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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Transport
(Ninety-second session, 19-21 October 1998)

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport
(Ninety-first session, 21-23 October 1998)

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE
JOINT SESSION ON BORDER-CROSSING PROBLEMS**

to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 21 October 1998

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Election of officers
3. Background and mandate for the Joint Session
4. Non-physical barriers to border-crossing
 - (a) Barriers to goods transport between East and West (Finland/Germany) TRANS/SC.1/1998/7-TRANS/WP.30/1998/9
 - (b) Non-physical barriers to transport development in Central Asia and the Caucasus (International Road Federation (IRF)) TRANS/SC.1/1998/8-TRANS/WP.30/1998/10
 - (c) Documents submitted by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) TRANS/SC.1/1998/14-TRANS/WP.30/1998/12 Informal documents
5. Other items to be considered

6. Consideration of solutions and strategy development
7. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations for follow-up by SC.1 and WP.30

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Joint Session may wish to elect the Chairmen of the respective Working Parties (SC.1/WP.30) as co-Chairs of the Joint Session.

3. BACKGROUND AND MANDATE FOR THE JOINT SESSION

The Joint Session may wish to be informed by the secretariat as to the background to the meeting, based on prior discussions in both SC.1 and WP.30.

4. NON-PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO BORDER-CROSSING

The Joint Session may wish to consider various non-physical barriers to border-crossing, including those described in the following documents:

- (a) Barriers to goods transport between East and West (TRANS/SC.1/1998/7-TRANS/WP.30/1998/9);
- (b) Non-physical barriers to transport development in Central Asia and the Caucasus (TRANS/SC.1/1998/8-TRANS/WP.30/1998/10);
- (c) Documents submitted by the IRU (TRANS/SC.1/1998/14-TRANS/WP.30/1998/12 and informal documents).

5. OTHER ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED ^{*/}

Based on prior discussions held by both Working Parties in recent years, the Joint Session may wish to consider the following items in an attempt to identify solutions to border-crossing problems:

- (a) Implications of the revision of the TIR Convention on border-crossing problems (TRANS/SC.1/361, para. 29);
- (b) Progress by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) on the updating of a questionnaire on the removal of obstacles to international goods transport at border crossings (TRANS/SC.1/361, para. 29);

^{*/} Agenda item 5 (points (a)-(e)) is excerpted from Informal Document No. 5, which was intended for discussion by the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) at its ninetieth session, but was postponed due to lack of time.

(c) Clarification of the division of labour between the ECE and ECMT regarding border-crossing issues, with ECE focusing on legal or technical solutions and ECMT on political aspects (TRANS/SC.1/361, para. 29);

(d) Consideration of the possibility of organizing a Workshop in 1999 or 2000 under the auspices of the ECE Workshop Programme for Countries in Transition on "Innovative Solutions to Border Crossing Problems between East and West", possibly in cooperation with the Governments of Germany and Finland and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, such as the IRU, the ECMT and the European Union (PHARE/TACIS). Account should be taken of related work in these organizations, as well as possible input from international financial institutions involved in transport and border crossing infrastructure financing (EBRD, IBRD, EIB and private banks) (TRANS/SC.1/361, para. 30);

(e) Consideration and further examination of recommendations made by the expert group established to investigate and report on barriers to East-West transport ("Barriers to goods transport between East and West", report prepared by the Ministry of Transport of Finland and the Federal Ministry of Transport of Germany, January 1997 Chapters 4 and 5 of the report were reproduced for the Joint Session as TRANS/SC.1/1998/7-TRANS/WP.30/1998/9):

- (i) Border crossing infrastructure and organization are to be improved quickly;
- (ii) Commitment of all the parties to work together is strongly urged;
- (iii) Assistance must be focused on the improvement of border crossings and operations;
- (iv) Harmonization of laws and regulations must be expedited;
- (v) Discrimination against foreign carriers must be eliminated;
- (vi) Crime in transport must be fought with all available means;

(f) Implications of the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) and Green Card Insurance on border crossing problems.

6. CONSIDERATION OF SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Joint Session may wish to consider possible solutions and develop strategies to alleviate the problems associated with border-crossing in the ECE region.

7. ADOPTION OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP BY SC.1 AND WP.30

The Joint Session may wish to develop concrete recommendations for follow-up and a division of labour between the two Working Parties in order to effectively implement the recommendations.
