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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Road Transport

Twenty-fifth session

Geneva, 22 February 2021

Report of the Group of Experts on the European Agreement concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport on its twenty-fifth session

I. Attendance

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its twenty-fifth session in Geneva on 22 February 2021, moderated by the secretariat upon request of experts.
2. Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.
3. The following non ECE member States participated: Lebanon, Morocco and the State of Palestine.
4. United Nations Specialized Agency: International Labour Organization (ILO) participated.
5. The European Commission, EuroMed Transport Project and the following non-governmental organizations were represented: Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry, National Association of Automobile and Urban Passenger Transport Enterprises, The Confederation of Organization in Road Transport Enforcement (CORTE) and International Road Transport Union (IRU), IN Groupe and Scania CV AB participated as observers.

II. Adoption of the Agenda (agenda item 1)

6. The secretariat informed the Group of Experts that the Chair was, for personal reasons, unable to participate while the Deputy Chair had communicated its resignation a few days earlier (due to change of his responsibilities). The Group proposed that the secretariat moderate the current session while it postponed the election of the Deputy Chair until its next meeting. The Group requested the secretariat to include the election of the Deputy Chair in the agenda for the next session and reminded the AETR contracting parties to nominate candidates.
7. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/56).

III. Programme of Work (agenda item 2)

A. Development of proposals for amending the AETR Agreement, including Article 22bis

8. The European Commission introduced Informal document No. 4 (originally submitted by Portugal in its capacity as President of the Council of the European Union). The document proposes to amend AETR Articles 10, 13, 14 and 22 to respectively facilitate the inclusion of a new Appendix 1C, to determine the relevant implementation dates, to introduce the possibility of accession by regional economic integration organizations, and to change the amendment mechanisms for appendices. The Russian Federation introduced Informal document No. 1 which states that it does not agree to references to EU legislation in the AETR Agreement and does not support allowing accessions by regional economic integration organizations. It also argues against having specific implementation dates not related to (possible) entry into force of Appendix 1C. After discussion, the Group requested that the secretariat submit Informal documents Nos. 1 and 4 for translation and table them at the next session.

B. Appendix 1C

9. At the last session, the European Commission gave a presentation about a new version (“Version 2”) of smart tachograph to be implemented in the EU area by August 2023 for newly registered vehicles and by end of 2025 for all vehicles engaged in international road transport (i.e. by retrofitting). The European Commission was invited to make a formal proposal related to amending the AETR Agreement to include “Version 2” of smart tachograph at the current session. Accordingly, the European Commission introduced Informal document No. 2 which contains proposals to modify Annex IC in order to adapt the European Union specifications on the smart tachograph to the AETR legal framework. While the text is almost final, there may be some minor revisions to be proposed in the future as a result of an upcoming formal review by EU member states. After discussion, the Group requested that the secretariat submit Informal document No.2 for translation into three official UNECE languages.

C. Application of Regulation (European Commission) No. 561/2006 in the AETR area

10. The Group agreed to postpone its discussions on this subject until the next session.

IV. Amendment of Article 14 (agenda item 3)

11. The representative of the EUROMED Transport Support Project advised the Group of Experts that the Government of Greece submitted an amendment proposal (C.N.473.2020 dated 23 October 2020) to amend Article 14 to make Egypt eligible to accede to AETR agreement, and also advised of a related communication by the Netherlands (C.N.520.2020 dated 6 November 2020).

12. In addition, the representative also invited the Group to consider amending Article 14 to make more United Nations member States eligible to accede, for example, in a similar way to the “eligibility to accede” articles of the 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic, and Road Signs and Signals, and the TIR Convention. The Group requested the secretariat to suggest possible wording for consideration at the next session.

V. TACHOnet (agenda item 4)

13. The Russian Federation introduced Informal document no. 1 where it proposed that any requirements in (new) AETR Appendix 4 do not refer specifically to TACHOnet. The

Russian Federation further elaborated that any new Appendix of the AETR Agreement (on the exchange of information between Contracting Parties) should only contain general, technical requirements to be used while seeking and receiving information. The European Commission was invited to consider the comments of the Russian Federation and to provide feedback at the next session.

VI. Other Business (agenda item 5)

14. The secretariat informed the Group that Informal document no. 3, tabled at this session by the secretariat, provides a (signed) copy of administrative arrangement between UNECE and the European Commission Services which recognizes the JRC as the authority responsible for Root and Interoperability Certification for non-EU AETR Contracting Parties. The newly signed arrangement is valid until the end of 2022.

15. The secretariat also informed the Group that on 24 February 2021 the Inland Transport Committee will consider the extension of this Group of Experts mandate until the end of June 2023.

16. A representative of a French company “IN Groupe” gave a presentation on its work which aims at digitizing roadside checks and driver’s journeys, by putting together three elements: information on the driver’s identity, the load, and the vehicle into one single control system.

VII. Date and Place of Next Meeting (agenda item 6)

17. The secretariat informed the Group that the next meeting is scheduled for 14 June 2021 at Palais des Nations in Geneva. The deadline for the submission of formal documents is 2 April 2021.

VIII. Adoption of the Report (agenda item 7)

18. The Group of Experts adopted the report of this session.
