



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
24 June 2013

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

134th session

Geneva, 11–14 June 2013

Report of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport on its 134th session

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I. Attendance

1. The Working Party (WP.30) held its 134th session from 11 to 14 June 2013 in Geneva. The session was attended by representatives of the following countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine. Representatives of the European Union (EU) were also present. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Eurasian Economic Commission, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), World Customs Organization (WCO). The following non-governmental organizations were represented: the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the International Association of the Body and Trailer Building Industry (CLCCR) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/267

2. WP.30 adopted the provisional agenda, prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/267), subject to the addition of two new sub-items "OSCE" and "IRU" under item 3 "Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party".

3. The secretariat, supported by EU, proposed to resume the considerations of audit requirements for an authorized international organization (the so-called provisions o, p and q) which were extensively discussed in 2010–2011 as part of a new Annex 9, part III of the TIR Convention, but were not included at that time into the package of adopted amendment proposals. Three delegations¹ and IRU were not in favour of this proposal and pointed out that they had not been made aware of developments which would justify reopening this debate and that any new argument put forward would require careful consideration at the national level prior to its discussion by the Working Party. In the absence of official documentation, the Working Party agreed, if time permits, to have an exchange of view on this issue under "Other business", upon the understanding that a final decision would not be taken at the current session.

III. Opening statement

4. In her opening statement, Ms. Eva Molnar, Director, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Transport Division, briefed WP.30 about the session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) in February 2013 (see para. 5 below for details). She also drew the attention of the Working Party to a number of documents and issues on the agenda which could have a real positive impact on the economies of developing countries and countries in transition and called upon the delegations to ensure efficient consideration of those matters which include:

¹ These delegations are mentioned in the report of the 127th session of WP.30 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/254, paras. 28 and 30)

- amendment proposal to the TIR Convention to allow TIR transports on the territory of even one single country or of a Customs union (agenda item 8 (c) (iii));
- document on the legal changes needed to implement eTIR (agenda item 8 (b) (i));
- initiative of the AIT/FIA to actualize the Convention on the temporary importation of private road vehicles (agenda item 7).

IV. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 2)

5. The Working Party was informed about the outcome of the seventy-fifth jubilee session of the ITC in February 2013 and, in particular, about its Ministerial segment at which declarations on Euro-Asian transport links and unified railway law had been adopted. WP.30 noted that ITC supported the continuation of the eTIR project, invited the Working Party to develop a business plan to implement eTIR and urged WP.30 to start working on the legal aspects of computerization of the TIR procedure without delay. The Working Party was also informed about the 10-year review of the Almaty Programme of Action and about the activities of the UNECE secretariat to promote the TIR and Harmonization Conventions among Land-Locked Developing Countries in Asia and Africa. Finally, WP.30 was briefed on the results of the review of the 2005 UNECE reform during which the ECE member States gave the Transport Subprogramme a very good evaluation.

V. Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 3)

A. European Union

6. The Working Party took note that, following the accession of Turkey to the Common Transit Convention in December 2012, the use of NCTS (New Computerized Transit System) in Turkey had steadily improved and had stabilized, to the satisfaction of EU and Turkish authorities. WP.30 also noted that, on 1 July 2013, Croatia would join EU.

B. Economic Cooperation Organization

7. The representative of ECO presented the activities of his organization with regard to infrastructure development, capacity-building, regional planning and studies and corridor development. WP.30 noted that the TIR system should be reactivated in Afghanistan in December 2013 and that the Government of Pakistan had started internal procedures for Pakistan's accession to the TIR Convention. The Working Party was also extensively informed about the ongoing work to launch the Islamabad – Tehran – Istanbul (ITI) road corridor for which TIR had been selected as a transit system. WP.30 welcomed this initiative, stressed its importance and invited delegations, UNECE and IRU to assist ECO in implementing the TIR pilot project along the ITI road corridor.

C. EurAsEC Customs Union

8. The Eurasian Economic Commission informed the Working Party about the directions for advancing the Customs legislation of the Customs Union: by codifying the

treaties which constitute the legal basis of the Customs Union, by also extending supra-national regulations and by further simplifying Customs operations and procedures. WP.30 was also briefed about the main directions for advancing integration in the framework of the Customs Union and Single Economic Space, enhancing cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Commission and Kyrgyzstan, which planned to become a member of the Eurasian Economic Union in the future, as well as with Ukraine which had expressed the wish to become observer at the Eurasian Economic Union.

D. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

9. The Working Party took note that the OSCE-UNECE Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings would soon be published in Albanian, Macedonian and Serbian languages. The Handbook is used as the basis for a series of targeted, tailor-made capacity-building and training events across the region. The next regional workshop will take place on 28 October – 1 November 2013 in Dushanbe and will focus on risk management and non-intrusive inspection technologies. Delegations were invited to participate in this event.

E. International Road Transport Union

10. The representative of IRU informed WP.30 about the major results and considerations of the recent IRU General Assembly in April 2013. Mr. Umberto de Pretto was elected the new IRU Secretary General and assumed his duties as of 1 June 2013. Mr. de Pretto is particularly committed to expanding the TIR system geographically, to making TIR even more competitive, and to enhance its attractiveness through further computerization. He also thanked Mr. Sven Alkalaj, Executive Secretary of UNECE, for addressing the General Assembly. Furthermore, he stated that just before the General Assembly IRU had fallen victim to a series of anonymous e-mails containing erroneous information and documents targeting the structure of IRU and its management. These unsigned emails were sent from a bogus IRU email address to various IRU members, staff and partners. The reasons behind and the source of this malicious action were still unknown. The General Assembly addressed this matter at some length. The discussions included a presentation by the IRU's lawyer, as well as by the IRU external auditor, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). The PwC representative described the tasks of the external auditors, as well as their general appreciation of IRU's overall financial situation. He highlighted notably the following main issues:

- The principal task of the external auditors, such as PwC, is to ensure that the IRU's accounting procedures are in full compliance with Swiss law and the IRU Constitution and that the financial management of IRU, including its policy of creating sufficient reserves, allows the organization to meet all of its current and future financial obligations;
- PwC's audit work is coordinated with the work of the IRU's internal auditor, the IRU Accounts Commissioners and the IRU Finance Commission and PwC confirms in its auditor's report that the IRU's accounts are in conformity with Swiss law and with the IRU Constitution;
- Concerning the 2012 accounts, PwC also confirmed in their auditors' report that the IRU's annual accounts were in conformity with Swiss law and with the IRU Constitution. Therefore, PwC recommended that the IRU bodies approve the 2012 accounts.
- PwC also confirmed that, as external auditors, they were aware of the activities of the whole IRU structure and that this structure was in full compliance with the law.

11. The presentations by the lawyer and by the PwC representative were followed by the IRU Accounts Commissioners and the President of the IRU Finance Commission who presented the IRU annual financial statement for 2012. Finally, the General Assembly approved the IRU accounts for 2012 without reservations.

12. In reply to a question by EU, the representative of IRU also pointed out that similar information had been reported to the TIR Executive Board. He pointed out that the change of the IRU Secretary General management had no link whatsoever with the anonymous attacks and had been planned long time before the General Assembly. The Working Party took note of the above information and congratulated Mr. de Pretto on his appointment.

F. World Customs Organization

13. The representative of WCO informed WP.30 about the Economic Competitiveness Package (ECP) (Informal document No. 11 (2013)). By launching ECP, WCO aimed to revive discussions on the role of Customs administrations in enhancing economic competitiveness, to identify and circulate innovative initiatives that Customs administrations are working on, to better determine individual and regional needs, as well as to promote its existing instruments and tools and to develop new ones as required. ECP has, at its core, the revised Kyoto Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures and its links to a number of other WCO instruments and concepts, including the SAFE Framework, the Data Model, the Time Release Study, tools for transit, integrity, risk management, Customs-Business partnerships, Globally Networked Customs (GNS), coordinated border management, the Single Window. Delegations posed several questions on WCO transit tools and IT related tools, such as GNS and Data Model, and their linkages with WP.30 activities, in particular eTIR.

14. WP.30 took note of the outcome of the April 2013 meeting of the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers (Informal document No. 10 (2013)). A major achievement in the framework of this Convention was that a draft "Recommendation on the Customs treatment of Container Security Devices, including eSeals" had been endorsed by the Permanent Technical Committee of WCO and would be submitted to the WCO Policy Commission and the Council in June 2013 for approval.

VI. Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Working Party (agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2011/10, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/5/Rev.2

15. The Working Party considered proposals by Iran (Islamic Republic of) for modifying the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) of WP.30 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/5/Rev.2). The delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) reiterated the reasoning behind its proposals (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/262, para. 40), namely to clarify the different roles of the Administrative Committees of the Conventions and WP.30. WP.30 will continue the discussion on this issue at its next sessions.

16. The secretariat drew the attention of WP.30 to the proposed footnote in ToR, which would give non-member countries of ECE full membership at sessions of WP.30. The secretariat was of the view that, for efficient consideration of the draft Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure as well as of the modifications proposed by Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Working Party needed to decide first on the status of non-ECE member States which are Contracting Parties to the legal instruments under the auspices of WP.30. Here, three options are possible:

(a) non-ECE member States can participate in WP.30 in a consultative capacity (i.e. as observers) on any item of particular concern to them (para. 11 of the UNECE ToR);

(b) non-ECE member States can participate in a consultative capacity in WP.30 on any matter of particular concern to them. These countries may, however, participate as full participants at sessions of WP.30 or parts thereof devoted to matters relating to the legal instruments to which they are Contracting Parties (ToR of some ITC Working Parties);

(c) non-ECE member States can participate as full members, subject to further agreement by the parent Sectoral Committee (i.e. ITC).

17. The secretariat also pointed out that, given the global nature of many UNECE conventions and agreements, option (a) does not seem reasonable and, therefore, WP.30 was recommended to choose between options (b) and (c). Due to the fact that, according to the UNECE Rules of Procedure and established practice, Working Parties are granted the right to adopt their own Rules of Procedure, it is unlikely that ITC would overrule a decision taken by WP.30.

18. Given the lack of a harmonized approach among various ITC Working Parties and different views expressed by delegations as well as in order not to set a precedent, the delegation of Germany, supported by EU member States, proposed to ask ITC for guidance on how to tackle this issue in a coordinated way in view of the ECE decision on the outcome of the review of the 2005 reform of ECE (E/ECE/1468, Annex III). In the interim, delegations were invited to study the Rules of Procedure of UNECE² and its subsidiary bodies, so as to be prepared for continuing this discussion at the next session.

VII. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”) (agenda item 5)

A. Status of the Convention

19. WP.30 noted that no changes had occurred in the status of the Convention and in the number of Contracting Parties. Under this item, the secretariat also spoke about its intention to convene the next session of the Administrative Committee in June 2014.

B. Annex 8 on road transport

1. International Vehicle Weight Certificate

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/3

20. The Working Party was informed about the activities of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) to launch a pilot project on introducing the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC) in the BSEC region (Informal document No. 7 (2013)).

21. WP.30 held an in-depth discussion of the proposal by Ukraine to introduce a new box "Weight of empty vehicle" into the IVWC form, as laid down in Annex 8 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/3). Without objecting to this proposal, various delegations

² http://www.unece.org/oes/nutshell/mandate_role.html

pointed out that a wide range of technical and practical issues would need, first, to be studied before taking a final decision to amend the Convention, for example, how to take into account the weight of fuel in the vehicle tanks, possible change of weight due to weather conditions, repairs, different tires, etc. The main purpose of such considerations would be to ensure that the proposed amendment, if adopted, would not make the situation worse for drivers and transport companies. The Working Party invited delegations to inform the secretariat, prior to the next session, about all relevant issues that they came across at the national level.

2. Outcome of the 2012 UNECE survey

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/7

22. WP.30 took note of the outcome of the UNECE survey to monitor the progress in implementing Annex 8 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/7). As for the previous 2009–2010 survey, the outcome of the 2012 survey had reconfirmed that the Contracting Parties were well aware of and taking their obligations seriously under Annex 8. Faster progress was again observed in meeting the requirements concerning the transfer of controls from the borders to inland offices, treatment of urgent consignments and infrastructure requirements for border crossing points. On the other hand, the areas of visa procedures for professional drivers and IVWC required further attention. With regard to future surveys, the Working Party felt that the secretariat should ask countries to only report on new developments occurring since the previous survey.

3. X-ray scanning certificate

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/6

23. WP.30 continued its discussion of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/6 by IRU, containing proposals to introduce the so-called “International Vehicle/Container X-ray Scanning Certificate” that would avoid repetitive X-ray inspections at border crossings. Representatives of Customs administrations pointed out that this would not waive their right to scan any vehicle, should this be justified by risk assessment. As risk factors may change in the course of a transport operation, one and the same vehicle may be scanned several times during its journey. The Working Party agreed that non-intrusive examinations, such as X-ray scans, which were recommended by the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards, should always take place on the basis of risk assessment. WP.30 also pointed out that joint controls and shared use of equipment by neighbour countries at border crossings would not only facilitate transport by reducing the number of scans, but could also substantially reduce governmental expenditures on buying expensive scanners. The representative of WCO pointed out that scanned images produced by different scanners are not directly comparable and, therefore, sharing them among Customs administrations would not necessarily bring benefits to Customs. In terms of drivers' health, he informed WP.30 about the existence of safe scanners that pose no health risks, if the operating instructions are observed. Finally, WP.30 decided to revert to this issue at the next session.

C. Annex 9 on rail border crossing

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/SC.2/2012/6

24. WP.30 was informed about the activities of UNECE and the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) aimed at facilitating the implementation of Annex 9 at the national level.

D. Border performance measurement and the Harmonization Convention

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/4

25. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party decided to postpone the consideration of this issue until the next session and invited delegations to carefully study various options on how to incorporate benchmarking and performance indicators in the Harmonization Convention, as proposed in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/4.

VIII. International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage carried by Rail, of 10 January 1952 (agenda item 6)

26. The Working Party noted that OSJD member States supported the idea of drafting a new convention in this field, rather than acceding to the outdated 1952 Convention (Informal document No. 12 (2013)). The representative of the Russian Federation put forward various arguments supporting the urgent need for a new convention, in particular, the rapid development of the international high-speed train network. Before embarking on a time- and resource-consuming process of drafting a new convention, WP.30 decided to verify if the competent authorities were indeed, interested in developing a new legal instrument. Countries were invited to inform the secretariat accordingly. In addition, the Working Party decided to study if other international legal instruments in force already contained provisions to facilitate crossing of frontiers for passengers and baggage carried by rail.

IX. Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956) (agenda item 7)

27. WP.30 took note of Informal document No. 9 (2013) prepared by AIT/FIA. The Working Party endorsed the AIT/FIA's proposal to include a barcode in CPD (Carnets de Passages en Douane), and confirmed that the barcode would conform to the standard contained in Annex 1 of the Conventions. WP.30 also supported the AIT/FIA pilot project for an electronic CPD database system and urged the concerned Contracting Parties to take part in it. Finally, the Working Party called upon Contracting Parties to transmit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations a proposal for amending the Convention, in order to allow the Carnets de Passages en Douane used within a specific region to be printed in combinations of United Nations official languages other than English and French. At the same time, WP.30 indicated that this proposal would be better transmitted by one of the major user of CPDs, which were not represented at the session.

X. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975) (agenda item 8)

A. Status of the Convention

28. The Working Party took note that, as a result of the forthcoming accession of Croatia to EU, the TIR guarantee level in Croatia would be raised to EURO 60,000 as of 1

July 2013. A similar increase would also take place in Turkey on the same date, following the full implementation of TIR-EPD and Real-time SafeTIR in this country.

B. Revision of the Convention

1. Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/8

Use of new technologies

29. The Working Party took note of the outcome of the twenty-second session of the Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (GE.1) as presented orally by its vice-Chair. In particular, it took note that GE.1 had finalized the introduction of an international declaration mechanism into the eTIR project and that it had extensively discussed the results of the Cost Benefit Analysis, its summary and its assessment in order to prepare recommendations. The report of the session as well as the CBA summary document would be submitted to the Working Party at its next session for consideration and possible endorsement.

30. The Working Party also took note of the progress of the eTIR pilot project between Italy and Turkey. On 17 April 2013, the third meeting of the pilot project was held in Rome. WP.30 noted that in the context of the current economic uncertainty, Italy may have difficulties carrying out the implementation phase of the project during the next two years. Nevertheless, the analytical work would continue. The group revised the implementation scenarios, and requested the secretariat to assist in preparing a technical description for those scenarios supplementing the existing Terms of Reference. The description would help both parties to undertake thorough data mapping.

31. Furthermore, WP.30 took note of the progress made with regard to the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project: “Strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to facilitate legitimate border crossing, regional cooperation and integration”. In the ECE region, Georgia had agreed to take part in the project and a call for tender would soon be issued for a gap analysis aimed at identifying the technical and legal obstacles in undertaking Customs-to-Customs (C2C) electronic exchange of transit data. The results of the gap analyses — mandated in each regional commission — would be presented and considered at a first interregional Expert Group meeting.³ There, a decision would be made for each pilot country, if, the country should begin or accelerate the exchange of transit data or, if, the country would focus on establishing an action plan aimed at filling in the identified gaps.

32. Finally, WP.30 took note of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/8 containing an analysis of various legal options on introducing eTIR, but regretted that it was not available in all official languages. WP.30, thus, decided to postpone its discussions to the next session. Some delegations provided preliminary views, highlighting, for example, that the choice — between amending the TIR Convention, establishing a protocol or preparing a new convention — is a strategic issue and that the substantive legal provisions, to be included in any of those options, need to be considered in parallel. WP.30 also recalled that the concepts described in the eTIR Reference Model, such as the transition between TIR and eTIR, should also be taken into account while discussing the eTIR legal aspects. It also pointed out that the impact of the various options on national legislation, in particular Customs legislation, may need consideration.

³ Planned for December 2013.

2. Amendment proposals for the Convention: vehicles with sliding sheets

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/6/Rev.2

33. WP.30 considered a revised document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/6/Rev.3 as well as Informal document No. 13 (2013) in which CLCCR proposed to delete, due to technical difficulties, several additional requirements introduced by the secretariat in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2012/6/Rev.3. The delegation of Belarus pointed out some linguistic errors in the Russian text of this document and expressed its concerns that these amendments proposals could lead to extra workload at the Customs offices of departure which would have to check the condition of the road vehicle or container. Belarus had not finalised its internal consultations and, therefore, reserved its position on the draft amendments. The delegation also felt that additional photographs and/or sketches of some key elements of a vehicle with a sliding roof would need to be included in the amendment proposals. WP.30 invited Belarus to contact directly CLCCR with a view to indicating which places and units of construction would require additional description, photographs and/or sketches. Finally, the Working Party requested the secretariat to issue a revised document for the next session which would take on board the comments made by CLCCR in Informal document No. 13 (2013), linguistic changes as well as any new photographs and sketches to be developed by CLCCR.

C. Application of the Convention

1. TIR-related electronic data interchange systems

34. WP.30 was informed by IRU about the functioning of the IRU SafeTIR system. From 1 January to 30 April 2013, IRU had received 990,479 SafeTIR messages with an average transmission delay of 1.3 days. Ninety-one per cent of the messages had been transmitted in real-time (within 24 hours). The Customs administrations of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan transmitted data in real-time. In the same period, IRU had issued 5,962 reconciliation requests and had received replies to 1,374 replies (23 per cent) of them with an average delay of 31 days. In addition, a total number of 1,625,030 were made by Customs during the year 2013 in order to enquire about the status of TIR Carnets in the IRU Real-Time SafeTIR database. During the same period, 147,930 pre-declarations were lodged, free-of-charge, to the Customs authorities of 26 countries through the TIR-EPD (electronic pre-declaration) system.

2. Settlement of claims for payments

35. The Working Party was informed by IRU about the current situation on the settlement of claims for payments made by Customs authorities against national guaranteeing associations. From 1 January to 30 April 2013, IRU received 405 pre-notifications and 266 notifications (from all Contracting Parties) as well as 30 payment requests. The number of pending payment requests as of 30 April 2013 amounted to 6,163. In the same period, 21 payment requests had been paid and 22 had been closed without payment. Since January 2010, 652 payment requests had been received, 299 payment requests had been paid and 871 had been closed without payment.

36. The representative of Belarus recalled his information at the previous session (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/266, para. 30) and informed WP.30 that the international guarantee chain had showed its good will and had paid a part of the outstanding portion of a claim which went beyond the TIR guarantee level.

3. Application of the TIR Convention in the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/9

37. The Working Party was informed about the final stages of preparing the intergovernmental agreement on the functioning of the TIR procedure in the Customs Union. Having recalled its discussion at the previous session (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/266, paras. 31–32), WP.30 also took note of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2013/9 by the secretariat, containing several options on how to amend Articles 2 and 48. In view of the late availability of this document in all languages, the Working Party decided to postpone its consideration to the next session.

4. Increase in the number of loading and unloading places

38. No new developments have been reported under this item. The Working Party decided to keep it on the agenda for the next session.

5. Other matters

39. WP.30 noted that, following the election of the new IRU Secretary General Mr. Umberto de Pretto, TIR Carnets bearing his signature under item 5 on the front cover would be issued progressively from June 2013 onwards. TIR Carnets printed before June 2013 and bearing the signature of Mr. Martin Marmy, former IRU Secretary General, would remain valid and must be accepted by Customs until stocks have been exhausted (Informal document No. 14 (2013)).

XI. Prevention of the abuse of Customs transit systems by smugglers (agenda item 9)

40. The representative of Poland reported about several cases when the Lithuanian authorities had confiscated trucks of Polish operators whose drivers tried to smuggle cigarettes into Lithuania. She believed that this heavy sanction was disproportionate to the gravity of infringement. WP.30 invited both parties concerned to settle this issue on a bilateral basis.

XII. Round table on using modern technologies to raise efficiency and security of Customs transit procedures (agenda item 10)

41. The Working Party welcomed the holding of a one-day round table on using modern technologies to raise efficiency and security of Customs transit procedures (Informal document No. 8/Rev.1 (2013)). The outcome of the round table would be published as a document for the next session of WP.30.

XIII. Other business (agenda item 11)

A. Dates of the next sessions

42. The Working Party decided to hold its 135th session in the week of 30 September – 4 October 2013.

B. Restriction on the distribution of documents

43. The Working Party decided that there are no restrictions on the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

XIV. Adoption of the report (agenda item 12)

44. During the adoption of the report and with reference to paras. 17 and 18 above, and in general, the European Union and its member States requested the secretariat to ensure that any discussion on mandates, terms of references, rules of procedure and membership rights be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee of UNECE before coming to any final conclusions about the respective subsidiary bodies. One reason is that these issues are of a horizontal nature and concern the organization as a whole. A second reason is that in such issues, representatives of member States need to be able to take an informed decision after having had sufficient opportunity to consult with their capitals, including with the respective ministries and with other relevant authorities, including legal, as appropriate. A third reason is that it is for the Executive Committee to adopt, renew or terminate the mandates and terms of reference of all subsidiary bodies and that the UNECE Commission, in its April 2013 Decision, tasked the EXCOM to ensure "that all subsidiary bodies and the secretariat apply the Guidelines on Procedures and Practices as contained in Annex III" (E/ECE/1468, para. 27 and Annex III).

45. In accordance with established practice, the Working Party adopted the report on its 134th session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat.
