

FACILITATION OF VISA ISSUANCE TO PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS

Proposal by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) for a Multi-disciplinary ad hoc Group & a Harmonised List of Recommended Transport Documentary Evidence to be submitted with Visa Applications - Informal Paper for the UNECE Working Party on Road Transport (27-29 October 2004) and the UNECE Bureau of the Inland Transport Committee (2-3 December 2004)

1. The International Road Transport Union (IRU) considers the facilitation of issuing visa for professional drivers employed in international traffic an issue of highest importance.
2. In the present state of discussions taking place in various subordinate bodies of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee, like in the Working Party for Road Transport (SC1) or the Working Party for Customs Questions Affecting Transport (WP30), the IRU
 - o Based on the UNECE Consolidated Resolution on the Facilitation of International Road Transport (R.E.4), paragraph 1.2.1.6, and confirming continuous support to the adoption of the new Annex 8 to the International Convention on the Harmonisation of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982, on efficient border crossing procedure, which includes provisions on the visa matter,

proposes the following pragmatic steps to the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and its subordinate bodies:

- a. Set up an *ad hoc* multi-disciplinary group of interested countries and organisations with the mandate to analyse the subject matter and make proposals for facilitation and harmonisation. The attention is drawn to the need to invite a *multi-disciplinary* group, i.e. not only of representatives of transport but also other authorities competent in the subject matter, like the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and so on, in the countries concerned. This group should study practical modalities of achieving real progress in facilitating the issuance of visa to professional drivers through various measures, like harmonisation of procedures.
- b. Establish, as a first possible move towards harmonisation of procedures, a harmonised list of recommended transport documentary evidence to be submitted with visa applications.
3. A draft harmonised list of recommended transport documentary evidence to be submitted with a visa application as supporting transport related documents by professional drivers, *in addition to the passport, photo(s) and application form*, is proposed to be as follows:
 - c. *On the transport company*
 - i. Copy of company registration certificate
 - ii. Copy of company's operator licence or any other official certificate of admission to the occupation valid for international transport
 - iii. Original supporting letter from the driver's employer and/or a national transport association with a seat in the country of the driver's origin, to which his company is affiliated.
 - d. *On the professional driver*

- i. Valid driving licence for the vehicle categories C (lorry) and/or D (bus & coach)
 - ii. Valid health and accident insurance
4. Consulates issuing visas to professional drivers should endeavour to limit the type and number of required transport related documents to those mentioned under item 3 above. Further documents should be requested *exceptionally*, only in case of doubt about the justification of the application.
