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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
No. prev. doc.:	12792/21
Subject:	Coordinated position of the Union and its Member States in the Working Party on Rail Transport of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as regards the 'Unified Railway Law' initiative - Approval

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 20 October 2021 the Commission services submitted to the Council a non-paper in which they outlined a proposed line to take for the above item on the agenda of the next meeting of the working party on rail transport of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
2. The objective of the UNECE 'Unified Railway Law' initiative is to develop an approach for the unification of rail transport law with the view to improving the efficiency and competitiveness of Euro-Asia rail freight transport services. Work started ten years ago, and the working group on rail transport, on 17 to 19 November 2021, will be called to take stock of the options developed at technical level and decide on the next steps.

II. WORK AT THE PREPARATORY BODY

3. The Working Party on Land Transport was introduced to the current state of discussion by a presentation of the Commission in its informal meeting on 18 October 2021.¹ The proposed line to take, which is aligned with the parallel discussion within the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF),² was presented in the informal meeting on 25 October 2021.³ Delegations taking the floor welcomed the comprehensive document and supported the line to take.

III. CONCLUSIONS

4. In light of the above, the Council is invited, subject to confirmation by the Permanent Representatives Committee, to approve the coordinated position of the European Union and its Member States as set out in the addendum to this note.
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¹ See WK 12350/2021.

² See Council Decision (EU) 2021/1744 of 28 September 2021, OJ L 351, 4.10.2021, p. 1.

³ See ST 12792/21.