

Distr.: General
5 June 2013

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

134th session

Geneva, 11– 14 June 2013

Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda

Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party:

Economic Cooperation Organization

Information Note on the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Road Transport Corridor

Transmitted by the Economic Cooperation Organization

Economic Cooperation Organization
S e c r e t a r i a t



No.TC/TIR/2013/956

5th June, 2013

The Secretariat of the Economic Cooperation Organization presents its compliments to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and has the honour to enclose an "Information Note on the 2nd Meeting of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Road Transport Corridor (Tehran, 4-5 February 2013 and the relevant recommendations of the 23rd ECO Regional Planning Council Meeting (Tehran, 6-8 May, 2013)" for utilization as Informal Document No.6 under Sub Item (b) Economic Cooperation Organization, Item 3 (Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party), of the Agenda of 134th Session of the WP 30, scheduled for 11-14 June 2013 in Geneva.

The Secretariat avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the esteemed Commission the assurances of its highest consideration.

Encl.: Three pages

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Information Note

On the 2nd Meeting of the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) Road Transport Corridor (Tehran, 4-5 February 2013) and the recommendations of the 23rd Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (Tehran, 6-8 May 2013) with regard to the abovementioned report

1. The 2nd Meeting on Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul Road Transport Corridor was held in Tehran on 4-5 February 2013. The Meeting was attended by the delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and the Republic of Turkey, as well as delegations from the ECO Secretariat, the ECO-CCI, and IRU.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Saeedullah Abdollahi Soveini, Director General, Transit Department, Road Maintenance and Transport Organization, Ministry of Road and Urban Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
3. The Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted.
4. An open ended Committee was elected to draft the report of the Meeting.
5. The ECO Representative briefed the Meeting on the progress with the implementation of the Action Plan signed at the 1st Meeting of the ITI Corridor. The Meeting highly appreciated all the parties for their efforts in implementing the Action Plan.
6. The Meeting agreed on the following initial routeing for the ITI Corridor:
 Pakistan: Islamabad to Taftan through Kohat- D.I. Khan- Quetta-Dalbadin
 Iran: Mirjaveh to Bazargan through Zehidan-Kerman-Quom, Tehran- Tabriz
 Turkey: Gurbulak to Istanbul through Erzurum-Erzincan-Amasya-Gerede
7. It was agreed that the Member states would suggest any further routes if they so desire to the next Meeting to expand the corridor.
8. The border crossing points were agreed to be Taftan in Pakistan, Mirjaveh and Bazargan in Iran, and Gurbulak in Turkey.
9. The delegation of Pakistan informed that Pakistan is completing its internal procedure for accession to TIR Convention, and that the reaffirmation of the Government of Pakistan on accession to the TIR Convention has been conveyed to the ECO Secretariat for implementation of the Pilot Project on ITI Road Corridor.
10. The Meeting noted that, as decided in the 1st HLWGM, while Pakistan is on its way to join the TIR Convention, it could benefit from the TIR procedures through specific legal framework to be put in place under the ITI project. The delegation of IRU stated that after consultation of all involved partners the most appropriate legal framework was defined. All documentation was provided to all partners at the end of 2012. Iranian and Pakistani authorities supported the documentation. The national associations ICCIMA and PNC-ICC signed them. While TOBB supported the documents and reiterated it during the meeting, the Turkish Customs were still analyzing them.
11. The Republic of Turkey briefed the Meeting about certain legal issues that may arise from applying the TIR Carnet to Non-Contracting Parties of the TIR Convention mainly due to the lack of a certain date by Pakistan to access to the TIR Convention and non-

obtaining of the UNECE's competent organ's consultative opinion for launching such a pilot project along the ITI Corridor using the TIR Carnet.

12. The Meeting requested the ECO Secretariat to obtain the consultative opinion of the UNECE with regard to the application of the TIR Carnet under the auspices of the pilot project along the ITI Corridor. Meanwhile the Meeting requested Pakistan to expedite accession to the TIR. As a third option Turkey also proposed the signing of a trilateral agreement replicating the TIR Convention's principle TIR Carnet on the establishment of a transit system among the enroute countries. The enroute member states were requested to convey their comments and views on the proposed agreement by the end of April 2013.

13. The Meeting asked the en-route Member States, the ECO Secretariat and IRU to closely follow up the abovementioned options in parallel.

14. The Meeting decided that the border crossing points should remain open 24 hours, 7 days a week. An electronic data sharing mechanism should also be applied along the corridor.

15. The meeting noted that the Customs Authorities of Pakistan have introduced container/cargo monitoring system by installing tracking devices on all containers leaving the Karachi Port. .

16. The Iranian delegation stated that they are using GPS system and will definitely equip ITI road corridor with GPS system.

17. The Turkish delegation stated that they have started TIR EPD in June 2012 for transit and import transactions and are planning to start it for the export transactions by March 2013. They have started implementing the Green Lane for TIR transactions at Kapikule border crossing. From 1st December 2012 they have started using Common Transit System, resulting in transit transport integration with EU. On the same date, the Authorized Economic Operator system has also been commenced. They have hired around 2000 officers to strengthen the workforce at the Customs offices.

18. Taking into account the high spirit of cooperation among the Member States, the Meeting decided that there will be no requirement for permits for transport along ITI Corridor.

19. All the en-route member states ensured that they would take all necessary measures to provide security to the drives, trucks and cargos in traffic along this corridor.

20. The Meeting decided to hold the Workshop on European Agreement on ADR, Border Crossing Points Modernization and digital tachograph in Ankara in November 2013.

21. The Meeting requested the en-route Member States to expedite the construction of model TIR Parking places along the Corridor. The Meeting decided that the IRU Model Highway would be utilized as a best practice to be used along this Corridor.

22. The Iranian delegation reiterated their readiness to facilitate the visa issuance for the Pakistani drivers traveling along this corridor. He also shared the Meeting with the progress in designing the ECO Unified Visa Sticker for Drivers.

23. The Turkish delegation stated that their concerned authorities are considering the proposals for facilitating visas for Pakistani Drivers, including reducing the time needed for processing the visa application and the visa costs.

24. The IRU presented the experience of Turkey with Romania, Bulgaria and Ukraine on annual exchange of list of professional drivers for issuance of long term multiple entry visas. The Meeting noted that a similar arrangement can be considered by the ECO. It also requested the en-route Member States to implement the visa related provisions of the

TTFA, whereby one-year multiple entry visa should be issued within 72 hours to drivers and persons involved in transit operations.

25. The Meeting expressed satisfaction that the focal points of the National Insurance Bureaus of the en-route Member States are in direct contacts with each other to assure the implementing the ECO White Card.

26. The Meeting decided that the dates for the test run of the trucks would be specified as soon as the arrangement regarding a commonly agreed transit system is finalized.

27. The Meeting also requested the en-route Member States to provide the details of Focal Points of the ITI Road Corridor at the earliest.

28. The ECO Secretariat informed the Meeting that TOR of the international and national consultants to conduct the feasibility study is under preparation and it will be circulated to the en-route Member States. Accordingly, the consultants will be recruited as per the arrangements agreed in the 1st HLWG Meeting in Islamabad.

29. The Meeting urged the ECO Secretariat and IRU to expedite launching a study to apply the Model Highway Initiative principles along the corridor with the assistance of the ECO Trade and Development Bank, IDB and other relevant international institutions.

30. The Meeting requested the ECO Secretariat to keep contact with the potential funding institutions to assist in construction of the logistic centre in Zahidan near Zahidan-Mirjaveh-Taftan border.

31. The Meeting highly appreciated the business community of the en-route member states for active participation in the meeting and for submitting specific recommendations.

32. The delegation of Turkey informed the Meeting about the training course recently held in Turkey for Afghan Customs staff regarding TIR Convention. They also offered similar course for the Pakistan authorities dealing with TIR Convention.

33. The 3rd Meeting of the ITI Road Corridor will be held in Turkey in the first week of June 2013.

34. The Meeting considered and unanimously adopted its report.

The recommendations of the 23rd Meeting of the ECO Regional Planning Council (Tehran, 6-8 May 2013) with regard to the abovementioned report

102. The Council urged the enroute Member States to expedite implementing the Action Plan of ITI Road Corridor agreed in Islamabad, and the Joint Statement of ITI Road Corridor signed among the Customs Administration of enroute countries on the occasion of 6th International Forum on the Role of Custom Administrations on Facilitating and Promoting trade among the Silk Road Countries (Istanbul, 29-30 October 2012). It was noted that three options were suggested in parallel to set up a transit system applicable along the said corridor, namely a) accession of Pakistan to the TIR Convention, b) implementing a Pilot TIR Project to apply the TIR on provisional basis, subject to consultative opinion of the UNECE's relevant organs, and c) signing a trilateral agreement proposed by the Republic of Turkey based on the principles of the TIR.

103. As regards the first option, the Council requested Pakistan to expedite the accession process to the TIR. The Council asked the ECO to expedite obtaining the consultative opinion of the UNECE. As regards the third option, the Council requested the enroute member states to expedite providing their comments and views on the draft agreement

proposed by Turkey. The Council recommended rescheduling the date of the 3rd HLWGM on this Corridor proposed to be held in Ankara on 4-5 June to a date after the meeting of the relevant organ of the UNECE, which will be held on 10-14 June 2013 in Geneva. The Republic of Turkey will consider for rescheduling of the Meeting and will convey in due course to the Secretariat. The communication has been made with UNECE to obtain their consultative opinion on the suggestion made by the Secretariat.
