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Report of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport on its 136th session

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I. Attendance

1. The Working Party (WP.30) held its 136th session from 4–7 February 2014 in Geneva. The session was attended by representatives of the following countries: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Representatives of the European Union (EU) were also present. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), Eurasian Economic Commission, Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). The following non-governmental organizations were represented: the International Touring Alliance and the International Automobile Federation (AIT/FIA), the International Association of the Body and Trailer Building Industry (CLCCR) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/271

2. WP.30 adopted the provisional agenda, prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/271).

III. Opening statement

3. In her opening statement, Ms. Eva Molnar, Director, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Transport Division, mentioned the achievements of the Working Party in the area of border crossing facilitation, such as the adoption of a new Annex 9 on rail border crossing to the Harmonization Convention. At the same time, she stressed the urgent need to further strengthen the TIR Convention and its governance, transparency in implementation, risk and vulnerability mitigation and further introduction of modern technologies. She urged the delegations to speed up the process to computerize the TIR system. She also referred to the recently concluded World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (December 2013) and the potential role the Harmonization Convention could play as a building block for the implementation of the Agreement. To that end, it was vital to make WTO negotiators aware of the potential of the Convention. Finally, she informed the Committee that Mr. Konstantin Glukhenkiy, TIR Secretary and Secretary of WP.30 and the TIR Administrative Committee (AC.2) had taken a lateral move within the UNECE Transport Division. Mr. Miodrag Pesut, Chief Transport Facilitation and Economics Section, had been appointed TIR Secretary and Secretary to both WP.30 and AC.2. Mr. Serguei Kouzmine, who had recently joined the Transport Division further to the outcome of the UNECE 2005 Reform review, had been assigned the task of dealing with rail transport issues as well as the Harmonization Convention, including conducting sessions of its Administrative Committee (AC.3). The Working Party thanked Mr. Glukhenkiy for having dedicated many years to serve the various aforementioned bodies.

IV. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

4. In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure and established practice, the Working Party re-elected Mr. Oleksandr Fedorov (Ukraine) as Chair and Ms. Elisaveta Takova (Bulgaria) as Vice-Chair for its sessions in 2014.

V. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 3)

5. Ms. Molnar reported on recent developments with potential relevance to the work of the Working Party. In particular, she mentioned the recently concluded WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the important link that the Harmonization Convention may have for the future implementation thereof. Other issues of relevance were the initiative to develop a new International Convention to facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage carried by Rail, and the 10-year review of the Almaty Programme of Action. Both initiatives have close relevance to the work of the Working Party and are important efforts to further improve global border crossing facilitation.

6. Ms. Molnar also informed the Working Party about the forthcoming seventy-sixth session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) (Geneva, 25–27 February 2014) and its policy segment that will be devoted to innovations for sustainable inland transport and mobility. In this context she also pointed to the on-going preparation of the post-2015 agenda for the United Nations and the development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in which border crossing facilitation plays a particular role in fostering economic sustainability.

VI. Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 4)

A. European Union

7. The delegation of the European Union informed the Working Party about the adoption of Regulation (EU) No. 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 October 2013 laying down the Union Customs Code (UCC). The text of the UCC, which becomes applicable as of 1 May 2016, is available in all official EU languages.¹ The European Commission and its member States are in the process, with close involvement from the trade community, to prepare UCC's implementing provisions. The Working Party took note that further extensions of the Common Transit Convention are expected to take place in the course of 2015.

B. Economic Cooperation Organization

8. The Working Party welcomed information from ECO about its recent activities and, in particular, the reactivation of the TIR system in Afghanistan; this will be further enhanced by the ECO Project for establishing a Road Corridor between Kyrgyzstan–Tajikistan–Afghanistan–Iran (KTAI). The Working Party was also informed that Pakistan is in the final phases of acceding to the TIR Convention and that ECO has planned a number of capacity building activities to support this process, as it does in Afghanistan. WP.30 took note of the progress in implementing the TIR Pilot Project on the Islamabad – Tehran – Istanbul (ITI) road corridor, which would be launched by April 2014. WP.30 also took note of the activities of ECO to interconnect the landlocked countries of Central Asia and to

¹ Official Journal of the European Union, L 269/2013, 10 October 2013.

promote United Nations legal instruments in the areas of transport and transit among the ECO member States, such as Afghanistan.

C. EurAsEC Customs Union

9. The representative of the Eurasian Economic Commission informed the Working Party about finalizing the monitoring of fifteen agreements which form the legal framework for the Customs Union and the single economic territory in the field of customs regulation, as well as about the agreed ways to address unresolved issues. EurAsEC organized a number of events on improving the customs legislation of the Customs Union, trade facilitation, integration of national information systems and continued work on further improvement and facilitation of customs procedures, by simplifying the rules for the movement of goods, developing risk management systems, increasing security and minimizing the risk of violation of customs procedures, as well as developing a mechanism for authorized economic operators. These aim at ensuring supply chain security. The efforts of EurAsEC to establish a Customs Union will be further expanded by the admission of Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.

10. At the request of IRU, the representative of EurAsEc confirmed that, on 31 January 2014, a working meeting of its Council of Ministers had taken place at which, inter alia, the functioning of the TIR system in the Customs Union had been discussed. However, no decision had been taken.

D. Black Sea Economic Cooperation

11. The Working Party took note of Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 1, containing an overview of the recent activities of BSEC. The Working Party was informed that, at its twenty-ninth session (Yerevan, December 2013), the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of BSEC had decided on a fast track mechanism to launch a pilot project on the introduction of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC) in the BSEC region. The Council of Ministers had also agreed on conducting a study on the existing legal mechanisms in the field of the international carriage of passengers and goods in the BSEC region. The Working Party was also informed of efforts undertaken under the aegis of BSEC to draft a further annex to the Harmonization Convention, dealing with seaports and hinterland connections. The Working Party noted that the expanding activities of BSEC were a result of (1) increased institutional capacity; (2) fruitful cooperation with other international organizations, in particular UNECE and (3) further development of public-private partnerships with non-governmental organizations, such as IRU.

VII. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”) (agenda item 5)

A. Status of the Convention

12. The secretariat reported that no changes had occurred in the status of the Convention and recalled its intention to convene the next session of the Administrative Committee on Thursday 12 June 2014, in conjunction with the 137th session of the Working Party.

B. Annex 8 on road transport

13. The representative of Ukraine informed the Working Party about the current problems at the border crossings between his country and the Russian Federation, where long queues of waiting vehicles are being observed. The reasons for this situation were

unknown to his country. In reply, the representative of the Russian Federation informed the Working Party on the problems related to these queues.

1. International Vehicle Weight Certificate

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/3

14. WP.30 continued its discussions of the proposal by Ukraine to introduce a new box "Weight of empty vehicle" into the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC) (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/3). Various delegations repeated that they did not see the added value of the proposal, while others pointed out again that such box could speed up customs and other border formalities, thus facilitating international transport. After extensive discussions, the Working Party, welcoming the BSEC pilot project on the introduction of the IVWC, invited this organization to consider including the issue of weight of empty vehicle into the scope of the pilot and to report back to the Working Party after having evaluated the outcome. At the same time, the Working Party invited governments to conduct research on the definition and application of the weight of empty vehicles at national level and to report the results thereof at one of its future session. To that end, the Working Party decided that the item should remain on its agenda for information only.

2. Biennial survey of Annex 8

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/7

15. The Working Party was informed that the secretariat planned to start the next survey in the autumn of 2014, by means of a communication from the Executive Secretary of UNECE to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Contracting Parties and distributing a questionnaire to monitor the progress in implementing Annex 8 at the national level. The Working Party requested the secretariat to ensure that the contents of the questionnaire be, to the extent possible, similar to the previous surveys for the sake of due comparison of figures and information over the years without, however, requiring countries to repeat information provided in previous surveys.

3. X-ray scanning certificate

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/6

16. The Working Party continued discussing the proposals to introduce the so-called "International Vehicle/Container X-ray Scanning Certificate on the basis of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/6. The Working Party recalled that, at its previous session, various delegations had stated that there was no need for such a certificate (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/270, para. 13). At the same time, some Contracting Parties stressed the need for exchanging, by other means than a certificate, information between customs offices of adjacent countries on the results of X-ray scanning. Considering that Article 8 of the Convention already deals with the exchange of information in general and, in view of the fact that the specific exchange of X-ray scanning results between customs administrations is under discussion at World Customs Organization (WCO), the Working Party decided not to revert to this issue at its next session.

C. Annex 9 on rail border crossing

17. WP.30 was informed about the activities of UNECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2), the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) and the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) aimed at facilitating the implementation of Annex 9 at the national level. The Working Party noted the progress made by SC.2 towards distributing a questionnaire on the national application of Annex 9 which was prepared by the secretariat at the request of Contracting Parties (ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2013/6).

D. Border performance measurement and the Harmonization Convention

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/4

18. The Working Party considered different options for introducing performance indicators into the Harmonization Convention as a tool for monitoring its implementation and benchmarking (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/4). The delegation of the European Union underlined the benefits of benchmarking in the form of best practice, but preferred it as a non-binding recommendation. Some other delegations questioned the need of introducing this concept in the Harmonization Convention. The Working Party decided to transmit the issue to AC.3, planned for June 2014. The Working Party also requested the secretariat to provide information on the AC.3 deliberations on this question at its October 2014 session. The Working Party also considered the issue in light of the new World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation agreement and its possible relevance for the Harmonization Convention in this context.

VIII. International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage carried by Rail, of 10 January 1952 (agenda item 6)

19. The Working Party was informed that, further to a request by SC.2, the secretariat had prepared an official document (ECE/TRANS/2014/15) for the seventy-sixth session of ITC, providing a historical overview of the on-going discussions to draft a new convention on the facilitation of crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail, together with draft terms of reference for a new to be established Group of Experts to discuss the issues at stake and to develop proposals

IX. Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956) (agenda item 7)

20. The secretariat of the International Touring Alliance and the International Automobile Federation (AIT/FIA) informed the Working Party that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had submitted proposals to amend the Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private (1954) and Commercial (1956) Road Vehicles to the Secretary-General of the United Nations with the aim of introducing the Carnet de Passage en Douane (CPD) in combinations of other United Nations official languages, other than English and French.

21. The delegations of Azerbaijan and Belarus expressed an interest in receiving detailed information on the functioning of the Carnet de Passage en Douane (CPD) guarantee system. In the context of the discussions, the delegation of Belarus requested information about the relationship between the World Customs Organization (WCO) Istanbul Convention and the usage of the CPD.

22. The Working Party requested the secretariat to contact the AIT/FIA secretariat, inviting it to provide, at its next session, more information about the two Conventions which are administered by AIT/FIA. In addition, the Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare, for discussion at one of its future sessions, a document which would outline the legal interaction between the UNECE Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private (1954) Road Vehicles Convention and the Istanbul Convention of WCO.

X. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975) (agenda item 8)

A. Status of the Convention

23. The Working Party recalled that the proposals to amend Article 6.2 *bis* and Annex 9 of the Convention entered into force on 10 October 2013 for all Contracting Parties (C.N.433.2013.TREATIES-XI.A.16). The Working Party further took note that no further changes in the status of neither the Convention nor the number of Contracting Parties had taken place. Thus, the TIR Convention has, to date, 68 Contracting Parties (including the European Union) and is operational in 58 countries. More detailed information on these issues as well as on various Depositary Notifications s available on the TIR website.²

B. Revision of the Convention

1. Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process

Use of new technologies

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/8

24. The Working Party endorsed document (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/4), containing the report of the twenty-third session of the Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (GE.1) (20 and 21 November 2013, Brussels), at the kind invitation of the European Commission. The Working Party welcomed the publication of version 4.0 of the eTIR Reference Model and noted that, subject to some further amendments and additions, it would soon be submitted to WP.30 for consideration and, possibly, endorsement (at the June 2014 session). The Working Party noted that GE.1 is of the view that it is nearing completion of its mandate and had requested the secretariat to start preparing a document summarizing its achievement and recommendations. This document will be presented to the Working Party, together with the complete final version of the eTIR Reference Model, to facilitate the assessment of the outcome of the work of GE.1.

25. The Working Party also noted that GE.1 is preparing a document to clarify the roles and responsibilities of eTIR focal points and will soon submit it to the Working Party for consideration.

26. The Working Party also considered Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 3 prepared by the secretariat in which GE.1 requests guidance from the Working Party on the strategy it should follow regarding the concepts for submitting eTIR declarations along the itinerary of a TIR transport. The Working Party welcomed the presentation of the document and recalled that it requires official documents in all working languages in order to take decisions. It requested the secretariat to prepare an official document on the basis of the informal document, and present the issues at stake in a non-technical manner so as to allow WP.30 to provide strategic recommendations to GE.1. In the meantime, the Working Party decided that GE.1 should continue working according to its current mandate and guiding principles, as already approved.

27. WP.30 further considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/8 containing an analysis of various options providing a legal basis for the implementation of eTIR. Some delegations expressed their preference for the option of a protocol. Other countries prefer that all technical, conceptual and financial aspects are finalized before considering the legal

² www.unece.org/tir/tir-depositary_notification.html

aspects. The Working Party could not yet reach consensus on the legal option to pursue. It was decided to revert to this issue at its next session. At the same time, some delegations stressed the need to move forward with the legal aspects of computerization. The Working Party welcomed the offer from Ukraine to transmit a draft recommendation that would possibly provide some guidance towards computerization of the TIR system. At the same time, it requested the secretariat to prepare the text of a draft, which could enable the eTIR system to function. WP.30 requested the submission of both documents for consideration at its next session.

28. Furthermore, WP.30 took note of the progress made in the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project: “Strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to facilitate legitimate border crossing, regional cooperation and integration”. A first draft of the report on a gap-analysis for Georgia, prepared by a hired consultant, is expected to be submitted soon. Upon the completion of the gap analyses by all Regional Commissions, the first interregional Expert Group meeting would be organized to select pilot countries and further define the possible achievements with the available funds for each pilot country. The Working Party requested the secretariat to keep it informed of further developments in the project.

29. Finally, the Board noted that the fourth meeting of the eTIR pilot project between Italy and Turkey had taken place on 23 November 2013 in Brussels, in conjunction with the twenty-third session of GE.1. Both countries had further revised the text of the draft Terms of Reference for the project, which would soon be submitted for final to their hierarchies for signature. Parties had also decided that the project would be broken down into phases and that the first phase would be limited to data exchanges for TIR transports involving only their two countries, with only one customs office of departure and one customs office of destination.

2. Amendment proposals for the Convention: vehicles with sliding sheets

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/6/Rev.4

30. The Working Party continued its considerations of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/6/Rev.4, containing proposals to amend Annexes 2 and 7 of the Convention introducing a new design for TIR approved vehicles and containers. The Working Party took note of Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 2, transmitted by the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Belarus, containing comments to the aforementioned amendment proposals. The Working Party welcomed a presentation by the International Association of the Body and Trailer Building Industry (CLCCR) which addressed concerns raised by Belarus. It took note of Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 4, containing minor amendments by CLCCR to the proposals for amendments, aimed at meeting the concerns by Belarus. The delegation of Belarus proposed adding some of the descriptions, photographs and sketches to these amendments in order to meet the proposals contained in Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 2. In addition, Belarus was of the view that the amendments required a uniform use of terminology. The representative of Germany indicated that the proposals to amend Annexes 2 and 7 should be flexible enough to accommodate the introduction of new technologies in the future. The Working Party invited CLCCR, Belarus, Germany and the secretariat to agree on the exact content and terminology used in the amendment proposals, and to submit a revised version of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/6/Rev.4 for discussion at its next session.

3. Amendment proposal to the TIR Convention: Use of the TIR procedure in a Customs Union with a single customs territory or in a single country

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/9, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/3

31. The Working Party took note of documents ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/9 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/3 prepared by the secretariat, elaborating on possible ways to use the TIR procedure for transport operations within a Customs Union and within a single country, respectively. With regard to the latter, the Working Party was of the opinion that national transit procedures could be inspired by existing international transit systems such as, but not limited to, the TIR Convention or the Common Transit Convention. The Working Party agreed that this issue is outside the purview of the intergovernmental structures dealing with these international legal instruments and that interested Contracting Parties and/or other countries should seek the appropriate contractual and administrative arrangements within their national jurisdiction. The IRU informed WP.30 that it has recently obtained the agreement of the international insurers of the TIR system to provide financial coverage for such transport operations. The Working Party agreed to close this item and not revert to this issue at future sessions.

32. As concerns the proposals to amend Articles 2 and 48 of the Convention so as to clarify the meaning of the provisions relevant to Customs Unions and the use of the TIR procedure therein, the delegation of the Russian Federation was of the opinion that use of the TIR procedure within a single country or Customs Union is contrary to the provisions and scope of the TIR Convention. Due to lack of time, the Working Party decided to revert to this issue at its next session.

4. Amendment proposals to the Convention: Audit requirements for an authorized international organization

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/6

33. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party decided to consider this issue at its next session.

C. Application of the Convention

1. TIR-related electronic data interchange systems

34. The Working Party was informed by IRU about the functioning of the IRU SafeTIR system (Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 5). From 1 January to 31 December 2013, IRU had received 2,936,871 SafeTIR messages with an average transmission delay of 1.7 days. Ninety-one per cent of the messages had been transmitted in real-time (within 24 hours). The customs administrations of twenty countries transmitted data in real-time. In the same period, IRU had issued 14,161 reconciliation requests and had received replies to 10,356 (73 per cent) of them with an average delay of 68 days. In addition, a total number of 4,762,310 requests were made by Customs during the year 2013 to enquire about the status of TIR Carnets in the IRU Real-Time SafeTIR database. During the same period, 568,623 pre-declarations were lodged (free-of-charge, the price being included in the price of a TIR Carnet) to the customs authorities of 27 countries through the TIR-EPD (electronic pre-declaration) system. Over the year 2013, 14 per cent of all TIR Carnets were submitted through TIR-EPD.

2. Settlement of claims for payments

35. The Working Party noted the current situation with the settlement of claims for payment made by customs authorities against national guaranteeing associations, as reported by IRU (Informal document WP.30 (2014) No. 6). The Working Party was informed that, in 2013, IRU had received 1,171 pre-notifications, 656 notifications and 104

payment requests, out of which 88 cases were paid. Seventy-two cases ended without settlement of payment and 645 were still pending. The delegation of the Russian Federation regretted that the figures only referred to 2013 and not to previous years. In reply, the representative of IRU confirmed that over the last few years the number of claims in the Russian Federation had remained at a low level.

3. Increase in the number of loading and unloading places

36. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party decided to revert to this issue at its next session.

4. Application of the TIR Convention in the Russian Federation

37. The representative of the Federal Customs Service (FCS) of the Russian Federation informed the Working Party that FCS had pursued negotiations with the Association of International Road Carriers (ASMAP) and IRU to settle the payment of outstanding customs claims, but that, since the end of November 2013, due mainly to opposing positions, no further developments had taken place. FCS informed the Working Party about the preparations for a new agreement, covering effective measures to ensure the payment of customs duties and taxes of goods during transit. This agreement had been sent to ASMAP, which had made its objections of principle and had informed FCS of its impossibility to sign the agreement in its current form. FCS informed the Working Party about the fact that it considers it necessary to select a national guaranteeing association on the basis of competition.

38. The representative of FCS further informed the Working Party that, over the years 2011–2013, FCS had identified more than 6,000 cases – and had confiscated goods with a value of about 500 million Russian roubles related to infringements of customs law committed in the course of transports under cover of TIR Carnets. In his view, the considerable increase in cases of customs violations warrants a thorough review of various provisions of the TIR Convention in order to increase safety and security of the TIR system and to avoid that customs authorities increasingly have to resort to cumbersome and lengthy judicial procedures to ensure payment of outstanding customs duties and taxes. Such review should also include the requirement for IRU and national associations to conduct annual audits and to make the results thereof publicly available. Proposals for amendments are in a later stage of preparation and would soon be sent to the secretariat for transmission to the competent TIR bodies.

39. Various delegations regretted the fact that, today, the Russian Federation only accepts TIR Carnets at its customs offices of entry along the Finnish and Norwegian border, but not at other customs offices with neighbouring countries. In their view, it seemed more likely that the mentioned customs violations were due to flaws in other customs procedures than to weaknesses in the TIR system or infringements by authorized TIR Carnet holders.

40. While fully respecting any decision taken with regard to the implementation of the TIR Convention at the Russian national level, the Working Party re-iterated that competent national authorities have a responsibility to other Contracting Parties, in particular, as well as to the trade and transport community at large to provide timely and complete information about any measure they intend to take within the framework of the TIR Convention, including the termination of its application. The Working Party recalled its statement at its 135th session, urging all stakeholders in the Russian Federation and IRU to find solutions that would ensure an uninterrupted application of the TIR procedure in the Russian Federation (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/270 para. 27).

41. IRU informed the Working Part that, on 14 October 2013, the Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation had rendered a decision recognizing the FCS actions as illegal. He further made reference to a letter received from the General Prosecutor of the

Russian Federation which confirmed that the activities of the FCS in this specific matter are being investigated. IRU confirmed that it will make these documents available to WP.30.

42. IRU asked FCS to confirm whether it intends to reinstate, before 1 July 2014, the TIR procedure in all customs offices of entry into the Russian Federation. IRU also stressed the importance of receiving exact clarification on the FCS plans, as soon as possible, as the IRU competent bodies will discuss on 14 February 2014 whether the TIR guarantee coverage can be maintained on the territory of the Russian Federation as well as for Russian TIR carnet holders, taking into account the current violations of the TIR convention by FCS.

43. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party could not finalize its discussions on this issue, and invited delegations to continue discussions at the forthcoming session of the TIR Administrative Committee on 6 February 2014. Due to the lack of time, the representative of FCS stressed his readiness to provide replies to questions from the Working Party at the session of the Administrative Committee or at a later stage.

5. Other matters

44. The secretariat informed the Working Party that the tenth revised edition of the TIR Handbook was now available in hard copy as well as at the UNECE TIR website, in English, French and Russian. The other language versions would be updated in due course, subject to the availability of dedicated resources.

XI. Prevention of the abuse of Customs transit systems by smugglers (agenda item 9)

45. No information was reported under this agenda item.

XII. Programme of work and biennial evaluation (agenda item 10)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/2

46. The Working Party considered and endorsed documents ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/1 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2014/2 containing the draft programme of work of WP.30 for the years 2014-2018 as well as the programme of work and the parameters for its biennial evaluation for the 2014-2015 biennium and requested the secretariat to transmit them to ITC for endorsement at its February 2014 session.

XIII. Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Working Party (agenda item 11)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/10, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/5/Rev.2, E/ECE/1468, E/ECE/778/Rev.5

47. Pending discussions by ITC at its February 2014 session on the participation of non-ECE countries, Contracting Parties to ECE Conventions, in the activities of ITC and its subsidiary bodies, the Working Party decided to postpone its consideration of proposals by Iran (Islamic Republic of) for modifying the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) of WP.30 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/5/Rev.2) and revert to the issue at its next session.

XIV. Other business (agenda item 12)

A. Dates of the next sessions

48. The Working Party decided to hold its 137th session from 10–13 June 2014, in conjunction with the tenth session (12 June 2014) of the Administrative Committee of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982.

B. Restriction on the distribution of documents

49. The Working Party decided that there were no restrictions on the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

XV. Adoption of the report (agenda item 13)

50. In accordance with established practice, the Working Party adopted the report on its 136th session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.
