

Protocol no 17
Steering Committee of
the Barents Euro-Arctic Transport Area
Date: April 23, 2008
Place: Murmansk, Russian Federation

Members present: Tuija Maanoja, Ministry of Transport and Communications in Finland, Martti Miettinen, Secretary of BEATA Steering Committee. Ministry of Transport and Communications, Finland;

Kjell Rosanoff, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Norway;

Magnus Axelsson, Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications in Sweden;

Mikhail Maslov ,Elena Kushnirenko, Lubov Smirnova Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation,

Other participants: Bo-Erik Ekblom, Norrbotten County Administration, Alexander Zaboev, Head of the Division of the Scientific Centre of Complex Transport Problem, Marten Edberg Transportation Senior Officer Region Vasterbotten, Alexander Ignatiev International Secretary, Krister Palo Swedish Road Adm/EU-coordinator, Andrey Getman Adviser to Head of the Nenets Autonomous District Administration, Anatoly Kolodin, Head of the Division of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Economic Development of the Republic Kareliya

§1 Opening of the Meeting

Mr Maslov opened the meeting.

The meeting agenda (Appendix 1) was adopted.

§2 Minutes of the 17th Meeting of the Steering Committee (Protocol no 13)

The minutes of the thirteenth meeting of the Steering Committee in Helsinki,30-31 October, 2007, were approved (Appendix 2).

§3 General context of the future BEATA cooperation

At the meeting the current situation and problems of the development of the transport system of the Euro-Arctic Barents region on the whole and of certain regions/provinces within the CBER region, were discussed. The representatives of the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Norway, the Kingdom of Sweden and the Republic of Finland informed the members of the Steering Committee about the results of the implementation of transport development national programs.

The representatives of the Russian Federation informed the participants of the Steering Committee about the completion of the preparation of a new draft Federal Target Programme (FTP) «Development of the Transport System of the Russian Federation (years 2010-2015)», as well as its submission for consideration by the Government of the Russian Federation. In the mentioned draft great significance is given to the development of the transport system in the region. For the period until

2015 the Russian federation provides for a federal budget funding, as well as funding from other sources for the development of the motorways «Kola» and «Holmogori», road system in the Republic of Komi, modernization and development of maritime transport and inland water transport objects, as well as civil aviation airports.

The members of the Steering Committee of the Barents Euro-Arctic Pan-European Transport Area (BEATA) were informed about the elaborated Railway Transport Development Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2030 and about the projects on mainline railroads in the Russian part of the CBER region included in this strategy, particularly, on the development and modernization of the line Saint-Petersburg – Petrozavodsk – Murmansk, access lines to Murmansk Commercial Seaport, the organization of a fast traffic connecting Saint-Petersburg and Helsinki, as well as realization of the project «Belkomur», which creates a direct access of Euro-Asian corridor «Transsib» to Barents Euro-Arctic region (a longer-term project).

The representatives of the BEATA Steering Committee were informed about the beginning of elaboration of the Transport Strategy of Russia for the period until 2030, which should determine the strategic transport policy of the country for the long-run period, inclusive of the CBER region.

The representative of the Kingdom of Norway informed the participants about his country's policy in transport system development, volumes of funds allocated, the modernization of the European motorway E-10 (the Lofoten Islands - continental Norway), which permitted to carry over part of cargo and passenger traffic from sea ferries to motor transport, as well as the renewal of air traffic between Kirkenes and Murmansk.

The representative of Finland Republic informed about the efforts made for the development of infrastructure of border-crossing points, improvement of their operation and measures to reduce waits of motor transport at the Russian-Finnish border. Particularly she dwelt upon the railroad transport issues, welcomed the opening of the Ledmozero-Kochkoma line for international traffic and proposed to intensify efforts on the building of a new Sala-Kandalaksha line, which should considerably promote regional connections between Finland and Russia in the West-East direction. According to the representative of Finland, the policy pursued by the European Union on the promotion of competition and the liberalization of access to the railroad transportation market plays the key role for the growth of railroad transport competitiveness and the increased contribution of the railway transport to regional development. She also mentioned the important role, which the «Northern Dimension» Partnership plays for the development of logistics and freight traffic in the BEATA region.

The representative of the Kingdom of Sweden introduced the Transport Infrastructure Development Plan for years 2010-2020 which is being elaborated by the Government and in which great consideration is given not to new construction, but to maintenance and improvement of the quality of the existing infrastructure. He informed about the conversion of Swedish railroads to the pan-European signaling and communication system, development of railroad line Happaranda-Narvik. Also

he noted, that it is very important not to duplicate the work carried out by the BEATA Steering Committee and that within the «Northern Dimension» Partnership.

§4. On the work of the Barents Council Secretariat

Alexander Ignatiev, Head of the Barents Council Secretariat, informed the participants about its work. He informed about the objectives and tasks of the Council, its structure and current activities. In particular, Internet-sites www.barents.info and www.beac.st, are established and supported. They provide for the implementation of the information strategy in the CBER region and accessibility of any CBER documents, including those on transport for officials and business representatives. All the Steering Committees and working groups were granted their own personal pages on the information Internet-site. The Barents Council Secretariat is situated in Kirkenes (Norway).

§5. About the program of work, rules and procedures of the Steering Committee

The participants of the meeting discussed issues on the development of drafts of a new program of work, and Rules and procedures of the BEATA Steering Committee. The representatives of the Russian Federation informed the participants that Russia, as country, which holds the chair, will finish the elaboration of this project and present it for discussion by the next 18-th meeting of the Steering Committee (October 2008).

§6. Realization of STBR project

The results of the implementation of the Project on Sustainable Transport in the Barents Region (STBR) and its second phase were considered. A significant progress was mentioned, in particular, with regard to maritime ports development, heavyweight road transportation and winter season transportation, regional aviation and cooperation in the sphere of air transport services marketing, development of railroad communications. The participants were informed about the successful creation of databases, organization of the multinational cooperation network within the Project in the region, as well as about the accomplishment of recommendations of the Project at the national level.

Prospects and possibilities of realization of the STBR Project in the 3rd phase (years 2008-2013) with budget estimated at 3 million Euro were considered. The objective of the 3rd phase should be the creation of a single Euro-Arctic Barents region transport system development, realization of concrete high-priority projects, harmonization of the regulatory and legal base of the states, extended participation of concrete regions in the Project. In 2008 the funding application of the STBR-3 Project should be initiated.

§7 Next Meeting and recommendations, concerning additional participants

The next BEATA Steering Committee meeting will be held on October 14-15, 2008. The place will be announced later.

It was recommended to invite the representatives of the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport of the European Commission (DG-TREN) to the next meeting of the Steering Committee with a view to get informed on the position of the EU concerning the Euro-Arctic Barents region transport system development, as well as on the EU prospective transport development policy.