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Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR)

Fifteenth session

Geneva, 12 June 2017

Report of the Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport on its fifteenth session

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I. Attendance

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its fifteenth session in Geneva on 12 June 2017, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine).
2. Representatives of the following UNECE member States participated: Finland, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands Norway, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.
3. The representatives of a non-ECE member State also participated: Lebanon.
4. The European Union (EU) Euro-Med, Continental Automotive and Stoneridge Electronics participated as observers.

II. Adoption of the Agenda (agenda item 1)

5. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/36).

III. Programme of Work (agenda item 2)

A. Development of proposals for amending the AETR Agreement including Article 22bis

6. The secretariat informed the Group of Experts about the availability and distribution (to non-EU AETR Contracting Parties) of the Russian translation of EU Regulation 2016/799.
7. As a result, and as agreed at the last AETR EG session, the Russian Federation presented a number of issues which it believed make the EU Regulations 165/2014 and 2016/799 incompatible with the AETR Agreement (Informal document No. 22).
8. In this context, the experts continued to discuss how to amend Article 22, Article 22bis, Article 10 as well as Article 14 (to make regional economic integration organizations eligible to accede) based on ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2. The Group has asked the secretariat to prepare ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.1 which incorporates the Group's comments for the next session.
9. In view of the 16 October 2017 session, Contracting Parties are invited to provide written comments in relation to EU Regulations 165/2014 and 2016/799 to the secretariat as early as possible, but no later than one month before the meeting. The Russian Federation requested that the amendment proposal proponent of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2 (i.e. Slovakia) be present to participate in discussions.

B. Application of Regulation (EC) No. 561/2006 in the "AETR area"

10. The Group of Experts continued discussing the application of the Regulation 561/2006 given that the objective of amending the AETR Agreement in 2006 was to harmonize the two regimes for driving times and rest periods. The European Union provided a further update on the steps undertaken since the last session with respect to revising Regulation 561/2006. The European Union was invited to submit draft proposals which revise EU 561/2006 and 165/2014 to facilitate discussion about the relationship of these two regulations with the AETR Agreement at the next session under this agenda item.

Contracting Parties can submit in advance written questions about these draft proposals to the EU (should they wish to do so).

C. Memorandum of understanding between the UNECE and the European Commission Services which recognizes the Joint Research Centre as the authority responsible for Root and Interoperability Certification for non-EU AETR Contracting Parties

11. Experts were informed about the availability of the signed supplement to this memorandum (which extends its validity until 31 December 2018) on the UNECE website.

IV. Other business (agenda item 3)

12. The secretariat informed experts about the relevant decisions made at the most recent session of the Inland Transport Committee, including the extension of the Group's mandate until 30 June 2019. In particular, the secretariat referred to paragraphs 34 and 35 of ITC Informal document No. 11 of 2017.

13. The Group of Experts was informed about the interest of the Government of Lebanon – through the EU-funded EUROMED Transport Project – to seek amendment of Article 14 with a view to making the country eligible to accede to the AETR Agreement. The representative of Lebanon delivered a statement about the Government's intention to improve road transport and road safety in the country through application of the AETR Agreement. The statement is available as Informal document No. 23.

14. In the context of paragraph 45 of ITC Informal document No. 11 of 2017, the secretariat provided background information on the possible need to consider changing the name of the AETR Agreement by deleting the term "European" from the title. The Chair requested that the secretariat places this issue on the agenda of the upcoming SC.1 session in October.

15. The Group of Experts elected a new deputy chair – Vice Chair Mr. Jan Erik Bangsund from Norway - to replace Mr. Bob Oudshoorn of the Netherlands who retired.

16. The Group was briefed on the status quo regarding the translations of the AETR Road Map into French and Russian. The Russian Federation requested the secretariat to revise paragraph 47 of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/3 to make it clear that AETR rules are not applicable domestically.

17. Continental Automotive placed a remark concerning the type approval certificates issued by Turkey and sought feedback from the Group. The Chair invited Turkey to reassess the text adopted for the type approval certificates which it is issuing.

18. Continental Automotive was invited to make a presentation at the next session concerning digital tachograph products branded "VDO DTCO TR" which it sells especially in Turkey.

V. Date and place of next meeting (agenda item 4)

19. The next meeting is scheduled for 16 October 2017 in Palais des Nations in Geneva. The Group's session will be followed on 17-18 October 2017 by a session of the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1).

VI. Adoption of the Report (agenda item 5)

20. The Group of Experts adopted the report of this session.
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