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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Customs Questions
affecting Transport

Ad hoc Expert Group on Customs Rail Transit
based on the SMGS Consignment Note
(23 September 2003)

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE
AD HOC EXPERT GROUP ON CUSTOMS RAIL TRANSIT
BASED ON THE SMGS CONSIGNMENT NOTE^{*/}**

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10.00 hours on Tuesday, 23 September 2003 ^{**/}**

^{*/} The UNECE Transport Division has submitted the present document after the official documentation deadline due to resource constraints.

^{**/} For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of the documents mentioned in this provisional agenda to the meeting. There will be no documentation available in the meeting room.

Before the meeting, missing documents may be obtained directly from the UNECE Transport Division (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; e-mail: poul.hansen@unece.org). Documents may also be downloaded from the Internet web site of the UNECE Transport Division (<http://border.unece.org>). During the meeting, documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.111, 1st floor, Palais des Nations).

In accordance with the accreditation procedures applicable for all meetings held at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to fill-in the attached registration form (also available from the web site of the UNECE (www.unece.org)) and to transmit the duly filled-in form at the latest one week before the session to the UNECE Transport Division, either by fax (+41-22-917-0039) or by e-mail (poul.hansen@unece.org). In Geneva, prior to the session, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at Villa Les Feuillantines, 13 Avenue de la Paix (see attached map), for issuance of an identification badge. In case of difficulties, please phone the UNECE secretariat (Int. 72453).

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Review of the provisions of the draft Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail under Cover of SMGS Consignment notes
3. Conclusion

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1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/21.

The Ad hoc Expert Group (hereafter referred to as: 'Expert Group') may wish to adopt its agenda (TRANS/WP.30/2003/21).

2. REVIEW OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE DRAFT CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS TRANSIT PROCEDURES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY RAIL UNDER COVER OF THE SMGS CONSIGNMENT NOTE

Documentation: TRANS/2001/10; TRANS/WP.30/2002/10.

(a) Background

The Expert Group may wish to take note, that at its ninety-sixth session, the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) had terminated its activities towards the preparation of harmonized pan-European Customs transit procedures for international rail transport by preparing two draft conventions, one for the covering the CIM Consignment Note and one for the area covering the SMGS Consignment note.

According to the decision of the Working Party, the two draft conventions prepared for this purpose had been transmitted, via diplomatic channels, to the Contracting Parties to the COTIF Convention and to the SMGS Agreement, respectively, with a view to soliciting their views on the approach taken and on the Customs transit procedures proposed therein. The secretariat received around 10 replies from Contracting Parties.

On the basis of the comments received and in accordance with the decision of the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/136) the Working Party, at its ninety-seventh session, had agreed not to continue any further work on the draft Convention based on the COTIF Consignment Note. The secretariat had, however, been requested to convene an ad hoc informal expert group meeting of interested countries and international organizations to review once more the provisions of

the draft convention based on the SMGS Consignment Note and to prepare a revised draft for consideration of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/198).

On 11 February 2002, an informal ad hoc Expert Group meeting on Customs Rail Transit based on the SMGS Consignment Note had concluded that there is a demand by Governments and industry for a harmonization of Customs transit procedures governing rail transport in the SMGS area (TRANS/WP.30/2002/12). However, it seemed that the amendments proposed by some Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement would result in considerably reduced facilitation measures compared to the provisions of the original draft prepared by the Working Party and the provisions in place for the COTIF Convention in the Common and Community transit system.

The Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-second session, stressing that the adopted resolution No. 50 was a preliminary facilitation measure, requested the secretariat to pursue, as soon as possible, the finalization of the draft Convention on international Customs transit procedures for the carriage of goods by rail covering the SMGS area, also taking into consideration the facilitation of transfer of goods in transit between Contracting Parties to the SMGS Agreement and the COTIF Convention (TRANS/WP.30/204, para. 23).

The Inland Transport Committee, at its sixty-fifth session, requested the Working Party to pursue its work towards finalizing a Convention facilitating international Customs transit rail transport on a Pan-European level in this area as soon as (TRANS/WP.30/152, para. 104).

(b) Status of resolution No. 50

The Expert Group may wish to be informed about the status of acceptance of the resolution.

(c) Outstanding issues concerning the draft Convention

The Expert Group should consider in detail the provisions of the draft Convention and its objectives (TRANS/2000/10) in order to be able to finalize the draft Convention. The complete text of the draft Convention is contained in document TRANS/2001/10. The comments received from Contracting States in 2002 are contained in document TRANS/WP.30/2002/10.

Contracting Parties or other organizations that wish to contribute to the discussion are invited to transmit their views in writing to the secretariat before the session.

3. CONCLUSION

Having reviewed and, hopefully, finalized the provisions of the draft Convention on Customs Rail Transit based on the SMGS Consignment Note, the Expert Group is invited to draw up recommendations for the Working Party on how to proceed concerning this question.



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