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Report of the Inland Transport Committee on its eighty-first session

Addendum 1

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Annex I

High-level Policy Segment on "Automation in Transport"

I.   Introduction

1.   Transport ministers from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, alongside 400 participants from 75 countries and the heads of inland transport organizations met at the high-level policy segment of the eighty-first session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) on "Automation in Transport" (Salle XVII, Palais des Nations, 19 February 2019, Geneva).

II.   Opening

2.   Mr. Kristof Schockaert, ITC chair, opened the eighty-first session of the Committee. Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE, opened the high-level policy segment and officially launched the Phase III Report of the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) project. Statements followed from Mr. Yuwei Li, Director of the ECE Sustainable Transport Division and Mr. Jean Todt, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety.

3.   Over the past 20 year, the EATL project, one of ECE's flagship activities in the field of transport infrastructure development, has achieved impressive results that helped lay the foundation for the more efficient Euro-Asian inland transport network that we have today. These include:

- The identification of nine rail and road routes, 17 water transport links, 53 inland and 70 maritime ports;

- The prioritization of infrastructure investment projects;

- The development of a Geographical Information System (GIS) database; and

- The harmonization of border crossing and transit procedures as well as the preparation of common time schedules and tariffs.

III.   High-level panels

A.   Panel I: Role and trends of Automation in Transport: Safety, efficiency and sustainability

4.   The discussions were moderated by Mr. Young Tae Kim, Secretary-General of the International Transport Forum (ITF).

5.   Panel I discussed a holistic approach to automation in transport as a catalyst in achieving sustainable transport and mobility and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Special attention was given to governance, the need for international coordination and harmonization in the accelerated development and safe deployment of automation solutions.

6.   Keynote speeches were delivered by

- Her Excellency Ms. Cora Van Nieuwenhuizen, Minister of Infrastructure and Water Management of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, who recognized that in the global discussion for the deployment of automated solutions, it is the duty of national

authorities to ensure "safety by design" and that innovation is driven not only by technology but also safety and security. In the Minister's remarks, safety toped other considerations, especially considering that any road traffic victim is one too many.

• His Excellency Mr. Abdalla Mohamed Obaid Balhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Infrastructure Development of the United Arab Emirates, stressed the need for global action to achieve our common goals and the role of the United Arab Emirates vision and spirit as a partner in the face of global challenges. Minister Al Nuaimi explained that achieving comprehensive global sustainability will require a collective, indeed global, approach that is inclusive of all regions and that relies on a healthy partnership between the public and the private sector, who has a crucial role to play in this respect.

• Mr. Matthew Baldwin, European Coordinator for Road Safety, stressed that in the wider automation landscape, safety is number one priority and a key element of the EU strategy on the future of sustainable mobility. The benefits of automation will come slowly but eventually a huge contribution in reducing fatalities and injuries. from driverless vehicles is expected in the medium to long-run However, this is only a means towards achieving the broader goal of ensuring that cities become more efficient, more liveable and safer, something that will require reducing reliance on privately owned vehicles as part of the equation. Finally, Mr Baldwin highlighted the importance of the full implementation globally of the legal instruments under the purview of the ITC.

• Mr. Guangzhe Chen, Senior Director, Transport Global Practice, World Bank, outlined the Bank's approach, noting that automation plays a major role in ensuring safety in aviation but not yet road transport. Indeed, of the 1.35 million deaths annually, 93 per cent take place in low and middle-income countries, where technology itself has limitations. Mr. Chen highlighted the potential of automation not only for labour cost savings but also for job creation, as well as for promoting decarbonization and outlined the Bank's active portfolio in these areas.

7. Interventions followed from:

• His Excellency Dr. Bounchanh Sinthavong, Minister of Public Works and Transport of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

• His Excellency Mr. Emil Kaikiev, Minister in charge of Energy and Infrastructure, Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC)

• Mr. Yury Petrov, Assistant Minister of Transport, Russian Federation

• Mr. Òscar Oliver, General Director, Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean (CETMO)

• Mr. Yves van der Straaten, Secretary General and Technical Director, International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA)

• Mr. Eduard Fernandez, Executive Director, International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee (CITA)

• Mr. Steve Phillips, Secretary-General, Conference of European Directors of Roads (CEDR)

• Ms. Susanna Zamattaro, Executive Director, International Road Federation (IRF)

• Mr. Gavin Dunnett, Director of Mobility Department, European Investment Bank

• Mr. Umberto Guida, Senior Director, Knowledge & Innovation, International Association of Public Transport (UITP)

B. Panel II: Challenges and synergies in advancing automation for all modes of transport

8. The discussions were moderated by Mr. Umberto De Pretto, Secretary General, International Road Transport Union (IRU).

9. Panel II reviewed innovative solutions aimed at advancing automation for all modes of transport and the importance of ensuring openness, inclusiveness and equitable access to ensure the sustainability of transport globally.

10. Keynote speeches were delivered by

- His Excellency Mr. Volodymyr Omelyan, Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine stressed that new technologies redefine mobility and outlined the key components of the national approach that rely on digital infrastructure, transport safety, and innovative transport and infrastructure network integration with the world's transport corridors. Minister Omelyan alerted the audience to the fact that no common rules exist for the validation and operation of automated systems that manage or will manage vehicles. In this sense, the Minister highlighted the role of the ITC in setting the fundamental directions for the further development of sustainable and environmentally sound international transport.

- His Excellency Mr. Arkhom Termpittayapaisith, Minister of Transport of Thailand reminded that the rise of automation technology is witnessed across all sectors, including transportation. Indeed, the vision of automation in transport is that it could be fully and seamlessly integrated to daily lives, thus yielding great benefit to societies, from reducing road accidents and casualties, to reducing congestion and pollution, and to enhancing accessibility for the disabled. The Minister highlighted the development of Thailand's Intelligent Transport Systems' Master Plan and highlighted the importance of synergies and coordination among countries and key stakeholder. In this regard, Minister Termpittayapaisith highlighted the role of the ITC, that has evolved into a key actor towards interoperable solution for future transport, in providing an appropriate platform for all countries to share their knowledge, experiences, and best practices of automation in transport.

- Mr. Ion Iordăchescu, Vice-Minister of Transport of Romania emphasized the importance of the ITC, the United Nations, the European Union and Romania as acting Presidency of the European Council in providing quality transport by using new technologies both in vehicles manufacturing and management, as well as in road traffic and transport infrastructures management. Vice-Minister Iordăchescu also stressed the necessity of future actions regarding ITC/ECE standardization, data protection and cyber security, social impact and ethical aspects, cross-border testing, legislative changes and impact upon the transport operators.

- Mr. François Davenne, Incoming Director General, International Union of Railways (UIC) showcased benefits of automation in creating an exchange of information between different modes, and in particular between the individual vehicles, the public transport network and the railway system. This in turn elevates multimodality as a realistic option to create a seamless transport network, that would be increasingly efficient and less carbon-intensive.

11. Interventions followed from:

- His Excellency Mr. Abdullah Li'Eibi Bahidh, Minister for Transport of the Republic of Iraq

- Mr. Baymyrat Annamammedov, Deputy Minister of Industry and Communications of Turkmenistan

- Mr. François Gave, Deputy Permanent Representative, French Permanent Mission to the UNOG

- Mr. Michael Christides, Secretary General, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation

- Mr. Jan Hoffmann, Chief, Trade Logistics Branch, UNCTAD

- Mr. Chaesub Lee, Director, Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

C.   Adoption of the Resolution on: "Enhancing Cooperation, Harmonization and Integration in the Era of Transport Digitalization and Automation"

12.   At the end of the meeting, Ministers and Heads of delegations of Contracting Parties were invited to adopt a resolution on: "Enhancing Cooperation, Harmonization and Integration in the Era of Transport Digitalization and Automation", highlighting the relevance of the Committee in ensuring that the accelerated pace of innovation in transport automation and digitalization will be characterized by harmonization and interoperability, as well as safety, equitable access and intermodal integration, as essential preconditions for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Agenda. In broad terms, the Resolution addresses the need for an enhanced cooperation in the area of automation in transport, to ensure that benefits are shared as widely as possible and to avoid the emergence of fragmented, non-interoperable systems.

13.   The Ministerial Resolution and the list of countries that adopted it are annexed to the report of the eighty-first plenary session of ITC (ECE/TRANS/288, Annexes I and II respectively).

IV.   Conclusions and the role of the Committee in promoting automation in transport

14.   Since its establishment in 1947, ITC has played a pioneering role in the development of harmonized international rules and regulations for ensuring a high level of efficiency, safety and environmental performance of international transport by road, rail, inland waterways and intermodal transport. The Committee's achievements over the past 70 years show that its regulatory work has direct impact on the supply and delivery side of businesses and industries globally, that in turn improve dramatically the daily lives of people and communities around the world. The long and consistent record of the Committee's achievements provide a solid foundation for its current and future role in "Enhancing Cooperation, Harmonization and Integration in the Era of Transport Automation".

15.   Panel discussions highlighted the importance of automation and harmonization for sustainable inland transport in the global agenda and addressed challenges for the future of automation as well as the strategic role of the Committee in providing a comprehensive cooperation platform to forge harmonized solutions and enhance international cooperation.

16.   Automation in transport holds the keys to advancing the global efforts for the provision of universal access to sustainable mobility for citizens around the world and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

17.   On the basis of the high-level policy segment's presentations, interventions and debates, the Committee **welcomed and endorsed** the ministerial resolution "Enhancing Cooperation, Harmonization and Integration in the Era of Transport Digitalization and Automation", **expressed its commitment to implement** the decisions in the resolution, **and decided to include the ministerial resolution** as an annex to the report of its eighty-first session.

Annex II

Report of the ninth Meeting for Government Delegates only with the Participation of the Chairs of the Committee's Subsidiary Bodies

Submitted by the Chair of the Inland Transport Committee

I. Introduction

1.   The ninth Meeting for Government Delegates only with the Participation of the Chairs of the Committee's Subsidiary Bodies was held on 19 February 2019.

2.   The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Committee's subsidiary bodies and Administrative Committees of United Nations transport conventions, the members of the Bureau and government delegates of contracting parties participating at the session of the Committee attended the meeting. In total, representatives from 75 countries, including 34 non-ECE member States, the European Commission, and 17 Chairs and Vice-Chairs participated.

3.   This year's meeting focused on adopting the ITC Strategy until 2030 containing the future directions of the Committee.

4.   Discussions were based on ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1 (restricted). In line with the decisions of the 2017 Ministerial Resolution "Embracing the new era for sustainable inland transport and mobility" (ECE/TRANS/270, para. 13 and Annex I) and its decisions at its eightieth session (ECE/TRANS/274, para. 17), the Committee had the opportunity to consider the draft ITC strategy, Action Plan and revised ITC Terms of Reference (ToR), as contained in ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1 during the restricted to governments-only segment of its eighty-first session.

5.   This annex summarizes and provides conclusions from the meeting based on the views exchanged.

6.   Participants at the restricted session agreed that the summary would take the form of the Chair's note which would be annexed to the ITC report after approval by the participating delegates in the restricted session.

II. The Strategy until 2030: process and content

A. Developing the strategy: an inclusive process

7.   Participants of the restricted session expressed their appreciation for the inclusive and transparent process that led to the formulation of the Strategy. These included extensive consultations and revisions of the strategy drafts, including:

- Stakeholder consultations: Survey (2016) and bilateral consultations with governments and international organizations.
- Extensive presentations to Working Parties throughout 2017 and 2018.
- Discussion at the restricted sessions of the 79th and 80th annual session.
- ITC Review of discussion paper (21 February 2018).

- Division consultations, with Bureau member participation (5 March 2018).

- 1st review by Bureau (16 April 2018).

- 2nd review by Bureau (5 June 2018).

- Zero draft: 1st wave of Consultation with member States and Working Parties (July-August 2018).

- Draft 1: 2nd wave of Consultations with member States and Working Parties (Oct. 2018).

- Draft 2: Bureau (29-30 November 2018).

- Draft 3: Information session with member States (17 December 2018).

- Final draft: Submitted 21 December 2018.

B. Vision, mission and strategic objectives

8. The Vision 2030, as stated in the Strategy, is that the Inland Transport Committee is the United Nations platform for inland transport to help efficiently address global and regional needs in inland transport.

9. The mission for ITC is that it contributes to sustainable inland transport and mobility for achieving the sustainable development goals in the ECE and UN member States through policy dialogue, harmonizing regulatory frameworks, as appropriate, promoting new technologies, assisting in enhancing connectivity and supporting the implementation of legal instruments.

10. In performing its mission, the Committee will enhance its role as:

(a) The UN Platform for regional and global inland transport conventions.

(b) The UN Platform for supporting new technologies and innovations in inland transport.

(c) The UN Platform for regional, interregional and global inland transport policy dialogues.

(d) The UN Platform for promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility.

11. The strategic objective for increased governance is that ITC is truly the UN platform with equal participation of all contracting parties to UN legal instruments under its purview to lead the future development of inland transport.

12. The horizontal objective of the Strategy is increased support to the implementation of all Sustainable Development Goals.

13. The vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Committee were supported by all member States which took the floor, without objection.

D. Action Plan, Resource mobilization and partnership

14. There was overwhelming support for the priorities contained in the Action Plan, Resource Mobilization and Partnerships segments of the strategy document as an effective road map that will lead to the successful implementation of the strategy.

E. Revised Terms of Reference

15. The participants of the restricted session acknowledged the opening up the Committee as a decision-making body to non-ECE member States as a major development and a milestone in the history of the Committee. They also acknowledged it as an important step that will ensure that the work of the Committee becomes even more appealing worldwide. This decision will further enable the Committee and its subsidiary bodies to reach countries and communities around the world that are most in need.

16. The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomed the opening of ITC to United Nations Member States that are contracting parties and was the only UN Member State which proposed that, as more states are joining legal instruments under the purview of the Committee, ITC Bureau membership should eventually be extended to non-ECE member States that are contracting parties to these legal instruments.

III. Follow-up to the ninth meeting

17. On the basis of these deliberations, the Committee **welcomed and endorsed** the ministerial resolution "Enhancing Cooperation, Harmonization and Integration in the Era of Transport Digitalization and Automation", **expressed its commitment to implement** the decisions in the resolution, **and decided to include the ministerial resolution** as an annex to the report of its eighty-first session. The Ministerial Resolution and the list of countries that adopted it are annexed to ECE/TRANS/288 (Annexes I and II respectively).

18. In line with the decisions of the 2017 Ministerial Resolution "Embracing the new era for sustainable inland transport and mobility" (ECE/TRANS/270, para. 13 and Annex I) and its decisions at its eightieth session (ECE/TRANS/274, para. 17), the Committee had the opportunity to **consider** the draft ITC strategy, Action Plan and revised ITC Terms of Reference (ToR), as contained in ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1 during the restricted to governments-only segment of its eighty-first session. The Committee **welcomed** the organization of the Ninth Meeting for Government Delegates only with the Participation of the Chairs of the Committee's Subsidiary Bodies, i.e. the meeting restricted to government participation, on the Committee's strategy until 2030. It **agreed** that the summary of the discussion in the form of the Chair's note, would be annexed to the Committee's report (ECE/TRANS/288/Add.1, Annex II), after approval by the participating delegates in the restricted session.

19. Following the deliberations during the restricted session, the Committee:

(a) **Considered and adopted by acclamation** the ITC strategy until 2030, as contained in ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1, including vision, mission, strategic objectives, action plan, list of priorities and resource mobilization and partnership, and **requested the secretariat** to annex this document to the report of the Committee;

(b) **Considered and adopted** the Committee's revised terms of reference, as contained in Annex I of ECE/TRANS/2019/R.1, and **requested** the Economic Commission for Europe to consider endorsement at its sixty-eighth session;

(c) **Requested** its subsidiary bodies to take follow-up actions to align their work with the strategy;

(d) **Requested** the secretariat to explore closer cooperation with the other Regional Commissions, special United Nations agencies, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and other relevant organizations and institutions, to benefit from each other's experience and knowledge;

(e)　**Expressed its support** for demand-driven synergies and collaboration within ECE with other subprogrammes, as appropriate;

(f)　**Agreed to review and, if necessary, adjust** the strategy and its priorities, keeping in mind the United Nations budgetary cycles, and **requested the secretariat** to report to ITC about new developments, if necessary;

(g)　**Requested the secretariat**, in order to facilitate the translation into action of the new ITC strategy and terms of reference, in close cooperation with the Bureau, to (a) consider and, if necessary, propose for adoption by the Committee at its eighty-second session, adjustments of the Rules of Procedure followed by the Committee, (b) take necessary actions to promote the implementation of the strategy; and (c) elaborate necessary adjustments in the organization of the Committee's annual session.

20.　Furthermore, the Committee **thanked** the Working Parties that have contributed to the development of the draft ITC strategy.

Annex III

Report of the ITC side event "Automation in Transport: Safe deployment of automated vehicles in traffic"

Organized by the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) and the World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29)

Event Report

1.   The event, which took place on February 18, 2019 at the Palais des Nations, featured the participation of high-level policy makers and experts, who discussed themes concerning the safe and systematic introduction of autonomous/automated vehicles in road traffic. The meeting programme consisted of an opening session with policy statements and four panels during which key topics that need to be addressed before the deployment of automated/autonomous vehicles can be expected in numbers. Participants of the panels included WP.1 and WP.29 experts as well as representatives of governments, NGOs and academia. Key topics that were addressed included the establishment of a common terminology to avoid misunderstandings in discussions on rule making, the current technical capacity of vehicle automation systems, activities other than driving, and the safe interaction between automated vehicles and drivers and between automated vehicles and other road users.

2.   The Director of the ECE Sustainable Transport Division Mr. Yuwei Li opened the meeting. In welcoming participants, the Director highlighted the opportunities that automated/autonomous vehicles in contributing to efficiency, environmental sustainability and particularly safety of road transport systems. He emphasized the role of WP.1 and WP.29 in establishing the technical and regulatory frameworks for the deployment of autonomous vehicles and called on representatives of the two intergovernmental bodies to continue established cooperation.

3.   In his policy statement, the Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry of the Russian Federation, Mr. Alexander Morozov, highlighted the huge potential of automated vehicles for coping with the ever-increasing demand of transportation and mobility. He stated that establishing a normative framework for the safe and secure deployment and operation of autonomous/automated vehicles would require the concerted employment of expertise present in both WP.1 and WP.29.

4.   Mr. Mathew Baldwin, Deputy Director-General of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Transport and Mobility and European Union Coordinator for Road Safety strongly welcomed the initiative to bring together within the ITC session week both global fora that provide the international regulatory basis for road traffic rules and vehicle regulations. He highlighted the need for further cooperation to unlock the benefits of autonomous transport.

5.   The following four panel sessions were held:

  • Panel I: A common terminology in the area of automated driving vehicles;

  • Panel II: Current technical capacity of vehicle automation systems. What should the role/s of WP.1 and WP.29 be?

• Panel III: Activities other than driving — addressing activities drivers of vehicles with various levels of automation could be allowed to do and how they impact the reaction readiness and road awareness;

• Panel IV: The safe interaction between automated vehicle and driver, and automated vehicle and other road users in traffic.

6. At the closing, the WP.1 and WP.29 Chairs thanked the speakers and participants for their active engagement, pointing out that the constructive comments and outputs of the discussion would be taken into account in the agendas of their respective working parties. The Chairs committed to continuing the process of close cooperation between WP.1 and WP.29 on a regular basis in order to facilitate the introduction of a safe deployment of automated vehicles in traffic.

Annex IV

Report of the ITC Side Event: "Digitalization and e-documents"

Event Report

1.   The opening remarks were delivered by Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE, Mr. Mathew Baldwin, Deputy Director-General of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Transport and Mobility and European Union Coordinator for Road Safety, and Mr. Umberto De Pretto, Secretary General of IRU.

2.   The Executive Secretary of ECE spoke of the trend towards digitalization, and the potential trade and economic benefits of the digitalization of information. She highlighted the role of electronic transport documents, and the international conventions administered by ECE which fall under this category including e-TIR and e-CMR. The legal framework for eTIR is soon to be finalized and it is hoped that the text of a new optional Annex to the TIR Convention - the only global customs transit system, allows the transport industry to move goods across borders quickly and efficiently, through the use of a single international customs document and a single, internationally valid guarantee - can soon be adopted and enter into force for the countries interested to start applying eTIR. She also shared that there have been seven new accessions to e-CMR over the past two years, which represents over one-third of contracting parties in total, and that UN/CEFACT technical standards to support the creation and exchange of electronic consignment notes for the international transport of goods by road were launched in April 2018 as a joint initiative of ECE's Sustainable Transport, and Economic Cooperation and Trade, Divisions.

3.   Mr. Baldwin, Deputy Director-General of the European Commission, said that digitalization is a key continuing priority for the European Union because of the almost limitless potential. For example, Commission proposals on electronic freight transport information (EFTI), requiring public authorities to accept documents accompanying freight in electronic format, would deliver around €27 billion savings in administrative costs in the next two decades. Going further, the European Union is aiming for a fully paperless logistics environment and a logistics single window based on a harmonized data model for digital communication across the entire transport network. He stressed the important role of the European Union's Digital Transport and Logistics Forum in driving forward the digitalization of logistics since 2015, and its future plan to build a common and interoperable data layer for freight multimodality.

4.   Mr. de Pretto, Secretary General of IRU, was of the view that automation of transport operations constituted a dramatic paradigm shift which presented challenges and opportunities for a variety of policy objectives and operational transport issues. A crucial element in the transition to autonomous transport was the digitalisation of transport documents such as TIR and eCMR. He emphasised that digital standards were essential in making autonomous transport a reality, and would bring huge benefits to society. IRU was committed to supporting ECE and member states to deliver digitalised TIR and e-CMR.

5.   In the first session on e-documents preparation, representatives of the International Rail Transport Committee (CIT), the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), and the ECE secretariat, spoke.

6.   Mr. Evtimov, Deputy Secretary-General of CIT, gave a presentation on the e-documents being developed for rail by CIT. These included the Handbook on the Consignment note and the Handbook on the Wagon note which were published on 1 January

2017. Work was also underway for preparation of the technical specifications of the electronic consignment note CIM. CIT was also working to clarify the legal situation on the recognition of the electronic consignment note as evidence of the contract of carriage recognised by courts and other national authorities.

7.   Ms. Probert, Chair of UN/CEFACT, shared that cross-border digitalization and e-documents could not be achieved within a specific bubble such as an individual mode of transport or in a particular industry sector. She underlined the importance of using clear semantics and globally agreed codes for electronic data exchange to ensure that all information could be transmitted from one system to another in a harmonized manner across all industries and all transport modes. She presented thirty plus years of expertise of UN/CEFACT in this area including the recent development of Reference Data Models which support data exchanges following a process-driven approach in addition to the traditional document-centric approach.

8.   Ms. Ivanova, the Secretary of the Working Party on Inland Waterways (SC.3), spoke about the advantages and opportunities, challenges and risks, obstacles, possible solutions and lessons learned from digitalization during the Workshop on "Digitalization in inland water transport" held on 26 November 2018 in Geneva. The major obstacles identified were the lack of the necessary regulatory basis, the need for efficient cyber security measures, the constraints related to funding and human resources and the insufficient knowledge of the personnel. Potential solutions could be the development of a common information and exchange system, single window and reporting formalities in ports, electronic consignment notes, and perhaps digital tachographs and checklists for combined traffic.

9.   Mr. Bouten, the Secretary of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) and the TIR Administrative Committee (AC.2) focussed on the process to introduce the computerization of the TIR procedure (known as eTIR) into the legal text of the TIR Convention. Rather than going for a new convention, or a separate protocol, experts have proposed to proceed by means of a new Annex 11, which will be optional. Contracting parties have the possibility to not accept (for now) the application of Annex 11. In addition, countries accepting Annex 11 would have the possibility to delay the implementation of eTIR. The presentation highlighted the crucial provisions of the body of the Convention as well as of Annex 11, by means of example for efforts in other legal instruments introducing computerization.

10.   Ms. Huang, the Secretary of the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) provided an overview of the 1956 Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods (CMR), the 1978 Protocol to the CMR, and the 2008 Additional Protocol to CMR concerning the electronic consignment note (e-CMR). Recent developments one-CMR were also presented, including the number of new accessions, the special SC.1 session dedicated to this topic in 2018, a guidance note on the legal aspects of e-CMR prepared by the secretariat, and suggested technical considerations for contracting parties wishing to implement e-CMR.

11.   In the second session on case studies, representatives from the Governments of the China and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and ERTICO-ITS Europe, spoke.

12.   Mr. Nurakhmetov, Director of Department of Transport and Infrastructure of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC), provided a detailed summary of transport facilitation and freight related activities within the area of the EEC including United Nations conventions of particular interest such as the AETR Agreement, e-TIR and e-CMR. The representative also shared that an agreement on shipping, which would ensure access of vessels of EEC states to their inland waterways, was signed. As a result, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, which had no access to the open sea, would have more opportunities for foreign trade through seaports.

13.   Mr. Ayati, Deputy Director-General of the Transit Supervision Bureau of the Islamic Republic of Iran, spoke about the e-TIR project in his country, which was aimed at enhancing the security and efficiency of the TIR within a computerized environment. Particular benefits included mitigating the risk of customs procedures, harmonization, improving risk management and accuracy in decision making, and facilitating trade and transport in regional international corridors such as the North-South corridor.

14.   Mr. Wu, Department Manager of Zhejian Electronic Port of the People's Republic of China, provided information on LOGINK, China's national Transport and Logistics Information Platform, which promotes digitalization logistics related messages in China. He also spoke about NEAL-NET, a cooperation mechanism of China, Japan and Korea, which promotes regional cooperation by improving information sharing on container logistics.

15.   Mr. Catana, Senior Manager for Transport and Logistics of ERTICO-ITS Europe, presented the AEOLIX project which is a pan-European logistics information exchange platform for connecting logistics information systems of different characteristics, intra- and cross-company, for the real time exchange of information in support of logistics-related decisions. It includes an architecture for a distributed open system which will exchange information among key logistics actors (commercial companies as well as relevant authorities such as Customs) to enable the increased use and impact of such information in the value chain. The AEOLIX platform will include an e-CMR offering.

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