



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/2
7 December 1987

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Administrative Committee for the
International Convention on the Harmonization
of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982
(First session, 19 and 20 November 1987)

**REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE HARMONIZATION
OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS, 1982
ON ITS FIRST SESSION**

1. The Administrative Committee held its first session at Geneva from 19 to 20 November 1987. The following representatives of the Contracting Parties attended: Austria; Belgium; Denmark; Finland; France; German Democratic Republic; Germany, Federal Republic of; Greece; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Portugal; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; United Kingdom; Yugoslavia; European Economic Community. Representatives of Czechoslovakia, the United States of America, the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the International Union of Railways (UIC) were represented as observers in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 2, of annex 7.
2. The Committee noted that the required quorum as stipulated in article 6 of annex 7 of the Convention had been attained.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/1) prepared by the secretariat adding to it the following items:

Agenda item 5: Necessity to make the Convention known to all interested and concerned parties;

Resolution No. 230 adopted by the Inland Transport Committee on Technical Assistance Measures for the Implementation of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods;

Declaration of the Group of Experts on Customs Questions affecting Transport concerning the conduct of participants in international trade in the framework of the Convention;

Technical assistance in this field to be offered by ECE in co-operation with UNCTAD;

National programmes in implementing the Convention;

Provisions for seminars in Implementing the Convention, wherever appropriate.

Agenda item 6: Activities of the European Economic Community (EEC) with regard to the Convention.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

4. In accordance with article 5 of annex 7, the Committee elected Mr. M. Vivod (Yugoslavia) as Chairman and Mr. P.-P. DE VAUCHER (France) as Vice-Chairman.

ATTENDANCE OF OBSERVERS

5. In accordance with annex 7, article 2, paragraph 1 of the Convention the Committee decided not to impose any restrictions on competent administrations of States which are not Contracting Parties or on representatives of international organizations to attend the sessions of the Administrative Committee as observers.

PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENTS OF THE CONVENTION

6. The Committee noted that no proposal for amendment of the Convention had been submitted for consideration by a Contracting Party to the Convention.

PROPOSALS OTHER THAN AMENDMENTS TO THE CONVENTION

(a) Problems encountered in the international transport of goods by rail

Documentation: TRANS/GE.30/R.214; TRANS/GE.30/59.

7. The representative of the UIC informed the Committee that his organization had undertaken a study on the problems encountered in the international transport of goods by rail. In accordance with the provisions of the convention and on the basis of this study the UIC proposed (i) to harmonize the list of goods which, in international traffic, are subject to special frontier formalities on importation and on transit; (ii) to eliminate checks on consignments in transit and (iii) to carry out inevitable checks at the most favourable location in a country. He further pointed out that, in view of its volume and importance for rail transport, foremost importance should be accorded to the reduction or even elimination of phytosanitary checks.

8. The Committee noted that the Group of Experts on Customs Questions affecting Transport had already considered these proposals made by the UIC and had underlined that the problems mentioned merited high attention and should be tackled by the Group of Experts concentrating, as a first step, on phytosanitary controls.

9. The Committee noted in particular that the Group of Experts would commence work with the participation of experts from member Governments and concerned international organizations on (i) the harmonization of the list of goods which, in international traffic, are subject to different national phytosanitary controls; (ii) the harmonization of the list of goods which, in transit, are subject to different national phytosanitary controls and (iii) the harmonization of the list of goods which do not have to be checked at border stations, but could be controlled, together with Customs formalities, at a location inside the country (TRANS/GE.30/59, paragraphs 38-43).

10. The Committee endorsed the recommendations made by the Group of Experts, particularly with regard to its emphasis on phytosanitary measures to be tackled on a priority basis. It requested Governments to delegate to the session of the Group of Experts, dealing with the above problems, the necessary experts in particular those in the field of phytosanitary controls.

11. As a basis for consideration by the Group of Experts the Committee invited the UIC to elaborate an updated list of goods subject to special frontier formalities in rail transport concentrating on phytosanitary control measures and to provide examples of problems arising for specific products from concrete control measures of particular countries. It further asked the UIC to indicate, if possible, at the forthcoming session of the Inland Transport Committee (1-5 February 1988) whether it was in a position to submit this study to the ECE secretariat by the middle of April 1988 which would enable the Group of Experts to devote some time of its next summer session to these problems.

12. The Committee also decided that problems in that field related to combined transport should be taken into account by the Group of Experts as well.

13. The Committee stressed that besides phytosanitary controls quality checks were of increasing importance, that they should not be confused with phytosanitary controls and that they should also be dealt with in due course.

(b) Publicity measures for the Convention

14. The Committee noted that a number of activities had already been launched to make the Convention known to concerned and interested parties. This included the publication of the text of the Convention by the ECE in four languages (ECE/TRANS/55), the adoption of resolution No. 230 by the Inland Transport Committee on technical assistance measures for the implementation of the Convention, and the Declaration of the Group of Experts concerning the conduct of participants in international trade in the framework of the Convention (TRANS/GE.30/R.212). In this context the Committee also took note of the activities initiated by the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) in familiarizing its members with the Convention.

15. The Committee asked the secretariat to inform the Group of Experts on Customs Questions affecting Transport of the new guidelines relating to the publication of ECE documents in order to find out what kind of publicity measures could be envisaged in the future. The secretariat was further requested to inform the other Regional Commissions of the United Nations about the Convention and on the implementation measures adopted.

16. The Committee noted that resolution No. 230 had been adopted by only a few countries and was informed that the European Economic Community (EEC) had launched an effort to adopt the resolution.

17. In order to inform transport operators about the provisions of the Convention, the Committee felt that it would be useful if short articles on its content and coverage would be published in specialized journals.

(c) Technical assistance relating to the Convention to be offered by ECE in co-operation with UNCTAD

18. The Committee noted that so far ECE has not been requested to provide technical assistance for the implementation of the Convention. Consequently, the Committee felt it to be premature to make any recommendation in this respect, but decided to keep this item on the agenda to consider any future request which may be made.

(d) National programmes in implementing the Convention

19. The representative of Yugoslavia informed the Committee that his Government had elaborated a national programme for the implementation of the Convention at the national level. This programme provided for the different national control authorities to request the necessary resources for carrying out control measures efficiently and included organizational measures and obligations of participants in international trade.

(e) Provisions for seminars in implementing the Convention, wherever appropriate

20. The representative of Yugoslavia informed the Committee that his Government had already convened a seminar to familiarize national authorities concerned with the provisions of the Convention.

21. The Committee considered whether seminars on the Convention at the international level should be organized and noted that the CCC in co-operation with the ECE had already organized a seminar in Barcelona (Spain) during which the objectives and provisions of the Convention were considered.

OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Activities of the European Economic Community (EEC) with regard to the Convention

22. The representative of the European Economic Community (EEC) informed the Committee that his organization was *inter alia* considering the possibility of elaborating an annex to the Convention concerning transport, the idea of which had already been discussed during the preparatory work for the Convention.

(b) Date of the next session

23. The Committee decided that its next session shall be convened in accordance with the provisions of article 4 of annex 7 of the Convention.

(c) Restriction on the distribution of documents

24. The Committee decided that no restriction should be placed on the distribution of documents for the current session.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

25. In accordance with article 8 of annex 7 of the Convention, the Committee adopted the report on its first session.
