

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
19 October 2020

Original: English

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**Economic Commission for Europe****Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Road Transport****115th session**

Geneva, 14 October 2020

**Report of the Working Party on Road Transport on its 115th session****I. Attendance**

1. The Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) held its 115th session on 14 October 2020, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine). The following United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States were represented in the meeting: Andorra, Austria, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine,

2. The European Commission, Euromed, International Transport Forum (ITF-OECD) and the following non-governmental organizations were represented: Association of International Road Carriers (ASMAP), Council of Bureaux (CoB), In Group, International Road Transport Union (IRU), The Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry, National Association of Automobile and Urban Passenger Transport Enterprises and The Confederation of Organizations in Road Transport Enforcement (CORTE). 1. Adoption of the agenda

**II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)**

3. The Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/413).

4. The secretariat explained that the current session was taking place in a dual format due to the COVID-19 situation. Participants could attend in-person or could connect via an Internet platform with simultaneous interpretation in three official languages. Further, due to United Nations resource challenges and the reduction in duration of sessions from three to two hours, this session was significantly shortened to one day (from three days) and part of the meeting was in English only. While appreciating the secretariat's support and being mindful of the current circumstances, SC.1 regretted this development and noted that substantive discussion on many items would need to be postponed due to time constraints at this session. SC.1 Chair requested the secretariat to ensure the full length of meeting days (three) for its next session.

### **III. Inland Transport Instruments (agenda item 2)**

#### **A. European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR)**

##### **1. Status of the Agreement**

5. The secretariat informed SC.1 about the status of the AETR Agreement, including about the interest of the Government of Egypt to seek amendment of Article 14 to make the country eligible to accede to the AETR Agreement. The representative of Euromed Transport Support Project informed SC.1 that the Government of Greece was taking steps to submit an amendment proposal to this effect soon. SC.1 was also informed of Israel's interest in potentially acceding to the AETR Agreement.

##### **2. AETR Group of Experts**

6. The Chair and the Secretary of the AETR Group of Experts updated SC.1 on the work of the AETR Group of Experts, especially on the work of the Group of Experts to reconcile the AETR regime in European Union and non-European Union AETR Contracting Parties following the introduction of the smart tachograph in the EU on 15 June 2019.

7. At the last session, SC.1 considered the issue of changing the name of the AETR Agreement by deleting the term "European" from the title, and agreed to keep this issue on the agenda of future sessions. Making this change would be consistent with the fact that there are currently five non-European countries which are eligible to accede to the Agreement and also with the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) Strategy document's (ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2, table 1) priority actions to amend legal instruments with geographical and procedural barriers by 2025. Due to time constraints, SC.1 was invited to revisit this discussion at the next session.

8. SC.1 agreed to extend the mandate of the Group of Experts until 30 June 2023 and requested the UNOG Conference Services to provide the meeting rooms, interpretation services, and document translation for three meetings per year.

9. In relation to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) which recognizes JRC as the AETR authority for root certification and for interoperability certification for the non-EU contracting parties to AETR, the secretariat advised SC.1 that a proposed supplement to the memorandum to extend its validity until 31 December 2022 has been discussed with EC officials at the last Group of Experts on AETR.

#### **B. European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR)**

##### **1. Status of the Agreement**

10. The secretariat informed SC.1 that Turkmenistan had acceded to AGR, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 38.

##### **2. Amendments to the Agreement**

11. At the last session, the secretariat drew attention to article 5 of AGR which covers eligibility to become a contracting party. SC.1 members agreed to consult their capitals on whether it would be appropriate to open the Agreement to accession by non-ECE member States, and to revert on this matter at this session. As there was no update by any SC.1 member, SC.1 decided to defer making a decision on this item until the next session.

## C. Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR)

### 1. Status of the Convention

12. The secretariat informed SC.1 that Oman and Afghanistan had acceded to CMR, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 58.

### 2. Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road

13. The secretariat informed SC.1 that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Ukraine had acceded to the Protocol to CMR, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 45.

### 3. Additional Protocol to the CMR concerning the Electronic Consignment Note (e-CMR)

14. The secretariat informed SC.1 that UK, Sweden, Ukraine, Norway and Oman had acceded to e-CMR, bringing the total number of contracting parties to 28.

15. At the last session, SC.1 endorsed a “without prejudice” guidance note on the legal aspects of e-CMR (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2018/1/Rev.1) and requested the secretariat to make it available in English, French and Russian on SC.1 website. The secretariat confirmed that this has been done and the guidance note may be accessed at [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/sc1/eCMR\\_Brochure\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/sc1/eCMR_Brochure_EN.pdf), [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/sc1/eCMR\\_Brochure\\_FR.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/sc1/eCMR_Brochure_FR.pdf), and [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/sc1/eCMR\\_Brochure\\_RU.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/main/sc1/eCMR_Brochure_RU.pdf).

16. Also at the last session, SC.1 created an informal group of experts comprising of Germany, Latvia, the Russian Federation, Slovenia (chair), Turkey, IRU and the European Commission to prepare a draft paper for SC.1 consideration at this session. The paper detailing research and other recommended actions was requested by ITC at its eighty-first session in February 2019. The chair of the informal group of experts provided an overview of the work, timelines and progress of the informal group to date. He also introduced the proposed table of contents of the draft paper (Informal document No.1). The Chair encouraged the informal group to make progress on its work, and to submit a formal paper for SC.1’s consideration at the next session.

17. Latvia provided a short introduction on its e-CMR pilot project (also shared on the SC.1 website). SC.1 invited Latvia to give a more detailed presentation at its next session.

18. The secretariat informed SC.1 about its involvement in a project of the Islamic Development Bank in promoting accession to, and implementing the operationalization of, e-CMR in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan. SC.1 requested an update at the next session.

## D. New legal instrument(s):

### Proposal for a global multilateral agreement on the international regular transport of passengers by coach and bus (Omnibus)

19. At the last session, SC.1 resumed its discussion with the attendance of representatives from the Russian Federation, Switzerland and Turkey. The Russian Federation indicated that it was prepared to accept the proposed wording reflected in paragraph 3 of Article 25 of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2015/3 but not the “alternate wording” option. The Russian Federation withdrew its reservation to the text of paragraph 10 of Annex VI. In addition, the Russian

Federation proposed additional text to the “Important notice” part of the application for authorization contained in Annex I.

20. Further, the Chair requested that the Russian Federation, Switzerland and Turkey work together (e.g. through “Friends of Chair” meetings or other informal methods) to finalize the text of the draft agreement, and to submit a finalized text for adoption at this session. Due to disruptions to usual work processes arising from the Covid 19 pandemic, such meeting/s did not take place in the first half of 2020. The Chair, assisted by the secretariat, has invited the Russian Federation, Switzerland and Turkey to an informal meeting, and will provide an update at the next session.

21. The European Commission provided an update on the status of the draft protocols to the InterBus Agreement (one for the extension of the scope of regular international services and another to provide access of Morocco to the InterBus agreement). SC.1 noted the information and invited the European Commission to provide an update at the next session.

## **E. Consolidated Resolution on the Facilitation of International Road Transport (R.E.4)**

### **The relationship between the origin of goods and transport operations**

22. At the last session, Poland submitted ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2019/3 which contained an amendment proposal to revise R.E.4 to include a definition of “bilateral transport” as a new subpoint 4.1.9.

23. SC.1 requested that Latvia, Poland, the Russian Federation, and Turkey discuss the alternative definitions listed in paragraphs 47 and 48 of the report from the last session (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/412), and agree on a definition to be proposed in ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2019/3/Rev.1 for this session. Members of SC.1 were also invited to contact the representatives of Poland directly with further alternatives.

24. Poland submitted Informal document No. 5 in place of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2019/3/Rev.1 and introduced its proposal. Following discussion, the Chair invited Poland, the Russian Federation and Turkey to work together to submit a joint proposal or alternatively separate proposals at the next session.

## **IV. Supporting New Technologies and Innovations in Inland Transport (agenda item 3)**

### **Digital/smart road infrastructure**

25. At the last session, Liechtenstein expressed its interest in providing a presentation at this session on managing a vehicle’s life cycle with blockchain technology. SC.1 appreciated a brief introduction by Liechtenstein on this topic and requested that the full presentation be deferred until the next session.

26. Other members of SC.1 were also encouraged to contact the secretariat if they wished to share or present initiatives on the digitalization of road systems or road infrastructure in their countries at the next session.

## **V. Regional, Interregional and Global Inland Transport Policy Dialogues (agenda item 4)**

### **Quantitative restrictions imposed on international road transport of goods**

27. At the last session, the European Commission advised that the transit charges which Turkish hauliers pay in Bulgaria, Greece and Romania were compatible with the European

Union-Turkey Customs Union. The representative of Austria referred to a decision of the European Court of Justice C629/16 which declared the system of bilateral quotas to be in line with the European Union-Turkey Customs Union. SC.1 agreed to keep this item on its agenda for this session so that Turkey and the European Commission could provide an update on any further analysis on this matter if desired.

28. Due to time constraints, SC.1 was unable to discuss this item and decided to keep it on its agenda for the next session for Turkey and the European Commission to update if desired.

## **VI. Promoting Sustainable Regional and Interregional Inland Transport Connectivity and Mobility (agenda item 5)**

### **A. Safe and sustainable road infrastructure**

#### **1. Road safety inspections and audits**

29. At the last session, SC.1 decided to consider the topic of safe and sustainable road infrastructure in general as a new item on its agenda for future sessions (para 25, ECE/TRANS/SC.1/412).

30. Due to time constraints, SC.1 decided to defer its discussion until the next session. Members of SC.1 were also invited to contact the secretariat to suggest potential topics for discussion at the next session.

#### **2. Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Inland Transport**

31. The Secretary of the ECE Group of Experts on Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Inland Transport (formerly the Group of Experts on Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Transport Networks and Nodes) provided an update on the work of the group which has been analysing the impacts of climate change on main transport assets in the ECE region. SC.1 appreciated the information and requested that this item be kept on the agenda so that the Secretary of the Group of Experts may provide future updates given the relevance of the topic to SC.1 work.

32. At the last session, members of SC.1 were encouraged to provide shapefiles (i.e. projection such as EPSG 3857, and at least one field containing the E-road number/s) of the E-roads in their countries to the secretariat which could be used to update the E-roads map. The representative of Germany had also suggested that the secretariat could obtain the shapefiles relating to E-roads from the TEN-T database. The secretariat advised that it had yet to receive shapefiles despite reminders, and repeated its request of SC.1 members. In relation to shapefiles from the TEN-T database, the secretariat had enquired of the ECE Transport Regional Adviser. The secretariat will follow up and provide an update at the next session.

#### **3. Benchmarking for transport infrastructure**

33. The Secretary of the Group of Experts on Benchmarking Transport Infrastructure Construction Costs provided an update on the work of the group which has been identifying models, methodologies, tools and good practices for evaluating, calculating and analysing transport infrastructure costs across all inland transport modes (i.e. road, rail, inland waterways and intermodal terminals). At the last session, members of SC.1 were invited to provide feedback to a survey. The opportunity to provide feedback has been extended until January 2021. SC.1 appreciated the information and requested that this item be kept on the agenda so that the Secretary of the Group of Experts may provide a periodic update given the relevance of the topic to SC.1 work.

## **B. Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) Project**

34. The TEM Project Manager gave a presentation on the substantive progress of the TEM project since the last session. The presentation also included areas of synergy and possibilities for collaboration between SC.1 and the TEM Project Group. On the latter, members of SC.1 were invited to the workshop that will be organized by the TEM Project Manager in Spring 2021 (on road use management strategies, road user charging, road safety, oversized and overweight transport, and connectivity and mobility).

## **VII. Facilitation of international road transport (agenda item 6)**

### **International Motor Insurance System (Green Card)**

35. The Managing Director of the Council of Bureaux tabled a report (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2020/1) and made a presentation to inform SC.1 about recent developments in the “Green Card system”, including the possibility to have the green card as a PDF on electronic devices. SC.1 invited COB to table a proposal on this at the next session if desired.

## **VIII. Revision of SC.1 Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure (agenda item 7)**

36. In 2016, Belgium and Germany submitted a proposal for changes to SC.1 terms of reference and rules of procedures (Informal document (2016) Nos 3 and 4). At the last session, SC.1 resumed its discussions which had previously been postponed. Germany facilitated discussion using Informal document No. 4 (2019).

37. As requested by SC.1, Germany submitted ECE/TRANS/SC.1/2020/2 with proposed changes and introduced the paper. Due to time constraints, SC.1 decided to defer its discussion until the next session.

## **IX. Activities of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 8)**

### **A. National delegations**

38. Due to time constraints, SC.1 requested national delegations to defer their presentations on this item until the next session.

### **B. International organizations**

39. Due to time constraints, SC.1 requested representatives of international organizations to defer their presentations on this item until the next session.

### **C. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) bodies and other United Nations organizations**

40. The Working Party was informed about the results of relevant sessions of ITC and its subsidiary bodies.

41. The ITC Deputy Secretary provided an overview of the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030 (Informal document No. 6). SC.1 expressed its support for the proposed plan and the specific tasks attributed to SC.1 therein. The secretariat summarized SC.1’s work to date on tasks 5.6, 5.14 and 5.16.

42. In light of the increasing synergies of the work of SC.1 with those of the Global Forum on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) and the Global Forum for the World Harmonization of

Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), SC.1 invited the Secretaries of WP.1 and WP.29 to attend this session, and to provide an overview on items with relevance for SC.1 from their recent sessions. The Secretary of WP.1 informed SC.1 of the recent developments in automated vehicles, such as amendments to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic.

43. The Secretary of WP.29 provided an update on the status of the framework document on safety of automated vehicles, and the work of the group of experts on regulating autonomous/automated and connected vehicles (including cyber security) (otherwise known as WP.29/GRVA).

44. The WP.29 secretariat also provided information on ITS Road Map update (ITC decision 18, Informal document no. 10/Rev.6). The Road Map has already been revised and its first draft is available at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-tIgg7XLAaax0t-WuiMrdU8WfXh3eOO6/edit> for further comments and inputs by working parties (changes to the original text are indicated in bold). The SC.1 Chair invited all SC.1 delegates to access the draft document and to provide comments online by 6 November 2020.

45. SC.1 invited the Secretaries of WP.1 and Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) to provide an update on their work at the next session, including on WP.5's paper on "Taking stock of the resilience of the inland transport sector to pandemics and international emergency situations".

## **X. Other business (agenda item 9)**

46. The secretariat presented a car-sharing and car-pooling project which is currently underway and which focusses on Central Asian countries. SC.1 expressed in principle support for the project and the project guidelines (Informal document No. 3 (in English) and Informal document No. 4 (in Russian)), and invited the secretariat to provide an update at the next session.

## **XI. Date of next session (agenda item 10)**

47. The Working Party was informed that its next session has been scheduled for 13-15 October 2021. For logistical reasons, the dates may be changed to the second half of October 2021. If this is the case, the secretariat will inform SC.1 members via email. The deadline for submission of formal documents is 30 July 2021.

## **XII. Election of officers (agenda item 11)**

48. SC.1 elected its officers for the period of October 2021 – October 2023. Mr. Roman Symonenko (Ukraine) was re-elected as the Chair and Mr. Krzysztof Lewczak (Poland) was re-elected as a Vice-Chair. Ms. Annija Novikova (Latvia) was elected as a Vice-Chair. In accordance with Rule 12 of SC.1's TOR, the officers "shall take office at the start of the session of the year following their election".

## **XIII. Adoption of the report (agenda item 12)**

49. The Working Party adopted the report of this session.