
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Informal document WP.30 No. 7 (2011)

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

28 September 2011

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

ENGLISH ONLY

129th session

Geneva, 4–7 October 2011

Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

HARMONIZATION CONVENTION AND HINTERLAND CONNECTIONS OF SEAPORTS

Note by the Secretariat

Below the Secretariat is reproducing a standard letter which was sent to the following organizations: European Sea Ports Organization (ESPO), International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Union of Railways (UIC), The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), Committee of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD), Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), International Union of Combined Road-Rail Transport Companies (UIRR), World Customs Organization (WCO), European Commission, UNECE Working Parties on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24).



NATIONS UNIES

COMMISSION ÉCONOMIQUE
POUR L'EUROPE

Tel: +41 (0)22 917 2400 (direct)
+41 (0)22 917 1234 (Palais des Nations)
Fax: +41 (0)22 917 0039
E-mail: Eva.molnar@unece.org

Ref: 11/TRAN/151– EM/KG

ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫЕ НАЦИИ

ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ
КОМИССИЯ

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR EUROPE

Palais des Nations, Room
CH-1211 GENEVA 10

18 July 2011

Dear XXX,

I am writing to you in connection with the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 (Harmonization Convention). This Convention, which is administered by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and its Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30), establishes a globally agreed framework for coordinated border management and reduction in the number and duration of border controls of goods. It applies to all controls services, all modes of transport and all goods being imported or exported or in transit. 54 States worldwide and the European Union are Contracting Parties to the Harmonization Convention. Its full text, as well as the list of Contracting Parties can be consulted at the following website: <http://live.unece.org/trans/conventn/legalinst.html#customs>

To meet the current demands of transport industry, the Harmonization Convention has been recently amended with new technical annexes dealing with specific modes of transport: Annex 8 on facilitation of border crossing procedures for international **road transport** came into force in 2008, while a new Annex 9 on facilitation of border crossing procedures for international **rail freight** is expected to come into force by the end of 2011.

In 2010, the UNECE Group of Experts on Hinterland Connections of Seaports produced an extensive analytical report on hinterland connections of seaports (<http://live.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/publications.html>) which recommended, inter alia, that WP.30 should consider the possible preparation of a new annex to the Harmonization Convention **on border crossing procedures at seaports**. WP.30 noted that ports are crucial nodal points for modern supply chains where various modes of transport are brought together and that the scope of the Harmonization Convention encompasses all modes of transport, including maritime and inland waterways. At the same time, the Working Party realized that it mainly deals with inland transport and might not have the necessary expertise in maritime transport. For this reason, the Working Party felt that, before taking any decision on the preparation of a new annex, extensive consultations with other competent international organizations, both public and private, should be undertaken, such as European Sea Ports Organization (ESPO), International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International

Union of Railways (UIC), The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), Committee of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD), Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), International Union of Combined Road-Rail Transport Companies (UIRR), World Customs Organization (WCO), European Commission, UNECE Working Parties on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) and national experts. The secretariat was requested to contact these organizations with a view to soliciting their views and possible organization of a consultative meeting.

In line with this request, I wonder if you could consider the underlying recommendation and inform UNECE:

- whether or not your organization supports the idea to amend the Harmonization Convention with a new annex on border crossing procedures at seaports;
- if so, would you be willing to contribute to drafting of such an annex; and
- whether your representatives would be available to attend a consultative meeting which could be organized in conjunction with the 129th session of WP.30 (Geneva, 3-7 October 2011).

Your earlier reply will be highly appreciated.

Thank you so much for your cooperation,

Yours sincerely,

Eva Molnar
Director
Transport Division
