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Working Party on Road Transport

Group of Experts on the Operationalization of eCMR

Third session

Geneva, 9-11 November 2022

Report of the third session of Group of Experts on the Operationalization of the Additional Protocol

I. Attendance

1. The Group of Experts on operationalization of eCMR (GE.22) held its third session on 9 to 11 November 2022.
2. Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Moldova Republic of, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan.
3. The following non-ECE member States participated: Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, State of Palestine and Togo.
4. The European Union and the following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations attended: Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Association of International Road Carriers (ASMAP), Association of International Road Carriers (BAMAP), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), FIA Foundation for Automobile and Society, Hellenic Federation of International Road Transport (OFAE), International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA), International Road Transport Union (IRU) and Union of Road Transport Associations in the Black Sea Region (BSEC-URTA).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

5. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.22/5).

III. Report of the third session (agenda item 2)

6. The Group of Experts noted the report of its third session which was approved on 4 November 2022 (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.22/4). It included the list of decisions which was adopted by the Group on 6 October 2022.

IV. Programme of work (agenda item 3)

A. Article 5 of the Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road concerning the Electronic Consignment Note (Additional Protocol)

7. At the last session, the Group of Experts requested the secretariat to further elaborate and prepare ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.22/2022/2/Rev.1 for consideration by the Group at the next session which takes into account the discussions of the Group and any input received from the Group prior to this session. Due to the short timing between the previous and this session, the secretariat submitted Informal document No. 1 in place of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.22/2022/2/Rev.1.

8. The Group of Experts discussed Informal document No. 1 and requested that the secretariat submits it as a formal document at the next discussion, taking into account the discussions of the Group at this session. The document included the first draft of concepts and processes for the future eCMR system based on the provisions that the CMR Convention and the eCMR protocol stipulates. The Group had the opportunity to discuss the practical implementation of the CMR convention ensuring that it will be reflected in the concepts and processes of the future eCMR system. The discussions on the practical implementation of the CMR Convention identified stakeholders (freight forwarders, subcontractors etc) and processes (change of roles of stakeholders, proof of delivery and acceptance of delivery etc) that are not being described in the CMR Convention.

9. Following its discussion on concepts and processes and the practical implementation of the CMR convention, the Group of Experts requested the secretariat to liaise with the UN/CEFACT secretariat to discuss and if needed, revise the UN/CEFACT eCMR standards in order to ensure the alignment of the standards with the discussions and outputs of the Group. The revised version of the UN/CEFACT standards should be presented at a future session when ready and if possible included in the functional specifications of the future eCMR system when these are submitted to SC.1 in October 2023 for adoption.

10. The Group of Experts also considered document ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.22/2022/3/Rev.1 which included information on how the CMR consignment document is used by the Customs authorities of contracting parties in different regions. The document was updated with the information provided by the Iranian and Swedish customs authorities following the last session. The Group took note of the updated information and requested the secretariat to consider these requirements by the customs authorities while drafting and revising the concepts and processes of the future eCMR system for its consideration at the next session. The Group of Experts also requested the secretariat to further update ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.22/2022/3/Rev.1 by including the case of cabotage with the relevant legislation in the European Union territory as presented by the delegation of Denmark.

11. Finally the Group of Experts discussed and appreciated Informal document Nos. 2 and 3 which contained a survey (in English and Russian) which were submitted by the Uzbekistan Customs authority. The survey refers to the use of CMR consignment notes by customs authorities. The Group requested the secretariat to submit Informal document No. 2 as a formal document for the next session. The Group also requested the secretariat to circulate the survey to the customs authorities of the CMR Convention contracting parties.

B. Good practices from other digitalization initiatives

12. The Group of Experts received, and expressed its appreciation for, a presentation from FIATA on its efforts to digitalize its bill of lading (eFBL). The Group of experts took note that FIATA decided to build its system as open source so it can be implemented by any private IT companies (currently 21), who will provide a service to generate eFBLs by being connecting with FIATA and FIATA being the one generating the unique eFBL code. The

group also took note that FIATA would like in the future to connect the system with customs authorities to further increase the services provided to its members.

13. The Group in order to decide about the optimal high-level architecture for the future eCMR system as well as to find a good and practical solution for issues such as the authentication, mutual recognition etc requested the secretariat to invite if possible experts to present on the following digitalization initiatives at the next session: ATA carnet, eCIM, ePhyto and Certex.

V. Other business (agenda item 4)

14. There was no other business.

VI. Adoption of list of decisions (agenda item 5)

15. The Group of Experts adopted a list of decisions for the session (per paragraphs 6, 7, 9, 12 and 14).

VII. Date of next session (agenda item 6)

16. The next session of the Group of the Experts is scheduled to take place on 25 to 27 January 2023. The deadline for the submission of formal documents is 16 November 2022.
