Dear Sir/Madam,

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) have the pleasure to invite you to a training seminar concerning the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, of 1982, to be held in Moscow on 17 (afternoon) and 18 October 2006.

This joint UNECE-OSCE seminar is funded by the Belgian 2006 OSCE Chairmanship and is being organized in close cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Community organization (EurAsEC). The organization of this seminar stems from the UNECE reform, which has identified assistance and capacity building in the implementation of UNECE legal instruments in the field of transport as a new UNECE priority, and from the conclusions of the 14th OSCE Economic Forum on “Transportation in the OSCE area: Secure transportation networks and transport development to enhance regional economic co-operation and stability”.

As you may be aware, the “Harmonization Convention” establishes commonly agreed requirements for ensuring integrated border management (IBM), aiming at reducing border formalities as well as the number and duration of all types of border controls of goods. It applies to all goods being imported, exported or in transit. Forty-eight States and the European Community are Contracting Parties to this Convention.

The seminar aims at capacity building targeting a more effective implementation of the “Harmonization Convention” and will address, among others, issues such as the IBM concept, cross border cooperation measures, national perspectives and experience sharing.
The seminar is designed for government officials responsible for customs, transport and trade policies in the EurAsEC member countries and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries, including neighbouring countries with transit links through the EECCA region. It is envisaged to hold a similar seminar in mid-November 2006 aiming mostly at South Eastern European countries.

Participation will be free of charge; however, participants must make their own travel arrangements (including visas) and pay their travel and accommodation costs. In exceptional circumstances, financial assistance may be considered.

English and Russian will be the working languages and simultaneous interpretation in these languages will be provided. More detailed information on the location, registration and program will be forthcoming shortly.

This event is organized in conjunction with the high-level UNECE-EurAsEC Conference on Trade Facilitation on 16 October and a training seminar on Single Windows and Data Harmonization organized at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation in the morning of 17 October 2006. The preliminary program for these events can be found at www.unece.org/trade

Yours sincerely,

Bernard Snoy
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic And Environmental Activities

Jose Capel Ferrer
Director, UNECE Transport Division