The GTMO 5+5 holds its 24th meeting of experts in Lisbon

During the 24th Meeting of the GTMO 5+5 Group of Experts

The group of experts is made up of the experts from the GTMO 5+5 countries, i.e. the five Maghreb countries and five countries in Southern Europe, of which CETMO has been the Technical Secretariat since 1997. The group of experts began discussing the topics to be included in the work programme of the Mauritania presidency.

Events: February - April 2018

6 and 7 February 2018
Mission to Algeria to gather information on the situation of transport infrastructure and services in the country.

20 February 2018
80th session of the Inland Transport Committee, Geneva.

26, 27 and 28 February 2018
Mission to Morocco to gather information on the situation of transport infrastructure and services in the country.

8 March 2018
Visit to France to gather information on its interest in the GTMO 5+5.

15 March 2018
Visit to Madrid to gather information on Spain’s interest in the GTMO 5+5.

19 March 2018
Visit to Portugal to gather information on its interest in the GTMO 5+5.

20 March 2018
Visit to Italy to gather information on its interest in the GTMO 5+5.

21 March 2018

23 March 2018
Visit to Malta to gather information on its interest in the GTMO 5+5.

17 April 2018
Seminar on public-private partnerships (PPPs) and other funding methods within the context of the GTMO 5+5 work programme, Lisbon.

18 April 2018
24th Meeting of the GTMO 5+5 Group of Experts, Lisbon.

23 April 2018
Meeting on Corridors for Vital Connectivity in the Arab Region organized by ESCWA and the IDB, Beirut.
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On 18 April 2018, the GTMO 5+5 held the 24th meeting of experts. On this occasion, the meeting was held in Lisbon at the headquarters of the Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes (IMT, I.P.) with the support of the Portuguese Ministry of Planeamento e das infraestruturas.

Representatives from all the member countries attended the meeting (Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia), as well as representatives from the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (SUIM), the Spanish company Sociedad Española de Estudios para la Comunicación Fija a través del Estrecho de Gibraltar, S.A. (SECEGSA), the Moroccan company Société Nationale d’Études du Detroit de Gibraltar (SNED) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA).

With a view to the upcoming Ministerial Conference of the GTMO 5+5 in Nouakchott (Mauritania) in November 2018, the meeting focused on identifying content for the work programme of the Mauritanian presidency of the GTMO 5+5. The Nouakchott conference will also provide a chance for the Portuguese officials to publicly hand over the presidency to Mauritania.

One of the most important points was the experts’ interest in sessions on exchanging experiences and good practices in the area of transport. These sessions contribute to training and help create affinities between members. One such session was held the day before the group of experts meeting. The Portuguese presidency of the GTMO 5+5 organized a session on public-private partnerships and other funding models. The first presentations by the session’s top-level speakers focused on the general theoretical framework of public-private funding, and emphasized the need for a clear legal and regulatory framework.

Participants at the session on PPPs and other funding models held the day before the meeting of the group of experts

Presentations on real practical examples in the area of motorways and rail services raised participants’ awareness about the complexities of managing PPP funding systems. It was concluded that a well-formed team within the public administration and reliable preliminary studies were highly relevant features for the success of this kind of funding system.

Different kinds of activities were identified for the next work programme. As the Technical Secretariat of the GTMO 5+5, CETMO will continue with its activities as representative by strengthening regional and international ties. It will also take action to provide more detailed information on the different transport systems in the region. This will be done by studying and analysing the GTMO 5+5 multimodal network, especially the Trans-Maghreb Multimodal Corridor, and making use of CETMO’s own databases and analysis tools.

The new work plan will also include group activities aimed at improving the design, management and operations of transport services. As these activities will be decided on in coming months, the country experts at the meeting focused on areas such as road safety, logistics, short sea shipping and port management.

Finally, the experts were in favour of identifying and promoting activities of variable geometry, i.e. activities in...
which only some GTMO 5+5 members would participate, provided the activity is regional in scope. The countries will act as the main promoters of these activities and will receive support for organization and implementation from the Technical Secretariat.

The meeting made progress in the preparation of a realistic and advantageous work programme for the Mauritanian presidency with the involvement of all the GTMO 5+5 members.

The ITC is the highest policy-making body of the UNECE in the field of transport. In the course of the last 70 years, the ITC has provided a pan-European intergovernmental forum, where UNECE member countries come together to forge tools for economic cooperation, and negotiate and adopt international legal instruments on inland transport.

Óscar Oliver, the General Director of CETMO, participated in the session on intermodality to promote the Trans-Maghreb Multimodal Corridor as the natural continuation of Europe’s Mediterranean Corridor. He stressed the importance of this corridor for future development of the Maghreb.

According to 2015 data, 40% of Maghreb exports went to European countries in the Western Mediterranean, from which the Maghreb received 28% of its imports. These figures highlight the importance of preserving and maintaining ties between the countries on the opposite shores of the Mediterranean. CETMO therefore promotes completion of the Trans-Maghreb Multimodal Corridor, a set of infrastructure works (roads, railways, ports, airports and intermodal logistics platforms) connecting the main cities and hubs of activity in the Maghreb from Mauritania to Libya. Completion of the corridor will help increase the efficiency of the regional transport system by increasing its intermodality.
Round of visits completed to GTMO 5+5 countries

On 23 March 2018, with the meeting with the Maltese Ministry for Transport and Infrastructure, CETMO, in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the Group of Transport Ministers for the Western Mediterranean (GTMO 5+5), completed the round of visits to all the countries in the group (except for Libya).

CETMO had informed the group members that it would make a round of visits to all the Maghreb and European countries in the group after the 23rd meeting of the GTMO 5+5 group of experts. The main goal was to acquire an understanding of each country’s current interests and concerns in terms of regional cooperation in transport with the aim of preparing a work programme for the Mauritanian presidency that matches the group’s interests.

The visits to the Maghreb countries also provided an opportunity to collect more specific information on the workings of each country’s transport system in terms of regulation, management and operations. During these visits, the CETMO delegation met with the government officials responsible for transport and infrastructure of each country. The delegation members also met with representatives from the organizations responsible for managing transport infrastructure and services.

The first country visited in the round of visits was Mauritania on 12 December 2017. Also discussed during the visit were matters relating to the Ministerial Conference to be held in Nouakchott in November 2018, when the GTMO 5+5 presidency will be transferred from Portugal to Mauritania.

These visits made it possible to identify the country’s interest in organizing activities on topics such as road safety, short sea shipping, port management, and the design and management of logistics platforms. The experts expressed an interest in an approach based on activities that drew on the group’s own know-how such as training and the exchange of good practices and experiences.
In conclusion, increased knowledge in the region with new ideas and approaches to ensure that cooperation as peers will continue in the Western Mediterranean transport sector.

Discussion during the session focused on the opportunities for connection in terms of transport and energy with the aim of identifying priority actions and joint initiatives to promote regional connectivity.

CETMO participates in conference in Beirut on transport corridors in Arab region

On 23 April 2018, a conference was held at the headquarters of the UN in Beirut on the main corridors for connectivity in the Arab region. The session “Corridors for Vital Connectivity in the Arab Region” was organized by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB).

The session included the participation of top-level representatives from some countries in the region, as well as representatives from a number of the region’s most relevant institutions. In attendance were representatives from ESCWA, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the IDB, the World Bank, the GTMO 5+5, the Arab League, the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, the Arab Maghreb Union, and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

Discussion during the session focused on the opportunities for connection in terms of transport and energy with the aim of identifying priority actions and joint initiatives to promote regional connectivity.

CETMO participated in the meeting in its capacity as an expert on transport in the Maghreb and as the Technical Secretariat of the GTMO 5+5. The CETMO representative spoke about the importance of the transport network in the Maghreb region, particularly the Trans-Maghreb Multimodal Corridor. The presentation helped provide information on the current situation of the network and its chances of connecting other neighbouring networks as a link between the transport networks of Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

More specifically, the speakers presented the real situation of the different energy and transport networks in Arab countries, and highlighted the benefits of connection. They described the lessons learned from successful cases that could help overcome the obstacles currently blocking the way to improved connectivity. They also mentioned the benefits of geographic information systems for analysing connectivity and network integration, as well as the role played by corridors as promoters of peace and stability.

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At institutional level, the meeting helped strengthen relations between the CEPE, the ESCWA, the IDB and CETMO, given the possibility of starting up projects of mutual interest in the future.
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