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### Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention, 1975

#### Technical Implementation Body

##### Sixth session

Geneva, 5 and 6 (a.m.) February 2024

### Report of the Technical Implementation Body on its sixth session

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## I. Attendance

1. The Technical Implementation Body (TIB) held its sixth session on 5 and 6 (a.m.) February 2024 in Geneva. The session was attended by representatives of the following countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Latvia, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye and the United States of America. Representatives of the European Union, the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) were also present.
2. In the absence of a quorum,<sup>1</sup> the Technical Implementation Body (TIB) mandated the secretariat to use the silence procedure, as per Rules 26 and 27 of its Rules of Procedure. TIB stressed the importance of government representatives of contracting States to be present during the rollcall to avoid having to revert to the silence procedure at future sessions.

## II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

3. TIB adopted the agenda of the session, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/11.

## III. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

4. TIB elected Mr. P. Arsic (Serbia) as Chair for its sessions in 2024 and invited delegations to nominate candidates for the position of vice-chair.

## IV. Adoption of the report of the fifth session (agenda item 3)

5. TIB adopted the report of its fifth session, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/10.

## V. eTIR international system (agenda item 4)

### A. Progress report on the development of the eTIR international system and the International TIR databank

6. The Technical Implementation Body welcomed the status report on the International TIR Data Bank (ITDB) delivered by the secretariat. It was informed about the current status of data recordings and usage figures in ITDB (1,184 web application users, 30,089 authorized TIR Carnet holders, 282 customs stamps and seals records and 2,691 customs offices operational for TIR procedures). It was further informed about the recent ITDB related achievements, in particular of the adaptation of European Union customs office data import (specific notes and data format variation), and on the future ITDB related activities, in particular the study the web services extensions and of the ITDB data management process streamlining.

7. TIB noted the ongoing enhancements to the eTIR national application and noted that the secretariat is presently prioritizing the completion of the application programming interface (API) module, with a progress of 95 per cent already achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> Fifteen Contracting States to the TIR Convention bound by Annex 11 had official governmental representatives present. Official representation of at least nineteen Contracting States was required to reach the quorum.

## **B. Progress report on the connection of national customs systems to the eTIR international system**

8. Following the recommendations on the implementation of the eTIR procedure along the middle corridor agreed during the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) friends of the chair meeting which took place in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on 21 and 22 June 2023, the secretariat informed the Working Party on the follow up steps. In that regard, the secretariat informed that currently, interconnection projects have been initiated and national consultants have been hired using funds from the United Nations Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC) account for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Also, meetings have been organised with the customs authority of Islamic Republic of Iran where different solutions for interconnection of the national customs system have been discussed. In all cases, the eTIR National Application has been proposed as the interconnection tool, a solution that could drastically reduce the interconnection time and resources required. Secretariat will continue its efforts to finalize those four interconnection projects within the year, and start the project with Turkmenistan, aiming at a middle corridor using the eTIR procedure towards the end of the year.

9. TIB noted that Pakistan had successfully completed the conformance tests. It further noted that Tunisia is currently undergoing the conformance tests.

## **VI. eTIR conceptual, functional and technical specifications (agenda item 5)**

### **A. Version 4.3**

10. TIB recalled that, at its previous session, it had adopted the minor corrections included in revision 2 of version 4.3 of the eTIR specifications, as described in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2023/7, and took note of revision 2 of version 4.3 of the eTIR technical specifications (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2022/5/Rev.2-ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2022/14/Rev.2) was now also available in Russian and French.

11. TIB considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/1, presenting the outcome of the surveys aimed at identifying the type of amendments that customs officers currently accept/refuse or directly include on the TIR Carnet as well as the kind of amendments that are requested by holders. TIB agreed with the list of data elements which should not be amended and requested the possible inclusion in the list of the description, HS code and quantity of the goods. Furthermore, TIB invited IRU to possibly identify practical cases where the description, HS code and quantity of the goods have been amended in TIR Carnets. Finally, TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a document presenting the relevant rules to implement the restriction on amendment to the declaration data, possible practical examples and any required clarifications.

12. TIB considered Informal document TIB No.1 (2024), presenting the results of a survey among TIR customs focal points on the usage of the equipment size and type data element and on the code list used as well as the results of consultations with relevant stakeholders.

13. TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a concrete proposal which would ensure that the ISO 6346 code list is used for containers and the UN/EDIFACT 8155 code list is used for other equipment types. TIB further mandated the secretariat to enquire with ISO on the possibility to publish their code lists as part of the eTIR XML schemas (XSDs).

14. Furthermore, TIB took note of a request from Türkiye to possibly restrict the length of some of the other code lists used for eTIR, e.g. CL05 Transport means description (UN/EDIFACT 8179), which could be including codes which will never be used for eTIR.

## B. Version 4.4

### 1. Concrete amendment proposals

15. TIB considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/2, containing concrete amendment proposals related to the issues which TIB, at previous sessions, considered important for inclusion in version 4.4 of the eTIR specifications. TIB reviewed them individually and took the following decisions:

#### (a) Requirements of the Eurasian Customs Union

##### *Languages for text fields*

16. TIB noted no additional information but that in the framework of the interconnection projects with members of the Customs Union of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the required gap analyses to be carried out might shed some light on specific requirements of their Customs ICT<sup>2</sup> systems. TIB invited the secretariat to share, whenever possible, the results of those interconnection projects and, in particular, the outcome of gap analyses.

17. TIB reiterated its invitation to the countries which are member of the Customs Union of EAEU to contact the secretariat to jointly analyze the requirements they would like to have included in version 4.4 of the eTIR specifications and prepare a concrete list of amendment proposals.

#### (b) Exchanging attached documents

18. TIB agreed to postpone the discussions related to a possible improvement of the exchange of attached documents and, for the time being, remove this issue from the list of concrete amendment proposals to be considered.

#### (c) Access to TIR transport data by holders

19. TIB recalled that, at its third session, it welcomed a presentation by the secretariat on the proof of concept for the possible access of TIR transport data by holders via the web and mobile applications dedicated to holders and that, at its fourth session, it felt that this question, since it requires changes to the eTIR concepts, should be first considered by the contracting parties to the TIR convention bound by Annex 11 in the framework of AC.2.

20. TIB noted that the issue had been transmitted to AC.2 and will possibly revert to it once AC.2 will have taken a decision.

#### (d) Procedure for drawing samples and additional control types

21. TIB noted that, in the European Union, no standard procedure for taking samples during transit existed and that the drawing of sample as well as eventual results of analyses were not recorded in NCTS. It further noted that drawing samples might happen more often in relation to import procedures than transit.

22. TIB also wondered whether the transport is interrupted while waiting for the results of analyses performed on the samples drawn and would be interrupted in case the results would not be satisfactory. The IRU also stressed that termination messages should be sent upon arrival at the customs office of exit or destination, regardless of samples being drawn and analyses undertaken on those samples.

23. TIB mandated the secretariat to carry out a survey among TIR focal points to clarify how samples are drawn during transit and if they are recorded in their national customs system. TIB further mandated the secretariat to prepare a refined technical solution on the basis of the results of the survey.

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<sup>2</sup> information and communications technology

**(e) Unique Consignment Reference**

24. TIB agreed with the proposal to add the Unique Consignment Reference (UCR) at both consignment and consignment item as well as with the proposed rule, as described in chapter II.E of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/2.

**(f) Consignee/Consignor identification**

25. TIB agreed with the proposal to make the name and address for the consignee and consignor mandatory, as described in chapter II.F of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/2.

**2. New proposals**

26. TIB considered Informal document TIB No.2 (2024), containing the following potential amendments to be included in version 4.4 of the eTIR specifications, as identified during the development of the eTIR international system and the conformance tests:

**(a) Loading and unloading places**

27. TIB noted that, as part of the safety and security requirements related to NCTS phase 6, the places of loading and unloading will be included at consignment level. A place of delivery will also be included at house consignment level. IRU supported the idea to limit the provision of loading and unloading locations at consignment level and, for both, keep the address class optional.

28. TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare for its next session a concrete proposal to harmonize information related to loading and unloading places.

**(b) Sequence number of TIR operations**

29. TIB noted the sequence number of each TIR operation has to be calculated by customs on the basis of the declared itinerary. However, as soon as a change in the itinerary, affecting the number of TIR operations of a TIR transport, is accepted under the fallback procedure, none of the ICT systems is able to calculate the correct sequence number of a TIR operation before the change of itinerary is adequately registered in the relevant systems, and, therefore, customs officers, on the basis of the information available on the accompanying document, are required to manually amend the sequence number calculated by their systems.

30. TIB considered two proposals by the secretariat (a) to remove the sequence numbers from TIR operations messages or (b) to add a rule forbidding changes, addition or removal of loading and unloading places under the fallback procedure.

31. On the one hand, TIB noted that, with the first option, considering that nothing ensures that two countries don't use the same national references in the course of a TIR transport, further clarifications are required to ensure that TIR operations can be uniquely identified. It also noted that even if the sequence number of TIR operations would not have to be provided in eTIR messages, under, or after, a fallback procedure, systems or customs officers would still have to ensure that a change of the itinerary, which would lead to an increase of the number of TIR operations, would be possible considering the guarantee coverage, i.e. the maximum number of TIR operations. TIB also acknowledged that, under the fallback procedure, customs officers which would be requested to accept a change of the itinerary might need to know the maximum number of TIR operation of the used guarantee, an information currently absent from the accompanying document.

32. On the other hand, TIB noted that the second option would remove flexibility and possibly lead to issues in case of a refusal to start which would require the holder to return to a country that had to revert to the fallback procedure.

33. In conclusion, acknowledging that the identification of the sequence number of a TIR operation could lead to practical problems after an amendment of the itinerary under the fallback procedure, TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a refined proposal for its next session.

**(c) Declaration acceptance date and time**

34. TIB agreed with the need to include the acceptance date and time attribute to all messages allowing the exchange of declaration data (i.e. E6, I6, I7 and I15) and requested the secretariat to prepare a detailed proposal for its next session.

**(d) Unicity of customs office code**

35. TIB considered the following solutions to ensure the global uniqueness of customs office identifiers, e.g. when checking a customs office in the ITDB by means of the I19 messages:

- Defining (within the TIR Convention or the eTIR specifications) and applying an internationally standard format for TIR customs office identifications which would ensure the global unicity of TIR customs office identifiers, e.g. by prefixing nationally defined identifiers with the ISO 3166-1-alpha-2 country code.
- Amending eTIR messages to include a country code attribute, which will refer to the country in which the customs office is located, together with each customs office identifier, in order to create an internationally unique identifier by combining the national customs office identifier and the country code.

36. TIB acknowledged that the unicity of customs office codes is a requirement for the proper functioning of the eTIR system and generally supported the idea of creating a standard format for the customs office codes which would ensure their unicity. TIB further mandated the secretariat to request TIRExB to consider including rules regarding to the format of customs office codes used in the ITDB and agreed to revert to this issue at its next session, possibly, with additional information from WCO and an analysis of the implications of the required changes by the secretariat.

**(e) Optional attachments to operations**

37. TIB decided to postpone the inclusion of optional attached documents to TIR operations until a contracting party would provide a solid used case supporting it.

**(f) Refusal to start a TIR operation**

38. TIB noted that, in case a country decides not to allow a TIR transport to enter the territory of their country, the best practices with regard to the use of TIR Carnets (Chapter 7.2 of the TIR Handbook) states that customs authorities of the Customs office of entry en route are strongly recommended to, inter alia, “fill-in, stamp and tear off Voucher No.1 and 2, certifying the start and termination of the TIR operation for their country”. It further noted that using a pair of vouchers of the TIR Carnet reduces the number of TIR operations which can be covered by the TIR Carnet and that, in eTIR, a simple rule could be added to ensure that an operation which did not happen because of a refusal to start does not affect the number of operations which are covered by an eGuarantee.

39. TIB agreed that the refusal to start a TIR operation should not reduce the coverage of an eGuarantee, pending confirmation by the Administrative Committee of the TIR Convention, 1975, and requested the secretariat to prepare a detailed proposal for a rule for its next session.

40. TIB noted that, at its ninety-eighth session (October 2023), the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) welcomed an informal document transmitted by the Government of Türkiye, on a possible new Explanatory Note to Annex 11 introducing the usage of the eTIR accompanying document(s) en route or at destination in countries that have not yet interconnected with the eTIR international system.

41. TIB further noted that, at its ninety-nineth session (December 2023), TIRExB remained positive toward the idea underlying the Explanatory Note but also stressed that before it would be submitted to AC.2 various issues would have to be addressed, inter alia, that a clear procedure regarding this new usage of the accompanying document should be included in the eTIR specifications. To that end, the TIRExB suggested that TIB should be

involved in preparing the required amendment which would clarify all the conceptual, functional and technical details that would allow to put in practice this new provision.

42. TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare, for its next session, a document further describing the procedure which allows for the usage of the accompanying document to continue the eTIR procedure in countries that are not yet interconnected with the eTIR international system.

### **3. Proposals by governments**

43. TIB took note that Government had not submitted any new proposals.

## **VII. Other business (agenda item 6)**

### **Date and place of the next sessions of TIB**

44. TIB noted that the seventh session is scheduled for a day and half in the week starting 3 June 2024 and the eighth session if scheduled on 3 and 4 October 2024. Furthermore, TIB agreed that as of 2025 it could hold session of three days twice a year, ideally in March and September, pending availability of meeting rooms and interpretation.

45. TIB requested the secretariat to ensure that, in the future, documents will be available four weeks before the sessions and devise a mechanism to notify interested parties of the publication of the relevant documentation.

## **VIII. Adoption of the report (agenda item 7)**

46. TIB agreed with the list of tentative decisions to be circulated under the silence procedure, as presented in Annex. After the closure of the since procedure and considering its outcome, TIB further mandated the secretariat to prepare and circulate the complete draft report for comments and submit it for adoption at its next session.

## Annex

### List of decisions taken at the sixth session of the Technical Implementation Body

No.	Agenda item	Reference in final report (para.)	Short description of decision
1	-		In the absence of a quorum, the Technical Implementation Body (TIB) mandated the secretariat to use the silence procedure, as per Rules 26 and 27 of its Rules of Procedure.
2	1		TIB adopted the agenda of the session, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/11.
3	2		TIB elected Mr. P. Arsic (Serbia) as Chair for its sessions in 2024 and invited delegations to nominate candidates for the position of vice-chair.
4	3		TIB adopted the report of its fifth session, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/10.
<b>eTIR specifications, version 4.3</b>			
5	5(a)		TIB recalled that, at its previous session, it had adopted the minor corrections included in revision 2 of version 4.3 of the eTIR specifications, as described in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2023/7, and took note of revision 2 of version 4.3 of the eTIR technical specifications (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2022/5/Rev.2-ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2022/14/Rev.2) was now also available in Russian and French.
6	5(a)		TIB considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/1, presenting the outcome of the surveys aimed at identifying the type of amendments that customs officers currently accept/refuse or directly include on the TIR Carnet as well as the kind of amendments that are requested by holders. TIB agreed with the list of data elements which should not be amended and requested the possible inclusion in the list of the description, HS code and quantity of the goods. Furthermore, TIB invited IRU to possibly identify practical cases where the description, HS code and quantity of the goods have been amended in TIR Carnets. Finally, TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a document presenting the relevant rules to implement the restriction on amendment to the declaration data, possible practical examples and any required clarifications.
7	5(a)		TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a concrete proposal which would ensure that the ISO 6346 code list is used for containers and the UN/EDIFACT 8155 code list is used for other equipment types. TIB further mandated the secretariat to enquire with ISO on the possibility to publish their code lists as part of the eTIR XML schemas (XSDs).
<b>eTIR specifications, version 4.4</b>			
8	5(b)(i)		TIB reiterated its invitation to the countries which are member of the Eurasian Customs Union to contact the secretariat to jointly analyze the requirements they would like to have included in version 4.4 of the eTIR specifications and prepare a concrete list of amendment proposals.
9	5(b)(i)		TIB agreed to postpone the discussions related to a possible improvement of the exchange of attached documents and, for the time being, remove this issue from the list of concrete amendment proposals to be considered.
10	5(b)(i)		TIB mandated the secretariat to carry out a survey among TIR focal points to clarify how samples are drawn during transit and if they are recorded in their national

<i>No.</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Reference in final report (para.)</i>	<i>Short description of decision</i>
			customs system. TIB further mandated the secretariat to prepare a refined technical solution on the basis of the results of the survey.
11	5(b)(i)		TIB agreed with the proposal to add the UCR at both consignment and consignment item as well as with the proposed rule, as described in chapter II.E of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/2.
12	5(b)(i)		TIB agreed with the proposal to make the name and address for the consignee and consignor mandatory, as described in chapter II.F of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/TIB/2024/2.
13	5(b)(ii)		TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare for its next session a concrete proposal to harmonize information related to loading and unloading places.
14	5(b)(ii)		Acknowledging that the identification of the sequence number of a TIR operation could lead to practical problems after an amendment of the itinerary under the fallback procedure, TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare a refined proposal for its next session.
15	5(b)(ii)		TIB agreed with the need to include the acceptance date and time attribute to all messages allowing the exchange of declaration data (i.e. E6, I6, I7 and I15) and requested the secretariat to prepare a detailed proposal for its next session.
16	5(b)(ii)		TIB acknowledged that the unicity of customs office codes is a requirement for the proper functioning of the eTIR system and generally supported the idea of creating a standard format for the customs office codes which would ensure their unicity. TIB further mandated the secretariat to request TIREXB to consider including rules regarding to the format of customs office codes used in the ITDB and agreed to revert to this issue at its next session, possibly, with additional information from WCO and an analysis of the implications of the required changes by the secretariat.
17	5(b)(ii)		TIB decided to postpone the inclusion of optional attached documents to TIR operations until a contracting party would provide a solid used case supporting it.
18	5(b)(ii)		TIB agreed that the refusal to start a TIR operation should not reduce the coverage of an eGuarantee, pending confirmation by the Administrative Committee of the TIR Convention, 1975, and requested the secretariat to prepare a detailed proposal for a rule for its next session.
19	5(b)(ii)		TIB mandated the secretariat to prepare, for its next session, a document further describing the procedure which allows for the usage of the accompanying document to continue the eTIR procedure in countries that are not yet interconnected with the eTIR international system.
20	6		TIB noted that the seventh session is scheduled for a day and half in the week starting 3 June 2024 and the 8 <sup>th</sup> session if scheduled on 3-4 October 2024. Furthermore, TIB agreed that as of 2025 it could hold session of three days twice a year, ideally in March and September, pending availability of meeting rooms and interpretation.
21	6		TIB requested the secretariat to ensure that, in the future, documents will be available 4 weeks before the sessions and devise a mechanism to notify interested parties of the publication of the relevant documentation.
22	7		TIB agreed with the list of tentative decisions to be circulated under the silence procedure.