



EWTC Association Forum in Odessa, 27-28 May, 2011

THIS YEAR, the conference of the East-West Transport Corridor (EWTC) Association took place in the Ukrainian port of Odessa on 27-28 May 2011 under the title: "The role of the transport corridor East-West extending economic cooperation between regions of the Southern Baltic's and the Black Sea".

THIS ASSOCIATION seeks to improve the competitiveness of the East-West transport corridor linking the Southern Baltic Sea region and the Asian and European countries beyond it. The Association includes as its members eleven states (Belarus, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Mongolia, Russian Federation, Sweden, Ukraine and Belgium) and also the European Intermodal Association (EIA).

THIS IS THE SECOND in a row regional forum (after the one in Karlshamne) aimed at encouraging freight generators and transporters to take advantage of the new opportunities for economic cooperation along the EWTC corridor, establishing direct contacts between them, strengthening unity among its members and elaborating the Association's action programme.

THE FORUM brought together nearly 90 participants, among them the representatives of the largest freight carriers, shippers, logistics companies and associations, as well as consignees, freight producing companies from Belarus, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, Ukraine, Turkey), including also the representatives of the ministries of transport and foreign affairs and customs authorities from Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus and other countries and the employees of the EU and US diplomatic missions in Ukraine.

FORUM PARTICIPANTS were greeted by President of the EWTC Association dr. Algirdas Šakalys, Vice Minister of Transport and

Communications of the Republic of Lithuania Arūnas Štaras, Deputy Minister of Transport cooperation agreement. Moldova Valeriu Ciubuc, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kaliningrad region (Russian Federation) Roman Skoryj, Deputy Governor of the Odessa region Liudmila Varavva (who read to forum participants the greeting of the Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine Borys Kolesnikov), EU Delegation to Ukraine representative Jūrate Juodsnukytė and the Director General of the Customs Department of the Republic of Lithuania Antanas Šipavičius.

30 PARTICIPANTS, who spoke at the forum, discussed broadly and in detail the potential of the EWTC corridor's Black Sea route, its current status and positive developments of the organization of the carriage of goods as well as obstacles to the efficient operation. The Association has set itself as its primary task to reach high levels of competitiveness of the intermodal carriage corridor as well as the shuttle train "Viking" running on this route, particularly in the areas of speed, punctuality, freight safety, client information and attractive rates. The forum has become a prominent step in the coordination of customs activities of the states across the EWTC passage. In particular, the Ukrainian and Belarusian customs chiefs agreed to make a wider use of the internationally recognized experience of the Lithuanian Customs along the EWTC corridor. Equally important was considerations to conclude agreement between the EWTC Association and the TRASECA transport project, linking countries in the Black Sea

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Final session (moderators: I. Liptuga, A. Šakalys, A. Šipavičius, B. Gustafson)

area, on common efforts in extending a high quality transport artery to Turkey, Caucasus and Central Asia.

AT THE SAME TIME, forum participants were unanimous in their view that this goal represented only the first stage of activities. The potential of the Association allows for a greater influence on the cooperation of the states linked by the EWTC corridor, both among their businesses and among their people. The forum also discussed and revised the Association's action plan.

OF PARTICULAR INTEREST to forum participants were direct business meetings (B-2-B) held on the second day of the event, which resulted in important bilateral agreements.

Members of the Association and guests took part in technical visits to the ports of Odessa and Illichivsk where one of the two branches of the EWTC corridor reaches the Black Sea and where the route of the shuttle train "Viking" comes.

THE FORUM was organized by the East-West Transport Corridor Association secretariat and its members: Administration of Blekinge County (Sweden), the Ukrainian company "PLASKE" JSC and the Lithuanian Railways. This year's upcoming regional forum is scheduled in China (October 2011).

CONFERENCE "BERLIN-BRANDENBURG AS A HUB FOR EAST-WEST-TRANSPORTATION"

ON 20/21 JUNE EWTCA PRESIDENT WAS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN CONFERENCE "BERLIN - BRANDENBURG AS A HUB FOR EAST-WEST TRANSPORTATION"(IN POSTDAM), WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY OVER 100 PARTICIPANTS FROM 6 COUNTRIES.

ONE OF THE MOST interesting presentations at the conference was made by dr. Stefan Rommerkirchen from Switzerland. He submitted a long-term population dynamics in different continents of the estimates (until 2050), drawing attention to the rapid population in Africa (not Asia), growth and the associated risks. He also presented (research-based) estimates of GDP, exports, imports, and transportation needs (run up to 2025) of the EU economic area, as well as separately for the EU15 (old Member States) and the EU12 (new EU countries).



André Tonn international panel discussion with: Dr. Algirdas Sakalys (Lithuania), Prof. Dr. Oleg Dunaev (Russia), Rüdiger Hage (Germany), Sergei Atroshchanka (Belarus).

DR. ALGIRDAS ŠAKALYS presented a new developments in the East-west Transport Corridor, including information about shuttle train Viking and regular train Klaipeda-Minsk - Moscow-Karaganda-Urumqi (China).

HIGH LEVEL ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION AT EIA

ON 22ND JUNE 2011 (BRUSSELS), A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION WAS JOINTLY ORGANIZED BY ASSOCIATION OF EAST WEST TRANSPORT CORRIDOR (EWTCA) & EUROPEAN INTERMODAL ASSOCIATION (EIA) ON TWO MAJOR CURRENT TOPICS: THE KEY PRIORITIES OF THE NEW EC WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORT AND THE REALIZATION OF A GREEN CORRIDOR CONCEPT THROUGH THE FORMATION OF INTERMODAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS, LINKING EUROPE WITH THIRD COUNTRIES.

A **BROAD SPECTRUM OF** both public and private stakeholders was represented, as participants came from private companies, regional administrations, national ministries, European Parliament and European Commission, including Mr. FITCH, Deputy Head of Cabinet of Commissioner KALLAS. His presentation of the 2011 White Paper was followed by many remarks on the document and by a lively dialogue between participants on the integration of transport modes.

AFTERWARDS, the discussion focused on the TEN-T policy review, in particular on core network multimodal corridors as pilots of green corridors. Valuable methodological clarifications were given on how the Commission identified core networks, primary and secondary nodes (for example ports, airports, cities, conurbations) as well as the different kind of links between them. Mr. Klaus EBELING, EIA Honorary Secretary General, said a clearer separation of passengers and freight rail networks was needed. Eventually, he was enthusiastic about the idea of mutualizing infrastructures and insisted a well-identified one-stop service provider must be accountable for it.

CONCRETE MEASURES WERE PRESENTED about the European added value achieved by combining green corridors approach with cooperation along the established intermodal transport corridors, such as the East West Transport Corridor. Cooperation beyond EU borders was also mentioned as an opportunity that can benefit the private sector, as the Ukrainian company Plaske showed in its business plan. The pilot shuttle train VIKING, operating between Baltic and Black Sea ports, was an illuminative example.

FINALLY, the first success stories in the development of East - West Transport corridor demonstrated how the extension of the European Transport Policy towards neighbouring regions could benefit from use of the innovative instruments such as the East-West Transport Corridor Association.

CONTACTS:

ALGIRDAS ŠAKALYS, PRESIDENT OF THE EWTC ASSOCIATION
ALBERTAS ARŪNA, EWTCA SECRETARY
LAIMA MILIAUSKAITĖ, LAURYNAS ZENEVIČIUS (SECRETARIAT)

EWTC ASSOCIATION SECRETARIAT
PLYTINĖS ST. 27, LT-10105 VILNIUS, LITHUANIA
PHONE: (+370 5) 274 4075,
FAX: (+370 5) 237 0555,
E-MAIL: SECRETARIAT@EWTCASSOCIATION.NET

WWW.EWTC2.EU, WWW.EWTCASSOCIATION.NET