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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Customs Questions

affecting Transport

(One-hundred-and-first-session, 19-21 June 2002,  
agenda item 5)

**DRAFT UNECE CONVENTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL  
CUSTOMS TRANSIT PROCEDURES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF  
GOODS BY RAIL**

**Draft resolution on the use of the SMGS consignment note  
as a Customs transit declaration**

**Note by the secretariat**

**BACKGROUND**

1. The Working Party, at its one-hundredth session, was informed about the results of the meeting of the informal Ad hoc expert group on Customs Rail Transit based on the SMGS consignment note (Geneva, 11 February 2002). The preliminary conclusions of the expert group indicated that there is a demand by Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement for a harmonization of Customs transit procedures governing rail transport. The report of the expert group is contained in document TRANS/WP.30/2002/12.

2. The expert group agreed, that in order to accelerate the harmonization of rail Customs transit procedures among Contracting Parties of the SMGS Agreement, a two-step approach could be pursued:

- (a) the preparation and adoption of a Resolution recommending Contracting Parties of the SMGS Agreement to adopt the SMGS consignment note as a Customs transit declaration;
- (b) continued work towards finalizing a Convention including all of the proposed facilitation measures similar to the procedures applicable to the CIM consignment note under the Common Transit system.

3. The Working Party, at its one-hundredth session, requested the secretariat, based on the preliminary conclusions of the expert group, to find a harmonized approach to Customs rail facilitation (TRANS/WP.30/200, para. 22).

4. In accordance with this request, the secretariat has, as a first step, prepared the draft Resolution provided below, taking account of the views expressed by the Contracting Parties of SMGS Agreement during the expert group meeting.

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**USE OF THE SMGS CONSIGNMENT NOTE AS A  
CUSTOMS TRANSIT DECLARATION**

**Draft Resolution**

**adopted on .....October 2002 by the  
UNECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport**

**The Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport,**

Concerned about the lack of harmonized pan-European Customs transit procedures for international rail transport,

Emphasizing the importance of the smooth and efficient functioning of Customs transit procedures in international rail transport where such do not exist,

Determined to facilitate the development of international trade and transport of goods, in particular between Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement,

Convinced that international rail transport will benefit from harmonized transit procedures, eliminating unnecessary delays due to repetitive Customs procedures,

Whilst awaiting the finalization of a Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage by Rail under cover of SMGS Consignment notes and further work towards a UNECE Convention governing rail Customs transit at the pan-European level, decides unanimously on the following short-term measures to be implemented as soon as possible by the competent authorities of Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement:

1. In order to facilitate international rail transport in the area of the SMGS Agreement, Contracting Parties may wish to simplify rail transit operations by using the SMGS consignment note as a Customs transit declaration;
2. Contracting Parties shall accept the SMGS consignment note as equivalent to a national Customs transit declaration and shall not require any other Customs transit declaration;
3. The SMGS consignment note shall have the same legal force as a national Customs transit declaration;
4. Contracting Parties should accept the SMGS consignment note in the language presented to them and should not require translation into other languages;
5. Save for the use of the SMGS consignment, consignments being moved in transit by rail through a Contracting Party to the SMGS Agreement shall otherwise fall under the relevant national Customs regulations;
6. Contracting Parties request the Committee of the Organisation for Cooperation between Railways (OSZhD) to provide all required assistance in the promotion of the SMGS consignment note as a Customs transit declaration in the Contracting Parties of the SMGS Agreement;
7. Contracting Parties of the SMGS Agreement intensify their endeavours to finalize the UNECE Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage by Rail under Cover of SMGS Consignment notes;

Requests the Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement to notify the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) by 31 January 2002, whether they accept the present resolution;

Requests the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to inform all Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement as well as the OSZhD about the acceptance of this resolution.

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