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Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR)

Eleventh session

Geneva, 22 February 2016

Report of the Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR) on its eleventh session

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I. Attendance

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its eleventh session in Geneva on 22 February 2016, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine).
2. Representatives of the following UNECE member States participated: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.
3. The European Union (EU) and Joint Research Centre (JRC), Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen (IPSC) and International Road Transport Union (IRU) also participated. Continental Automotive participated as an observer.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

4. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/27).

III. Programme of work (agenda item 2)

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

5. The Group of Experts continued to discuss the proposed changes to Article 22bis as well as to Article 14 (to make regional economic integration organizations eligible to accede) based on the consolidated proposal contained in ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/20.
6. The Russian Federation presented an oral proposal to amend Article 2, item 2.4.5 of the Agreement to allow for testing for interoperability by more than a single competent body. The Russian Federation proposed to replace the current provision with: 'Interoperability tests are carried out by competent laboratories recognized at the international level'.
7. The Russian Federation further informed the Group that it maintains its position regarding amending Article 14. As far as Article 22bis of the Agreement is concerned, the current position of the Russian Federation is to remove this Article from the Agreement. (as per ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/26, paras. 6-7). At the same time, the Russian Federation informed the Group about its readiness to cooperate with other Contracting Parties to the Agreement to seek and reach a compromise. All experts agreed that a compromise needs to be sought and achieved.
8. The Joint Research Centre (JRC) made a presentation, requested by the Russian Federation and Turkey at the last session, on certification procedures and requirements for interoperability certification centres (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/26, para. 8). JRC also recalled possible ways forward with regard to the existence of one or multiple interoperability certification laboratories across the AETR territory (as already elaborated in ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/7, chapter VII).
9. The Russian Federation invited JRC to provide information about the legal status of "Digital Tachograph System, European Root Policy, Version 2.1, by J.W. Bishop and J-P Nordvik.
10. The Group of Experts invited the Russian Federation to table an amendment proposal in writing at the next session. The secretariat reminded the Group that the deadline for submitting documents to be translated into English, French and Russian is 12

weeks before the date of next session. Documents which do not require translation (informal documents) can be submitted any time before a session.

B. Update of Amendment proposals of AETR, Article 14

11. The Group of Experts was informed about the status of the amendment proposal to allow four non-UNECE member States to accede to the AETR Agreement. The secretariat reiterated that due to notification of 7 May 2015 of the Secretary-General of United Nations by the Government of the Netherlands (invoking Article 21(2(b))), the acceptance or rejection of the amendment proposal of 18 February 2015 would only be determined by 18 May 2016 (i.e. nine months later than originally expected). The delay is due to the necessity to pass the amendment by the Parliament of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

C. Application of Regulation (EC) No. 561/2006 in the “AETR area”

12. The Group of Experts continued discussing the application of the Regulation 561/2006 given that the objective of amending the AETR Agreement in 2006 was to harmonize the two regimes for driving times and rest periods.

13. The European Union informed the Group about the process of revising Regulation 561/2006 and about the public consultations to be held in early 2016 on the proposed changes. The European Union invited the non-EU AETR Contracting Parties, to provide opinions on the proposed revisions during the public consultation process.

D. Exchange of information on issuing digital tachograph cards

14. The secretariat reiterated that, at the seventh session, experts agreed to support the tabling of an amendment proposal to introduce new Article 10bis (presented in the annex of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/20). The secretariat further informed the Group that so far no Contracting Party had formally tabled the amendment proposal to the Working Party on Road Transport. At the current session, none of the Contracting Parties volunteered to do it.

15. The delegate of Union of Chambers and Commodities Exchange of Turkey requested that the Turkish Government’s presentation on the results of the project to establish a data monitoring centre on national driving times and rest periods (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/26, para. 12) be postponed to the next session.

IV. EU Regulation No. 165/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (agenda item 3)

16. The Group of Expert continued to discuss EU Regulation No. 165/2014 and its possible impacts on the AETR Agreement, including those related to establishing the Tachograph Forum.

17. The European Union made a presentation on the process to establish the Tachograph Forum in accordance with the European Union Regulation No. 165/2014, Article 43. The European Union also informed the Group about the process to implement the Regulation No. 165/2014, i.e. what should the transition mechanism be for introducing the smart, second generation digital tachograph. This EU Regulation is expected to enter into force in March 2016 and become applicable in the EU after three years, i.e. in March 2019.

18. As there were different views on the possible ways of introducing the European Union Regulation No. 165/2014 into the AETR Agreement, the Group of Experts invited the European Union to prepare a document for the next session. The document will aim at ensuring the implementation of the tachograph specifications based on the Regulation 165/2014 in the framework of the AETR Agreement.

19. The Russian Federation urged the EU to provide the text (in Russian, if possible) that describes the technical specifications on the second generation, smart digital tachograph.

V. Other business (agenda item 4)

20. The Group of Experts discussed whether the title of Informal document No. 12 submitted to the upcoming session of the Inland Transport Committee is appropriate.

VI. Date and place of next meeting (agenda item 5)

21. The Group of Experts was informed that the next meeting is scheduled for 27-28 June 2016 in Palais des Nations in Geneva. The Chair encouraged experts to submit documents before the deadline 11 April 2016.

VII. Adoption of decisions (agenda item 6)

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