other dues of the Participating States to the Agreement on the INSTC.

The Expert Group declared the readiness to submit the information in writing on the port dues and free of charge cargo storage period at the storehouses and warehouses, located in the sea-trade ports of the Caspian Sea with the cost substantiations.

4. Demonstration run of container trains (with the participants of ferryboats on the Caspian sea) to display the advantages of the INSTC over the traditional route and to identify the weak points of the Corridor.

The group recommended the test run of a demonstration train from Europe along with the Russian railways with destination to port of Olya (in the Russian Federation), further the containers moving to Bandar Abbas in the Persian Gulf (Iran) and then to Mumbai (India) in 2004. It was decided to set up an "ad-hoc task force" consisting of the representatives of the Member countries for this purpose. It was felt that a point to point tariff for various destinations along the INSTC is desirable.

5. Development of international road transport on the INSTC and related issues (viz.: fuel cost, toll tax, etc.).

The group recommended the desirability of developing auto-transport within the framework of the INSTC. Such a road transport regime should be based on the principle of equal treatment (viz.: fuel cost, toll tax, etc.).

6. Support and development of liner shipping in the Caspian sea. Creation of favorable conditions for liner vessels in the ports of Iran / Russia in the Caspian sea.

The Iranian party requested for equal treatment to liner ships flying Iranian flag in all the ports of Astrakhan region vis-à-vis Russian liners. The Russian party explained that the existing laws in the Russian Federation require the registration of the shipping liners in the Russian Federation for this purpose. It was decided that this matter may be taken up under the aegis of the Russian-Iranian Inter Governmental Commission.

7. Transportation of transit and foreign trade cargoes along the inland water routes of Russia within the framework of INSTC.

The Russian party presented the information on the condition of inland water routes of the Russian Federation within the framework of INSTC. It was decided that the Russian Side will make a presentation on the integration of Inland water transport with the INSTC as per intergovernmental agreement, in the next meeting of the Coordination Council planned in the first quarter of 2004.

8. Agreement between Russia and Kazakhstan for joint construction of a bridge over the frontier river Kigach on the Atyrau-Astrakhan road.

Delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan emphasized the need for early finalization of the Agreement between Russia and Kazakhstan for joint construction of a bridge over the frontier river Kigach on the Atyrau-Astrakhan road.

The delegation of the Russian Federation noted that the said Agreement will promote further development of the INSTC and will provide a shorter route for the cargo flow from Kazakhstan and Central Asia to Russia, countries of Europe and Northern Caucasus.

The Expert Group decided to make the above mentioned recommendations to the Coordination Council.

Signed on 3rd December, 2003 at Astrakhan, Russian Federation in four originals in English, each being equally authentic.

(Delegation of
India)

Mr. Susheel
Kumar

(Delegation of
Iran)

Mr. Golamreza
Sasani

(Delegation of
Kazakhstan)

Mr. Murat
Turkestanov

(Delegation of
Russia)

Mr. Vyacheslav
Parfenov

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
of the Third Meeting of the Expert Group (1) of the Coordination
Council
of the International “North-South” Transport Corridor
on Commercial and Operational matters
1-3, December, 2003, Astrakhan

The delegation of the Republic of India

1. Mr Susheel Kumar – Joint Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, Republic of India
2. Mr Sudhir S. Rangnekar – Director, Shipping Corporation of India
3. Mr Prasanta Kumar Mahapatra – Director, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Republic of India

The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran

1. Mr Sasani Golamreza – General Director on tariffs and transit, Head of the Documentation-Customs Group
2. Mr Seyed Nabi Seidpur – General Director of the ports of the provinces of Mazandaran and Golestan
3. Mr Ahmad Partu Azam – Director on transit of the Iranian-Indian shipping company
4. Mr Hamid Amini – Representative of the Association of shipping companies and accompanying services
5. Mr Mohammad Khamid Kamal – Managing Director and Deputy Chairman of “Khazar Shipping Co.”

The delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan

1. Mr Murat Turkestanov – Deputy Head of the Department of Exploitation and Development of the Committee of Automobile roads and Construction of the infrastructure complex of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The delegation of the Russian Federation

- ~~1.~~ Mr Vyacheslav Parfenov – Deputy Head of the International Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Transport of Russia (head of the group)

2. Mr Sergey Terskov – Vice-Governor of the Astrakhan region – Head of the industry, transport, communication, science and technologies Department of the Astrakhan region
3. Mr Alexey Kozlov – Head of Natural Monopoly Department of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation
4. Mr Andrey Nikolov – Deputy General Director of the Closed Joint-Stock Company “Stim”
5. Andrey Trubitsin – Head of the Division of the Organization of International Transportations of the Automobile Transport Department of the Ministry of Transport of Russia
6. Mr Arkady Kurshin – Representative of ASMAP
7. Mr Alexander Melnikov – General Director of “Vagna” company in Astrakhan
8. Mr Vyacheslav Petrenko – Deputy Head of the Centre of Branded Transport Service
9. Ms Elena Ivanova – Leading Specialist of the Division of the International Relations Department of the JSC “Russian Railways”
10. Mr Batyr Dzhamalutdinov – Head of the Commerce Division of the Makhachkala sea-trade port
11. Mr Vladimir Mozes – Manager of the International Transport Corporation
12. Mr Gennady Kharin - Head of the Federal State Unitary Enterprise “Morinraschet”
13. Mr Andrey Chernyshev – Head of the International Transportations Division of “Rosrechflot” of the Ministry of Transport of Russia
14. Mr Valery Pokusaev – Deputy of the Managing Director of the Association of car-builders
15. Ms Larisa Martyanova – 1st category Specialist of the International Cooperation Department of Russia