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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE
Working Party on Customs Questions
affecting Transport
(17-20 June 2003)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE ONE-HUNDRED-AND-FOURTH SESSION

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 15.00 hours on Tuesday, 17 June 2003 ^{*/}**

^{*/} 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).

The full text of the Conventions in English, French and Russian as well as complete lists of Contracting Parties to the Conventions referred to in this agenda are available on the UNECE web site: <http://www.unece.org/trans/conventn/legalinst.html#customs>.

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).

Tuesday 17 June 2003

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Activities of UNECE bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party
3. Activities of other organizations of interest to the Working Party
4. Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)
 - (a) Status of the Conventions
 - (b) Application of the Conventions
5. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 ("Harmonization Convention")
 - (a) Status of the Convention
 - (b) Preparation of a new Annex on efficient border crossing procedures
 - (c) Preparation of a new Annex on security related issues

Wednesday 18 June 2003

6. Draft UNECE Conventions on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail
 - (a) Resolution on the Use of the SMGS Consignment Note as a Customs Transit Declaration
 - (b) Draft UNECE Conventions on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail
7. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975)
 - (a) Status of the Convention
 - (b) Revision of the Convention
 - (i) Implementation of Phase II of the TIR revision process and examples of best practices
 - (ii) Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process

- (iii) Draft amendments on the inclusion and attribution of voting rights to Regional Economic Integration Organizations (REIO)
- (iv) Draft amendments on the introduction of a control system for TIR Carnets

Thursday 19 June 2003

- (c) Application of the Convention
 - (i) Functions and roles of the TIRExB, the TIR secretariat and the IRU
 - (ii) Control system for TIR Carnets - IRU SafeTIR
 - (iii) Settlement of claims for payments
 - (iv) Measures to reduce the number of lost, stolen and falsified TIR Carnets
 - (v) Issues relating to technical provisions
 - (vi) Heavy or bulky goods
 - (vii) Inclusion of place and number of seals in the certificate of approval
 - (viii) The concept of authorized consignee in the TIR Convention
 - (ix) Practical application for the TIR procedure of the Customs Union between the Russian Federation and Belarus
 - (x) TIR Handbook
 - (xi) Other matters
- 8. Prevention of the abuse of Customs transit systems by smugglers
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 - (a) Dates of the next sessions
 - (b) Restriction on the distribution of documents

Friday 20 June 2003

- 10. Adoption of the report

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1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/207.

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda (TRANS/WP.30/207).

2. ACTIVITIES OF UNECE BODIES AND OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party will be informed about the results of relevant sessions of the Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party.

At its one-hundred-and-second session, the Working Party decided to monitor the progress made in the field of transport and security by the World Customs Organization (WCO) (TRANS/WP.30/204, para. 7). The Working Party may wish to be informed of any new developments in this field.

3. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities by the World Customs Organization (WCO), the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), the European Commission (DG TAXUD) as well as by other governmental and non-governmental organizations as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party.

4. CUSTOMS CONVENTIONS ON THE TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF PRIVATE ROAD VEHICLES (1954) AND COMMERCIAL ROAD VEHICLES (1956)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/107/Rev.1; ECE/TRANS/108; (<http://border.unece.org> - Legal Instruments); TRANS/WP.30/2003/2.

(a) Status of the Conventions

The Working Party will be informed of the situation concerning the scope and the number of Contracting Parties to the Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private (1954) and Commercial (1956) Road Vehicles.

(b) Application of the Conventions

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its one-hundred-and-third session, it was informed by the AIT/FIA about specific problems in the application of the Conventions, in particular, about the system of “Carnet de Passage en Douane” (CPD).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the any new developments in this respect.

5. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE HARMONIZATION OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/55; (<http://border.unece.org> - Legal Instruments); TRANS/WP.30/196; TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/10; TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/8; TRANS/WP.30/2002/19; TRANS/WP.30/2001/16; TRANS/WP.30/2000/16; TRANS/WP.30/2000/11, Informal documents No. 19 and 21 (2002).

(a) Status of the Convention

The Working Party will be informed of the situation concerning the scope and the number of Contracting Parties to the Convention. A complete list of Contracting Parties to the Convention is annexed to the agenda of the fifth session of the Administrative Committee for the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/9, annex 1).

(b) Preparation of a new Annex on efficient border crossing procedures

The Working Party may wish to recall that the Administrative Committee for the "Harmonization Convention" at its fifth session had agreed to postpone the substantive discussion concerning a new Annex 8 to the Convention, which has the objective of addressing all elements important for efficient border crossing procedures in international road transport of goods since several Contracting Parties indicated that they were not yet in a position to decide on the proposal (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/10, para. 5). The Working Party may wish to consider in detail the consolidated proposal of a new Annex 8, contained in document TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/2003/1, prepared by the secretariat, with a view to agreeing on a final text to be transmitted for adoption at the sixth session of the Administrative Committee. In this context, delegations are invited to undertake all necessary consultations concerning the various elements of the new draft Annex 8 at national level prior to the present session with the aim that the Working Party can finalize the draft text.

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the outcome of sixth session of the SECI Regional Road Transport Committee (RRTC) that was held at Istanbul on 19 and 20 March 2003. In particular, the Working Party may wish to be informed about the outcome of the discussions of the new International Vehicle Weight Certificate, for which the RRTC had prepared the concept and technical specifications, which is part of the newly proposed Annex 8 to the Convention, with the aim of considering all practical measures and procedures that may need to be undertaken at national level to ensure proper application of the new International Vehicle Weight Certificate.

(c) **Preparation of a new Annex on security related issues**

The Working Party may wish consider the possibility of establishing a new Annex to the Convention on security for international goods transport by road, rail and inland waterways.

In this context, the Working Party may wish to take note that provisions specifically related to security have been implemented in international agreements on both air and maritime transport. Furthermore, the Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-third session took note of the developments in the framework of the World Customs Organization (WCO) in relation to security and facilitation of the international trade supply chain.

With the aim of providing a harmonized approach to the aspects of security and facilitation for overland transport and considering possible alignment with provisions in place for other transport modes, the Working Party may wish to have a preliminary exchange of views of this issue.

6. DRAFT UNECE CONVENTIONS ON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS TRANSIT PROCEDURES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY RAIL

Documentation: TRANS/2001/10; TRANS/WP.30/194; TRANS/WP.30/164; TRANS/WP.30/2002/25; TRANS/WP.30/2002/16; TRANS/WP.30/2002/12; TRANS/WP.30/2002/10; TRANS/WP.30/2002/9; TRANS/WP.30/2000/17; TRANS/WP.30/R.141; Informal documents No. 4-5 (2002).

(a) **Resolution on the Use of the SMGS Consignment Note as a Customs Transit Declaration**

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its one-hundred-and second session, it adopted resolution No. 50 on the use of the SMGS consignment note as a customs transit declaration (TRANS/WP.30/204, annex 1). The Working Party may wish to be informed about the status of acceptance of the resolution.

(b) **Draft UNECE Conventions on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail**

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its ninety-sixth session, it had decided to transmit two draft conventions on international Customs transit procedures for the carriage of goods by rail: one covering the area of the COTIF Convention and one covering the area of the SMGS Agreement to the Contracting Parties of the two legal instruments with a view to soliciting their views on the approach taken and on the Customs transit procedures proposed therein (TRANS/WP.30/192, paras. 14-21).

The Inland Transport Committee, at its sixty-third session, had requested the Working Party only to consider the draft Convention for the SMGS Consignment note (TRANS/136, para. 88).

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).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the status of developing a draft Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail.

7. CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF GOODS UNDER COVER OF TIR CARNETS (TIR CONVENTION, 1975)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/17 and Amends.1-22; 2002 TIR Handbook; (<http://tir.unece.org>); TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/69 annex 1; TRANS/WP.30/204; TRANS/WP.30/202; TRANS/WP.30/200; TRANS/WP.30/198.

(a) Status of the Convention

The Working Party will be informed of the situation concerning the scope and the number of Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention, 1975.

A complete list of Contracting Parties to the Convention as well as a list of countries in which TIR operations can be undertaken is annexed to the report of the thirty-fourth session of the TIR Administrative Committee (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/69, annex 1). Permanently updated information on the scope of the TIR Convention is available on the UNECE TIR web site: (<http://tir.unece.org>).

(b) Revision of the Convention

(i) Implementation of Phase II of the TIR revision process and examples of best practices

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the secretariat about the status of implementation at national level of Phases I and II of the revision process.

(ii) Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/18; TRANS/WP.30/2003/15; TRANS/WP.30/2003/14; TRANS/WP.30/2003/9; TRANS/WP.30/2003/8 ; TRANS/WP.30/2003/7; TRANS/WP.30/2003/5; TRANS/WP.30/2003/3; TRANS/WP.30/2002/23; TRANS/WP.30/2002/20; TRANS/WP.30/2002/17; TRANS/WP.30/2002/15; TRANS/WP.30/2002/11; TRANS/WP.30/2002/7; TRANS/WP.30/2001/19 and Rev. 1; TRANS/WP.30/2001/18; TRANS/WP.30/2001/15; TRANS/WP.30/2001/13; TRANS/WP.30/2001/12; TRANS/WP.30/2001/11; TRANS/WP.30/2001/6; TRANS/WP.30/2001/5; Informal document No.20 (2002); Informal document No.2 (2002); Informal document No.15 (2001); Informal document No.14 (2001); Informal document No.13 (2001); Informal document No.12 (2001); Informal document No.8 (2000); Informal document No.7 (2000); Informal document No.1 (2000); Informal document No.5 (1997).

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its ninety-sixth session, it had decided to start work on Phase III of the TIR revision process, which would include a study of the following elements (TRANS/WP.30/192, para. 33):

- Revision of the TIR Carnet, including the insertion of additional data elements (ID number, HS code, value of goods, etc.);
- Increase in the number of places for loading and unloading under Customs seal;
- Use of new technologies in TIR operations also with a view to reducing the delay in notification of non-discharge.

- Revision of the TIR Carnet

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its ninety-eighth session, it had considered the usefulness of including additional data elements into the TIR Carnet. It had concluded that additional data elements could be useful in relation to the procedures for recovery of debt and facilitating subsequent Customs procedures (TRANS/WP.30/196, paras. 35-40). At its one-hundredth and one-hundred-and-first sessions, it had taken note of the work of the European Commission's sub-group on data requirements (Informal document No. 2 (2002)) that, at the time, in general seemed not to favour requirements for additional data in the Community and Common transit systems (TRANS/WP.30/200, para. 37). It has also considered a survey conducted by the secretariat on documentary requirements for TIR operations showing that a majority of the Customs authorities having replied required information in addition to that contained in the TIR Carnet (TRANS/WP.30/2002/15). As a result, the Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare proposals for best practices concerning documentary requirements for the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/202, para. 36). At its one-hundred-and-third session, the Working Party had considered this issue on the basis of document TRANS/WP.30/2003/3, prepared by the secretariat. The Working Party requested the IRU to prepare a document for its next session containing a proposal to amend the proposal with a view to limiting the responsibility of the holder for information contained in documents submitted to Customs authorities.

The Working Party may wish to consider the proposal of the IRU, which is contained in document TRANS/WP.30/2003/18.

- Increase in the number of loading and unloading places

The Working Party, at its one-hundredth session, continued its consideration of document TRANS/WP.30/2001/19 prepared by the secretariat containing proposals for three alternative solutions to increase the number of loading and unloading places (TRANS/WP.30/200, paras. 41-42). At its one-hundred-and-first session, it considered document TRANS/WP.30/2002/17, prepared by the secretariat, describing a scenario of up to six places of loading and unloading. The

Working Party agreed that there exists a demand from the transport industry to increase the number of loading and unloading places permitted in the Convention. The Working Party also agreed that the task of finding a short-term solution should remain with the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB). The Working Party should focus on finding a long-term solution. The Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare a document describing, in detail, the implications at both national and international level of a scenario of six Customs offices of loading and unloading, including an analysis of the legal consequences (TRANS/WP.30/202, para. 39). The Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-second session, considered a document, prepared by the secretariat, in this respect (TRANS/WP.30/2002/20). The Chairman of the TIRExB informed that, as a short term solution, it had agreed, in principle, that the use of two consecutive TIR Carnets, in cases where more than four offices of loading and unloading were required, could be in line with the provisions of the Convention if certain conditions were met. The TIRExB had requested the secretariat to prepare a draft Explanatory Note for its next session to be submitted to the Working Party. The Working Party felt that the two proposals for short and long term solutions should be considered concurrently (TRANS/WP.30/204, paras. 31-34).

The Working Party may wish to consider document TRANS/WP.30/2003/7 containing a short-term solution to increase the number of loading/unloading places transmitted by the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB).

- Use of new technologies

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the secretariat of any new developments in this field.

(iii) **Draft amendments on the inclusion and attribution of voting rights to Regional Economic Integration Organizations (REIO)**

The TIR Administrative Committee, at its thirty-fourth session, recalled its previous discussion of the amendment proposals, based on a report and explanations provided by the representative of the European Community, concerning the inclusion in the Convention and attribution of voting rights to REIOs (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2002/8; TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/67, paras. 59 and 60). It also noted that these proposals had been discussed in the Working Party (WP.30) (TRANS/WP.30/198, paras. 50-54; TRANS/WP.30/196, paras. 45-47). The Administrative Committee took note of a modified proposal by the European Community contained in Informal document No. 3 (2003) (reproduced for the present session as document TRANS/WP.30/2003/14). It also took note of a proposal transmitted by the United States of America, which is contained in TRANS/WP.30/2003/15.

The Working Party may wish to consider the proposals transmitted by the European Community and the United States of America respectively and to provide guidance for the Administrative Committee on the final text of the proposal.

(iv) Draft amendments on the introduction of a control system for TIR Carnets

The Working Party may wish to recall the Recommendation adopted on 20 October 1975 by the TIR Administrative Committee on the introduction of a control system for TIR Carnets (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/37, annex 4). The recommendation, prepared to safeguard the TIR procedure, contains provisions recommending that Customs authorities provide competent national guaranteeing associations with a minimum number of information in a standard format concerning the presentation of TIR Carnets at Customs offices of destination. On the basis of this Recommendation and with the information provided by Customs authorities, the IRU operates the so-called SafeTIR system, an EDI system that allows the IRU and national associations to manage the risk involved in managing the TIR guarantee system and also allows interested Customs authorities to have access to certain data concerning the issuance and presentation of TIR Carnets.

The TIR Administrative Committee, at its thirty-third session, recognizing that the quantity, quality and timeliness of the data provided by many Contracting Parties were apparently not sufficient to allow for an effective risk management by associations and the IRU, invited the Working Party to consider ways and means of providing for improved possibilities of risk management for associations and the IRU, in particular by the possible insertion of relevant provisions into the Convention (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/67, paras. 53-56).

The Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-fourth session, considered an amendment proposal transmitted by Latvia. The Working Party, in general, considered that the proposal would contribute to improving the exchange of information and the security within the TIR procedure. It also considered that the Convention should only make generic reference to the international organization (and its control system) (TRANS/WP.30/2003/5). The Working Party invited Contracting Parties to transmit their amendment proposals to the secretariat as soon as possible (TRANS/WP.30/206, para. 36).

The Working Party may wish to consider document TRANS/WP.30/2003/8 containing amendment proposals transmitted by the Government of Estonia and the European Community.

The Working Party may also wish to consider document TRANS/WP.30/2003/9, transmitted by the IRU, containing an overview of information available in the IRU TIR Carnet databases relevant for Customs authorities as requested by the Working Party at its one-hundred-and-third session (TRANS/WP.30/206, para. 38).

(c) **Application of the Convention**

(i) **Functions and roles of the TIRExB, the TIR secretariat and the IRU**

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/11; TRANS/WP.30/2003/10; TRANS/WP.30/2002/30; TRANS/WP.30/R.179.

The Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-first session, was informed by the IRU about the possible threat over the sustainability of the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/202, para. 12). At its one-hundred-and-second session, it considered a proposal by the IRU on guidance on the functions and roles of the TIRExB, the TIR secretariat and the IRU (TRANS/WP.30/2002/30). In this context, the IRU also stressed the importance of further developing the agreement between the IRU and the UNECE to encompass not only the transfer of funds to the UNECE Trust Fund for the funding of the TIRExB, but also the responsibilities of the IRU in managing the TIR system, including the printing, distributing and guarantee for the TIR system, as well as determining carefully the budget for the TIRExB. The Working Party supported a proposal by its Chairman, that he would convene a small group of “Friends of the Chairman” to preliminarily explore if and how the issues raised by the IRU could be addressed (TRANS/WP.30/204, paras. 10-12).

The TIR Administrative Committee, at its thirty-third session, took note of the proposal by the IRU and welcomed the initiative taken by the Chairman of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/67, para. 47).

The Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-third session, supported the conclusions of the meeting of the “Friends of the Chairman”, that took place in January 2003, as contained in Informal document No. 1, which for the present session are contained in document TRANS/WP.30/2003/10. The Working Party also took note of a number of amendment proposals proposed by the Russian Federation as contained in document TRANS/WP.30/2003/11 (TRANS/WP.30/206, para. 39-42).

The Working Party may wish to consider the documents in question.

In relation to the existing agreement between the UNECE and the IRU, the Working Party recommended the TIR Administrative Committee to give the UNECE secretariat a mandate to revise the agreement immediately after the session of the Committee in February 2003. The mandate should be based on the provision of the Convention and respect the competencies of the Contracting Parties. The Working Party also agreed that the group “Friends of the Chairman” would provide the secretariat with advice on the draft of the revised agreement before its provisional signature by UNECE and the IRU, awaiting the formal adoption by the Committee.

The TIR Administrative Committee at its thirty-fourth session decided to follow the recommendation of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/69, para. 42).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the status of the agreement.

(ii) Control system for TIR Carnets - IRU SafeTIR

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the activities of the SafeTIR-Taskforce, a joint effort by the TIR secretariat and the IRU, to improve the functioning of the IRU operated SafeTIR based on the Recommendations of the TIR Administrative Committee of 20 October 1995 on the introduction of a control system for TIR Carnets.

(iii) Settlement of claims for payments

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/206.

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the IRU on further progress made in the current arbitration procedure, initiated by the IRU, to obtain payment for Customs claims presented to the previous insurers of the international guaranteeing chain which had denounced their contract with the IRU at the end of 1994 (TRANS/WP.30/202, para. 48).

The Working Party may also wish to be informed by Customs authorities and the IRU of the present situation with regard to the settlement of claims for payments made by Customs authorities against national guaranteeing associations.

(iv) Measures to reduce the number of lost, stolen and falsified TIR Carnets

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/16.

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its one-hundred-and-third session, it expressed concern about the variety of the TIR Carnets in circulation. This situation might undermine the possibility for proper Customs control of the TIR procedure. The Working Party requested the IRU, as soon as possible, to recall from issuing associations all TIR Carnet versions other than the latest version (the so-called “black” TIR Carnet with alpha-numeric numbers from 38.000.000).

The Working Party may wish to take note of document TRANS/WP.30/2003/16 containing information transmitted by the IRU concerning the end of issuance of so-called “red” and “blue” TIR Carnets by issuing associations to TIR Carnet Holders as per 31 May 2003.

(v) **Amendment proposals relating to technical provisions**

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/13; TRANS/WP.30/2002/27.

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its one-hundred-and-second session, it considered information transmitted by a private company on the development of a TIR cable with integrated fibre optic offering increased security against tampering with the TIR cable and unauthorized access to the load compartment (TRANS/WP.30/2002/27) (TRANS/WP.30/204, para. 54). At its one-hundred-and-third-session, the Working Party took note of a presentation of the cable. The Working Party decided to postpone further discussions on the issue until the technical compliance with the provisions of the Convention, Annex 2, could be established based on the results of investigations of the cable by Customs authorities.

The Working Party may wish to be informed by Customs authorities about the outcome of such tests.

During the discussions taking place in the WCO on security, the issue concerning sealing has also been addressed. In this context, the United States Government has submitted a study on tamper-indicating seals carried out by the Vulnerability Assessment Team of the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The Working Party may wish to consider the conclusions of the survey and the repercussions these could have on the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/2003/13).

(vi) **Heavy or bulky goods**

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2002/23 and Rev. 1; TRANS/WP.30/2002/8.

At its one-hundred-and-third session, the Working Party considered document TRANS/WP.30/2003/6, prepared by the secretariat, containing a proposal for a comment to the Convention providing for the use of more than one TIR Carnet for a TIR transport. The Working Party decided to postpone the discussion of this issue until the present session in order to be able to consider the proposal in parallel with the proposal to be submitted by the TIRExB concerning the short-term measures for increasing the number of loading and unloading places (TRANS/WP.30/2003/7) (TRANS/WP.30/206, para. 59).

The Working Party may wish to consider document TRANS/WP.30/2003/6.

(vii) Inclusion of place and number of seals in the certificate of approval

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/4; TRANS/WP.30/2002/24.

The TIR Administrative Committee, at its thirty-fourth session, adopted an amendment to Explanatory Note 2.2.1 (b) to Article 2, paragraph 1 (b) of Annex 2 of the Convention (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/69, para. 56).

The Working Party may wish to be informed about the status of the amendment procedure.

(viii) The concept of authorized consignee in the TIR Convention

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/12; TRANS/WP.30/2003/1.

At its one-hundred-and-third session, the Working Party had a first exchange of views on the issue of authorized consignee, based on document TRANS/WP.30/2003/1, prepared by the TIRExB at its fifteenth meeting, containing a summary of the discussions by the TIRExB on the validity of the concept of authorized consignee within the framework of the Convention. Some delegates were of the view, that the conclusion of the TIRExB that the TIR Convention already, at present, provides for the use of the concept authorized consignee, should be the guideline for any further consideration. Other delegates, however, raised a number of impediments of a legal and/or practical level contrary to the TIRExB's conclusions. The Working Party decided to continue its considerations at its present session. In this context, the Working Party welcomed a proposal by France to give a presentation outlining the French experiences gained in a pilot study providing consignees the right to receive goods under the TIR procedure directly at their premises.

The Working Party may wish to consider document TRANS/WP.30/2003/12 containing an outline of the presentation provided by France.

(ix) Practical application for the TIR procedure of the Customs Union between the Russian Federation and Belarus

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/2003/17.

The Working Party, at its one-hundred-and-third session, was informed by the IRU about difficulties for operators in understanding the practical application of the Customs Union between the Russian Federation and Belarus. The Working Party invited the Russian Federation and Belarus to prepare a document for the forthcoming session of the Working Party describing the relevant provisions of the Customs Union and the practical application and procedures for TIR transport operations going from west to east and vice versa.

The Working Party may wish to consider the document TRANS/WP.30/2003/17 containing information provided by the Russian Federation.

(x) **TIR Handbook**

Documentation: UNECE document; (<http://tir.unece.org>).

The TIR Handbook contains the latest amendments to the Convention as well as all relevant comments adopted by the UNECE Working Party (WP.30) and the Administrative Committee. The TIR Handbook can be viewed and downloaded from the UNECE TIR web site in various languages (<http://tir.unece.org>). Updated hard-copy versions of the TIR Handbook are available in Chinese, English, French, German and Russian. A limited number of such copies may be obtained free of charge from the secretariat.

(xi) **Other matters**

The Working Party may wish to consider any other issues and difficulties in the application of the Convention faced by Customs authorities, national associations, the international insurers or the IRU.

8. PREVENTION OF THE ABUSE OF CUSTOMS TRANSIT SYSTEMS BY SMUGGLERS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.30/127.

Having discussed at earlier sessions a number of drug seizures involving TIR vehicles, the Working Party felt that it should be informed of any special devices and facilities used by smugglers abusing the TIR transit system. The Working Party invited all Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention, 1975, and the World Customs Organization (WCO) to transmit all relevant information on such cases so that it could take the necessary steps, falling within its competence and mandate, to prevent such occurrences (TRANS/WP.30/127, paras. 55-57).

The Working Party may wish to exchange views and report on experiences on this subject, if any, on a confidential basis.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Dates of the next sessions

The Working Party may wish to decide on the dates for its next sessions.

The secretariat has already scheduled the one-hundred-and-fifth session of the Working Party to be held in the week from 22 to 26 September 2003 in conjunction with the thirty-fifth session of the TIR Administrative Committee and the sixth session of the Administrative for the “Harmonization” Convention.

The one-hundred-and-sixth session of the Working Party is tentatively scheduled to be held during the week of 2 to 6 February 2004.

(b) Restriction on the distribution of documents

The Working Party should decide whether there shall be any restrictions with respect to the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

10. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

In accordance with established practice, the Working Party will adopt the report on its one-hundred-and-fourth session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. Given the present resource restrictions with regard to translation facilities, parts of the final report may not be available at the session for adoption in all working languages.



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