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**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE HARMONIZATION
OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS, 1982
("HARMONIZATION CONVENTION")**

Preparation of a new annex on rail border crossing

Jointly transmitted by the Committee of the Organization for
Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) and
the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF)

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE HARMONIZATION
OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS, 1982
("HARMONIZATION CONVENTION")**

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Annex 9

**FACILITATION OF BORDER CROSSING PROCEDURES
FOR INTERNATIONAL RAIL FREIGHT**

Article 1

Principles

1. This Annex, supplementing the provisions of the Convention, is intended to define the steps that need to be taken to facilitate and expedite the crossing of borders for international rail freight.
2. The Contracting Parties pledge to cooperate in order to standardize as fully as possible formalities and requirements in respect of documents and procedures in all areas connected with the carriage of goods by rail.
3. The Contracting Parties shall endeavour to base all forms of joint controls at ~~adjoining~~ border ~~(transfer)~~ *(interchange)* railway stations (hereinafter "border ~~(transfer)~~ *(interchange)* stations") on bilateral agreements.

Article 2

Crossing of borders

1. The Contracting Parties shall endeavour to facilitate the procedures for granting of visas for locomotive crews, refrigerated unit crews, persons accompanying freight shipments and staff at border ~~(transfer)~~ *(interchange)* stations engaged in international rail transport in accordance with national best practice for all visa applicants.
2. The border crossing procedure for the persons listed in paragraph 1, including official documents confirming their status, shall be determined on the basis of bilateral agreements.
3. When a joint control is carried out, the officials of the border, customs and other agencies that conduct controls at border ~~(transfer)~~ *(interchange)* stations shall, in the performance of their official duties, cross the State frontier using documents stipulated by the Contracting Parties for their nationals.

Article 3

Requirements for border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations

To rationalize and expedite the required formalities at border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations, the Contracting Parties shall observe the following minimum requirements for border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations open to international rail freight traffic:

(1) Border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations shall have buildings (premises), plant, facilities and technical equipment enabling them to carry out daily and round-the-clock controls, if this is justified and is appropriate to the volume of freight traffic;

(2) Border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations where phytosanitary, veterinary and other controls are carried out shall be provided with technical equipment;

(3) The carrying and traffic capacity of border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations and adjacent tracks must be adequate for the volume of traffic;

(4) Inspection areas must be available, as well as warehousing for the temporary storage of goods subject to customs or other forms of control;

(5) Equipment, facilities, information technology and communications systems must be available to enable the exchange in advance of information, including on goods approaching border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations, corresponding to the information contained in the railway consignment note and customs declaration;

(6) Sufficient qualified staff of the railway, customs, border and other agencies must be on hand at border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations to cope with the freight volumes involved;

(7) ~~Ability to accept and use technical approval and inspection data~~ *Border (interchange) stations shall have the technical equipment, facilities, information technology and communications systems to be able to receive and use data concerning a vehicle regarding its technical approval and the technical controls and inspections made by authorities and railways prior to the arrival of the vehicle at the border within the framework of their competence.*

Article 4

Inspection of rolling stock, containers and goods

The *competent authorities* of the Contracting Parties *in the area of rail transport* shall coordinate action with respect to the inspection of rolling stock, containers, piggyback semi-trailers and goods and the processing of shipping and accompanying documentation.

Article 5

Controls

The Contracting Parties:

- (1) Shall ensure reciprocal recognition of all forms of control of rolling stock, containers, piggyback semi-trailers and goods, provided the objectives thereof coincide; *a mechanism for reciprocal recognition will be set up on the basis of bilateral agreements.*
- (2) Shall carry out customs controls relying on the principle of selection on the basis of risk evaluation and management;
- (3) Shall carry out simplified controls at border (~~transfer~~) (*interchange*) stations, moving certain forms of controls to the station of *departure and* destination in accordance with the legislation of the Contracting Parties;
- (4) Shall not perform inspections of transit goods if reliable information on the goods has been provided and if they are contained in a properly closed and sealed rolling stock unit, container, piggyback semi-trailer or wagon, with the exception of customs controls based on the principle set forth in paragraph 2.

Article 6

Time limits

1. The Contracting Parties shall ensure compliance with the time limits specified in bilateral agreements for technical operations involving the reception and transfer of trains at border (~~transfer~~) (*interchange*) stations, including all types of controls, and shall endeavour to reduce these time limits by improving the technology and equipment used. The Contracting Parties agree to reach a maximum reduction in the time limit in the coming years.
2. *The Contracting Parties shall collect information on the rolling stock delayed at border (interchange) stations and shall transmit the information collected to the competent rail transport organs of the neighbouring Parties for the purposes of analysis and development of a co-ordinated package of measures to reduce the time spent by railway rolling stock at border (interchange) stations.*

Article 7

Documentation

1. The Contracting Parties shall ensure that shipping and accompanying documents are properly formulated in accordance with the legislation of the importing and transit countries.
2. In their mutual relations, the Contracting Parties shall endeavour to reduce paper documents and to simplify documentation procedures *by using* electronic systems for the exchange of information corresponding to the information contained in railway consignment

notes and customs declarations accompanying the goods, drawn up in accordance with the legislation of the Contracting Parties.

3. The Contracting Parties shall endeavour to provide the customs agencies in advance with information on goods arriving at border ~~(transfer)~~ (*interchange*) stations corresponding to the information contained in the railway consignment note and customs declaration. The format, and the procedure and deadlines for providing the information, shall be determined by the Contracting Parties.

Article 8

Use of the *uniform* CIM/SMGS railway consignment note

The Contracting Parties may use, *instead of* the other shipping documents currently stipulated by international treaties, the ~~common~~ CIM/SMGS railway consignment note, which at the same time *can serve as* a customs document.
