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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Administrative Committee for the
International Convention on the Harmonization
of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982
(21 and 24 June 1999)

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRD SESSION
OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ^{*/}**

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10.00 hours on Monday, 21 June 1999 ^{*/}**

^{*/} 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 ECE Transport Division (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; E-mail: martin.magold@unece.org). Documents may also be downloaded (in their original language only) from the Internet web site of the ECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans). During the meeting, missing documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.111, 1st floor, Palais des Nations).

New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings held at the Palais des Nations. Therefore, delegates are requested to fill in the attached registration form (also available from the Internet web site of the ECE Transport Division) and to transmit the duly filled-in form at the latest two weeks before the session to the ECE Transport Division, either by fax (+41-22-917-0039) or by e-mail (martin.magold@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.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

In accordance with annex 7, article 4 of the Convention and in line with the decision taken by the Contracting Parties to the Convention at the second session of the Administrative Committee (3 and 4 February 1994) (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/4, para. 25), the Executive Secretary of the UN/ECE is convening this third session of the Administrative Committee. He has taken due account of the recommendation of the UN/ECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport to convene this session of the Administrative Committee in conjunction with the fourth session of the UN/ECE Ad hoc Group of Experts on Phase II of the TIR Revision Process to be held from 21 to 24 June 1999 (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 72 and 73).

On the understanding that the large majority of participants at the expert group meeting will also represent their countries at the Administrative Committee and in order to use existing conference facilities as efficiently as possible, it is proposed to convene the Administrative Committee on Monday, 21 June 1999, starting at 10.00 hours for a morning session of substantive discussions and to reconvene the Administrative Committee for the reading of the report on Thursday, 24 June 1999, starting at 14.30 hours.

The expert group meeting on phase II of the TIR revision process will be held on Monday, 21 June 1999, starting at 14.30 hours (the provisional agenda of the expert group meeting is contained in document TRANS/WP.30/1999/4).

QUORUM

It is recalled that, according to annex 7, article 6 of the Convention, "a quorum consisting of not less than one third of the States which are Contracting Parties is required for the purposes of taking decisions." As of 21 June 1999 the number of States, Contracting Parties to the Convention will be 37.

TEXT OF THE CONVENTION

The complete text of the Convention is contained in document ECE/TRANS/55 and may be obtained directly from the UN/ECE secretariat. It may also be accessed via the Internet web site of the UN/ECE (www.unece.org/trans/main/admincom/wp30.html).

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1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Administrative Committee may wish to consider and adopt the agenda of its present session as prepared by the UN/ECE secretariat (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/5).

The reports of the first and second sessions of the Administrative Committee held in 1987 and 1994 are contained in documents TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/2 and TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/4 respectively.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with annex 7, article 5 of the Convention, the Administrative Committee may wish to elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman for its session.

3. ATTENDANCE OF OBSERVERS

In accordance with annex 7, article 2, paragraph 1 of the Convention, the Administrative Committee may decide whether competent administrations of all States which are not Contracting Parties or representatives of international organizations which are not Contracting Parties, are invited to attend the session of the Administrative Committee as observers. In accordance with annex 7, article 2, paragraph 2 of the Convention, international organizations referred to above, which are competent for the subject dealt with in the annexes of the Convention, shall have the right to participate as observers in the work of the Administrative Committee.

4. STATUS OF THE CONVENTION

The Committee will be informed in detail about the situation concerning the scope and the number of Contracting Parties to the Convention. A list of Contracting Parties to the Convention is contained in annex 1 to this agenda. Contracting Parties may wish to verify this list.

5. PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENT OF THE CONVENTION

Contracting Parties to the Convention have been invited by the Executive Secretary of the UN/ECE to submit proposals for amendment of the Convention. Such proposals will be circulated when received before the session.

(a) **Insertion of a new annex to the Convention on facilitation of the passage of ATP vehicles carrying perishable goods**

The Administrative Committee may wish to note that the UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee, at its sixty-first session (8-11 February 1999), endorsed a draft annex to the Convention and requested the Administrative Committee to give favourable consideration to this draft annex on facilitation of the passage of ATP vehicles carrying perishable goods (ECE/TRANS/128, para. 110). The text of the proposed new annex is contained in annex 2 to this agenda.

This new annex has been prepared by the UN/ECE Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11) and refers in particular to the facilitation of vehicles transporting perishable cargoes under the provisions of the Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (ATP). The ATP Agreement is in force since 1970 and has at present 29 Contracting Parties. The ATP Agreement aims at improving the conditions of preservation of the quality of perishable foodstuffs during their carriage, particularly in international trade. The text of the Agreement is available at the UN/ECE secretariat and can be accessed via the Internet web site of the UN/ECE (www.unece.org/trans/main/wp11/wp11.html).

The Administrative Committee may wish to consider this amendment proposal and decide on any further action in this regard.

(b) **Preparation of a new annex to the Convention on efficient border crossing procedures**

The Administrative Committee may wish to take note of a joint meeting of the UN/ECE Working Parties on Road Transport (SC.1) and on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) which was held on 21 October 1998.

The results and recommendations of the joint meeting may be summarized as follows:

- ECE member countries should accept and implement all international conventions facilitating border crossing procedures;
- analyses should be carried out to determine the rate of implementation of these conventions, in particular the TIR Convention, 1975 and the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”);
- a new annex to the “Harmonization Convention” might be prepared identifying all issues important for efficient border crossing procedures;

- transparency in Customs and other relevant regulations and administrative practices should be ensured and mechanisms for an efficient information flow should be established;
- a reference guide on best practices in efficient organization of border crossing procedures might be prepared (TRANS/SC.1/363), paras. 33-35; TRANS/WP.30/182, paras. 10 and 11).

The UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee, at its sixty-first session (8-11 February 1999), invited the Administrative Committee to consider at its forthcoming session the preparation of a new annex to the Convention on the facilitation of border-crossing procedures, taking into account, *inter alia*, the work carried out in the context of ECMT (ECE/TRANS/128, para. 52).

The Administrative Committee may wish to consider this request and decide on any further action in this regard. Relevant background information on this issue is contained in the following UN/ECE documents: TRANS/WP.30/181/Add.1; TRANS/WP.30/1998/9; TRANS/WP.30/1998/10; TRANS/WP.30/1998/12.

6. PROPOSALS OTHER THAN AMENDMENTS TO THE CONVENTION

(a) Facilitation of border crossings in international rail transport

Following the considerations of the Administrative Committee at its second session in 1994 on the facilitation of border crossing procedures in rail transport (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/4, paras. 13 and 14), the UN/ECE Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) continued its activities in this field on the basis of the so-called "FACILRAIL" project whose final report was issued in 1994.

In particular, the Working Party on Rail Transport is monitoring the following issues:

- S** average time spent by passenger and goods trains at main border crossings;
- S** progress made (in minutes) subsequent to the implementation of measures taken by Governments (e.g. for Customs, police, sanitary and phytosanitary controls) and railways (technical controls) for passenger and freight trains to reduce the delays during border crossings;
- S** other measures envisaged in the future to eliminate delays during border crossings;
- S** bilateral and multilateral contacts that have taken place between Governments and railways of neighbouring countries in order to improve border crossings.

The Administrative Committee may wish to consider the progress achieved and problems still encountered. The UN/ECE secretariat will report on recent activities in this field, in particular on the adoption of a resolution by the UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee on the reduction of border stopping time of shuttle trains in international traffic (maximum of 60 minutes, i.e. 30 minutes on each side of the border) (ECE/TRANS/128, paras. 71-73).

(b) Measures to facilitate the world-wide implementation of the Convention

The Administrative Committee may wish to continue its consideration on possible measures to facilitate the world-wide implementation of the Convention in line with resolution No. 230 adopted by the UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee on 4 February 1983 on "Technical assistance measures for the implementation of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods" (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/4, paras. 15-20; ECE/TRANS/53, annex 1).

The UN/ECE secretariat will report on recent activities in this respect.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Date of next session

In accordance with annex 7, article 4, sub-paragraph (ii) of the Convention, the Administrative Committee may wish to decide on the date for its next session.

(b) Restriction on the distribution of documents

The Administrative Committee may wish to decide whether there should be any restriction with respect to the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

8. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

In accordance with annex 7, article 8 of the Convention, the Administrative Committee will adopt the report of its third session on the basis of a draft prepared by the UN/ECE secretariat.

Annex 1

**Contracting Parties
to the
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods
(21 October 1982)**

Situation as of 1 April 1999

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Armenia | Spain |
| Austria | Sweden |
| Belarus | Switzerland |
| Belgium | Switzerland |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | United Kingdom |
| Bulgaria | Uzbekistan |
| Croatia | Yugoslavia |
| Cuba | |
| Czech Republic | European Community |
| Denmark | _____ |
| Estonia | |
| Finland | |
| France | |
| Germany | |
| Greece | |
| Hungary | |
| Ireland | |
| Italy | |
| Kyrgyzstan | |
| Lesotho | |
| Lithuania | |
| Luxembourg | |
| Netherlands | |
| Norway | |
| Poland | |
| Portugal | |
| Russian Federation | |
| Slovakia | |
| Slovenia | |
| South Africa | |

Annex 2

**Draft Annex to the
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods
on
facilitation of the passage of ATP vehicles carrying perishable goods**

Article 1

Principles

1. Given that the transit time available for the marketing and distribution of perishable foodstuffs is limited, any delay in the transport of these foodstuffs can compromise their commercial qualities, and especially their safety and hygiene.
2. Given that refrigeration equipment must be kept functioning during transport, noise and other types of environmental pollution result whenever vehicles are subjected to abnormally long waiting times or held for long periods without proper reason.
3. Pursuant to these principles, waiting times at borders for ATP-approved and temperature-controlled vehicles should be as short as possible.

Article 2

Reduction in waiting times

1. Traffic authorities must take all measures available to minimize waiting times for ATP-approved vehicles carrying perishable goods, from the moment of arrival at the border post through the various legal, administrative, customs and public health checks.
2. Authorities responsible for regulatory checks on perishable goods must carry out their function in such a way as to reduce delays.
3. Refrigeration equipment must be kept functioning during the whole time spent at the border crossing, except where it absolutely has to be temporarily shut down due to the nature of the checks being carried out (e.g. where the vehicle has to be opened up for inspection).

Article 3

Cooperation

The authorities must cooperate with their counterparts in other countries which are party to this Agreement, in order to speed up the passage of perishable goods subjected to public health inspections, in particular through the exchange of information.



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE - GENEVA

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Delegation/Participant of country, Organization or Agency)

Participant: Name Mr. Mrs. Ms.

First name(s)

Participation Category

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| Delegation Member | <input type="checkbox"/> | NGO | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Observer Country | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Please specify below) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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First Name (spouse)

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Palais des Nations at Geneva

