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Item 4 (b) (ii) (b) of the provisional agenda

**Customs Convention on the International Transport of
 Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975):
 Revision of the Convention:**
Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process:
**Activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and
 Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure**
**Report of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual
 and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR
 Procedure on its thirtieth session**
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I. Attendance

1. The Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (further referred to as “the Expert Group”) held its thirtieth session on 18 and 19 September 2019 in Budapest, at the kind invitation of the Hungarian customs administration.
2. The session was attended by experts from Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Turkey. Experts from the European Commission also attended the session.
3. At the start of the session, Mr. C. Torda (Head of Customs Department), delivered an opening statement on behalf of the National Tax and Customs Administration of Hungary, welcoming the delegates to the offices of its headquarters in Budapest. He stressed the growing relevance of electronic processing techniques for customs procedures and, therefore, welcomed the creation of an electronic platform for the TIR procedure. Looking back at the first time the Expert Group met in Budapest in 2003, he congratulated the experts with the great progress made in the field of computerization of the TIR procedure since then and wished them good results for the topical issues on the agenda of the current session, in particular the discussions on draft Annex 11.
4. The Expert Group also took note of the proposal to turn the Expert Group into a formal expert group, which would be provided with interpretation during its sessions and translation of its official documents in the three ECE working languages. The Expert Group further noted that, considering the financial implications, this conversion will require the support of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) as well as the approval of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and of the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM).

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: Informal document GE.1 No. 1 (2019)

5. The Expert Group adopted its provisional agenda as contained in Informal document GE.1 No. 1 (2019). Additionally, the Expert Group agreed, time permitting, to consider under agenda item 5 a list of questions prepared by the European Commission on the application of various provisions of the TIR Convention for TIR transports carried out under the eTIR procedure (Annex 1) as well as a proposal on the use of electronic signatures and trusted third parties to authenticate the holder, made by the Russian Federation in the framework of the so-called “meetings of the Friends of the Chair” (Annex 2). At the request of the Expert Group, the Russian Federation agreed to make a presentation on the concept of trusted third parties (TTP) under the same agenda item.

III. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

6. The Expert Group elected Mr. H. Greven from the Netherlands as Chair for the year 2019.

IV. New information and communication technology developments in the TIR system (agenda item 3)

7. The Expert Group recalled a presentation, at its twenty-eighth session, by a representative from the European Commission on the possible use of blockchain technology for the Excise Movement and Control System (EMCS) of the European Union and in a project to digitalize the Carnet Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission (eATA) and welcomed the offer to receive information about the results of the proof of concept of the project at one of its future sessions.

V. eTIR pilot projects (agenda item 4)

Projects related to the Memorandum of Understanding between ECE and IRU

8. Recalling the signature, on 6 October 2017, of a five years Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation between ECE and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) in the field of computerization of the TIR procedure and of the supporting Contribution Agreement (CA) towards enhancement of the full computerization of the TIR procedure, the Expert Group welcomed the recently launched eTIR project between Azerbaijan and Iran (Islamic Republic of). The Expert Group took note that a first eTIR transport from Iran (Islamic Republic of) to Azerbaijan had already taken place, that 7 companies and 35 customs offices had been selected to take part in the project and that Georgia had expressed an interest to join the project.

9. The Expert Group further noted that Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Turkey were still discussing a revision of their existing MoU which would allow extending their eTIR pilot project to all customs offices and all TIR Carnet holders from both countries.

10. Finally, the Expert Group welcomed a presentation of the secretariat on the recent developments made to the eTIR international system in parallel to the pilot projects. In particular, the secretariat detailed the efforts made to ensure that the eTIR international system would be reliable and secured and that it was about to have all E and I messages implemented and tested and, thus, available to start projects with direct connections with customs administrations.

VI. Annex 11 of the TIR Convention (agenda item 5)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2019/9/Rev.2

11. The Expert Group took note of the progress made with regard to the new Annex 11 and the comments provided by various contracting parties, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2019/9/Rev.2. In particular, the Expert Group took note of the two major issues on which a consensus has not yet been reached: (a) which customs offices should receive advance TIR data and (b) the authentication of the holder.

12. While considering Article 2 (b), Article 6 and Explanatory Note 11.6.2, the Expert Group was of the view that the clarification introduced by Explanatory Note 11.6.2 would not be necessary if Article 2 (b) and Article 6 would clearly indicate when and to whom advance TIR data need to be send. Consequently, ensuring the alignment of Annex 11 with the eTIR specifications, the Expert Group proposed to add “and of the country in which he or she will request an amendment to the declaration data” after “of the country of departure” to the definition of advance TIR data contained in Article 2 (b).

13. Furthermore, GE.1 proposed the following two options to further clarify the text of Article 6.

Option 1

Advance TIR data shall be submitted by the holder, or his or her representative, to the competent authorities of the country of departure and of the country in which he or she will request an amendment to the declaration data. Once the declaration, or the amendment, has been accepted in line with national law, the competent authorities shall forward the declaration data, or the amendment thereto, to the eTIR international system.

Option 2

Advance TIR data shall be submitted by the holder, or his or her representative, to the competent authorities of the country of departure. Once the declaration has been accepted in line with national law, the competent authorities shall forward the declaration data to the eTIR international system.

When the holder intends to change the declaration data, accepted by the competent authorities of the country of departure, advance TIR data shall also be submitted by the holder, or his or her representative, to the competent authorities of the country in which he or she will request an amendment to the declaration data. Once the amendment has been accepted in line with national law, the competent authorities shall forward the amendment to the eTIR international system.

14. With regard to the authentication of the holder, the delegation of the Russian Federation regretted that the secretariat had not published (as informal document) a proposal it had tabled in the course the meetings of the Friends of the Chair, as contained in Annex 2 to this report. The secretariat explained that, on the one hand, it had not received such an explicit request from the Russian Federation. On the other hand, the proposal did not take into consideration the amendments that had been approved by GE.1 at previous meetings, as contained in Informal document GE.1 No. 4 (2019), more specifically the decision to remove the use of a hash code to ensure the integrity of the declaration throughout the transport. Even though the proposal had not been published in advance, the Expert Group agreed to consider it and requested the delegation of the Russian Federation to clarify the concept of TTP, which is the key technology supporting its proposal.

15. The delegation of the Russian Federation gave a presentation on the concept of TTP which raised interest as well as numerous questions. The delegation of the Russian Federation clarified that the use of TTP would require all contracting parties to only use electronic signatures for the authentication of the holder when he/she submits the advance TIR data. Furthermore, it explained that each contracting party would need to set up a national TTP, which would have to be connected to the TTPs in all other contracting parties. It also clarified that, to avoid having to connect each and every TTP with all others, which would lead to an exponential number of connections, the connections could also be made via a central TTP which could be managed, for example, by ECE. On the question of costs, the delegation of the Russian Federation was not in a position to estimate how much it would cost per country to set up a TTP, nor the cost of establishing a central TTP at ECE, but agreed to work with the secretariat during the intersessional period to provide figures at the next session of the Expert Group, as well as, possibly, a revised proposal, taking into account the approved amendments to the eTIR specifications. The Expert Group, while supporting the idea to continue considering the proposal, in particular with regard to the financial impact on the overall eTIR project, was of the view that the introduction of new stakeholders, such as TTPs, would require a clarification of their roles and responsibilities in the eTIR specifications.

16. The Expert Group also agreed to have first considerations on a list of questions, prepared by the European Commission, on the application of various provisions of the TIR Convention for TIR transports carried out under the eTIR procedure (Annex 1), despite the fact that the questions were only presented at the session. Acknowledging that the working language of the Expert Group is English only, the experts of the Russian delegation indicated that, as part of their preparation for the meeting, they had translated the informal documents in Russian, but could not do so with the questions, as they were only tabled at the session. However, they agreed with the idea to have first considerations of the questions. Within the time available, the Expert Group, tentatively provided answers to some of the questions (as reflected in Annex 1) and requested the secretariat, in consultation with the European Commission, to continue this work and circulate the draft answers to eTIR focal points, for consideration at the next meeting of the Expert Group. The Expert Group was of the view that, once the questions and answers had been approved by the relevant bodies, they could be posted on the eTIR website under a new section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

VII. eTIR conceptual, functional and technical documentation (agenda item 6)

A. Contributions by the network of eTIR focal points

Documentation: Informal document GE.1 No. 2 (2019), Informal document GE.1 No. 3 (2019)

17. The Expert Group took note of Informal document GE.1 No. 2 (2019) and, in particular, that thirty-eight countries have nominated one or more eTIR focal points.¹ The Expert Group also recalled that eTIR focal points, together with TIR focal points, had been requested to respond to the GE.1 survey on the connection to the eTIR international system and the “opting out” of Annex 11, the results of which are contained in Informal document GE.1 No. 3 (2019).

18. The Expert Group regretted that only 12 responses had been received but, considering that one answer was received from the European Union on behalf of all its Member States, it noted that the final results still reflect the opinion of 39 contracting parties. On the question related to the amount of time required by customs administrations to connect to the eTIR system, the Expert Group noted that few countries were in a position to make such an assessment and that some would only be able to connect to the eTIR international system as part of already planned projects aimed at upgrading their customs Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems. When it comes to the possibility of using the “opt-out” clause contained in the draft Annex 11, the Expert Group noted that three countries might use it as the resources required to implement Annex 11 might not be justified by the number of TIR Carnets they currently process.

19. Finally, the Expert Group requested the secretariat to submit the final results of the survey to WP.30. The final results are attached as Annex III to this report.

B. eTIR conceptual, functional and technical documentation

Documentation: Informal document GE.1 No. 5 (2017), Informal document GE.1 No. 6 (2017), Informal document GE.1 No. 7 (2017), Informal document GE.1 No. 8 (2017) and Informal document GE.1 No. 4 (2019)

20. The Expert Group took note of Informal document GE.1 No. 4 (2019) which contains all the amendment already approved by the Expert Group at its 27th, 28th and 29th sessions. It noted that those amendments will be included in the next version of the eTIR specifications (4.3), whereas the current version (4.2a) is contained in Informal documents GE.1 No. 5, 6, 7 and 8 (2017). However, the Expert Group pointed out that some of the terminology used in Informal document GE.1 No. 4 (2019) is not aligned with the text of Annex 11 as it is under discussion and requested the secretariat to make the necessary amendments once the text of Annex 11 would be finalized.

C. Amendments

Documentation: Informal document GE.1 No. 5 (2019)

21. The Expert Group carefully considered the various amendment proposals and considerations contained in Informal documents GE.1 No. 5 (2019) and took the following decisions:

1. Accompanying document and fallback procedure

22. The Expert Group considered the draft accompanying document, the summary description of its usage, the revision of Chapter 1.2 (fallback) of the eTIR functional

¹ The list of eTIR focal points is on the eTIR web site: www.unece.org/trans/bcf/eTIR/focals.html.

specifications and Chapter 3 of the eTIR concepts document as well as four amendments proposed under paragraph 5 of Informal documents GE.1 No. 5 (2019).

23. With minor editorial changes to the wording of the amendments proposed under paragraph 5 of Informal documents GE.1 No. 5 (2019), the Expert Group agreed with the proposed amendments. Further to a presentation by an expert from the European Commission, the Expert group also requested the secretariat to prepare activity diagrams to further clarify the fallback procedures, for its next session.

2. Reconciliation procedure

24. The Expert Group thanked the experts from the European Commission for sharing the documentation regarding the National Service Desks, an essential element of the reconciliation procedure of the New Computerized Transit System (NCTS) and took note that the experts from the European Commission expressed doubts about the usefulness of a general reconciliation procedure in the framework of eTIR.

25. The Experts Group also pointed out at the lack of legal basis in the TIR Convention (other than Annex 10) and in Annex 11 for setting up a general reconciliation procedure. However, considering the absence of IRU, which had been the main advocate of the introduction of a reconciliation procedure in the eTIR specifications, the Expert Group decided to postpone the discussion on this issue to a next session. The Expert Group took this opportunity to express its regret with regard to the absence of experts from IRU at the session.

3. Pointers

26. The Expert Group agreed with the proposal to delete code lists 18 and 19.

4. Hash code

27. Recalling its discussion on the complications related to the usage of a hash code during the submission of the advance TIR data, the Expert Group agreed with all changes proposed in paragraph 14 of Informal document GE.1 No. 5 (2019).

5. Refusal to start

28. The Expert Group agreed with the changes proposed in paras. 15 and 16 of Informal document GE.1 No. 5 (2019), subject to the following change in the description of the fallback scenario: “[...] will nevertheless send the “refusal to start” **electronic** message at a later stage”.

6. Accident or incident

29. The Expert Group agreed with the changes proposed in in paragraph 17 of Informal document GE.1 No. 5 (2019), subject to the following change in the description of the fallback scenario: “[...] will nevertheless send the required **electronic** message at a later stage”.

7. Validations performed by the eTIR international system

30. The Expert Group took note that, according to the eTIR specifications, the eTIR international system is expected to perform strict validations with regard to the sequence of messages, the status of the holder, the mandatory nature of data elements, etc. While stressing the importance for all stakeholders to comply with standard eTIR messages, the Expert Group acknowledged that, during a transitional period, it could be envisaged, on a case by case basis, to accept messages which would not fully comply with the eTIR specifications, e.g. messages that would arrive out of sequence. Bearing that in mind, the Expert Group requested the secretariat to prepare a draft table presenting the possible transitional exceptions to the rules contained in the eTIR specification, for consideration at its next session.

8. Error codes

31. The Expert Group welcomed a presentation by the secretariat highlighting the need to improve the code list for errors (CL99). It agreed with the proposal by the secretariat and requested a revised code list of errors, for consideration at its next session.

9. Customs offices database

32. The Expert Group agreed with the changes proposed in paras. 21 and 22 of Informal document GE.1 No. 5 (2019) and requested the secretariat to propose an interface between the eTIR international system and the ITDB to extract information on customs offices approved for eTIR.

33. The Expert Group welcomed a presentation by the Chair on message specifications in spreadsheet format. It acknowledged the value of having all the information about a message presented in a single spreadsheet and the advantages of the spreadsheet format versus a conventional word processor or PDF format. However, in order not to overly complicate the publication of the eTIR specifications, the Expert Group was of the view that the message specifications in spreadsheet format, would not be part of the eTIR specification but made available for download on the eTIR website, as a tool to assist with the national implementation of eTIR.

VIII. Other business (agenda item 7)**A. United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business**

34. The Expert Group welcomed a video presentation by the Secretary of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) on the UN/CEFACT Multimodal Transport Reference Data Model.

B. World Customs Organization activities

35. The Expert Group welcomed information on the activities of the World Customs Organization (WCO), in particular that data maintenance requests (DMR) to the WCO data model can now also be submitted directly by international organizations, on the condition that such requests are submitted six weeks ahead of meetings of the Data Model Project Team (DMPT).

C. Other activities of interest

36. The Expert Group took note of developments of the International TIR Data Bank (ITDB) web application and the fact that the recruitment process of the information system officer in charge of ITDB had been finalized.

D. Date and place of next session

37. The Expert Group was not yet in a position to agree on a date for its next session. It requested the secretariat, in coordination with the Chair, to propose dates, possibly towards March or April 2020.

Annex I

Questions prepared by the European Commission on the application of various provisions of the TIR Convention for TIR transports carried out under the eTIR procedure

Questions/Replies by the Expert Group

New Art. 1 (s) of the body of TIR Convention

Annex 1 of the TIR Convention

- Page 1 of the TIR Carnet: how will the signature of the holder be handled in the eTIR context?
 - GE.1: in general, signatures are replaced by the security aspects related to the exchange of data (IRU, association, customs officers). In the case of the sending of advance TIR data by the holder, his/her signature is replaced by authentication means provided for in national law, including electronic signatures. Communication between the eTIR international system and the customs administrations will also be secured to ensure that the information about the holder is genuine.
- Where will the rules regarding the use of the eTIR Carnet be provided?
 - GE.1: eTIR Carnet is not a concept used in the eTIR specifications. (see Art. 1 (s)). The rules regarding the use of the accompanying document are dealt with in the eTIR specifications.
- What linguistic regime will be applied to the eTIR Carnet (French/English/Russian)?
 - GE.1 Translation can be requested as it is the case for the paper TIR Carnet.
- Page 2 of the TIR Carnet: how will the signature/stamp of customs authorities be handled in eTIR?
 - GE.1: in general, signatures are replaced by the security aspects related to the exchange of data (IRU, association, customs officers). In the case of the sending of declaration data and TIR operations data by customs administrations, the signature/stamp will be replaced by authentication means set up within the eTIR international system.
- Page 3 of the TIR Carnet: how will the “Certified Report” be completed in the eTIR context?
 - The eTIR specifications dedicate a specific use case to the certified report in case of accident or incident.
- Even if currently not used, how will eTIR deal with the Tobacco/Alcohol TIR Carnet?
 - GE.1: by using different “guarantee types”.
- How will loading lists and additional documents be handled in the eTIR context?
 - GE.1: by using the “attached documents” and “binary objects” classes.
- How will indications of reservations be possible in eTIR?
 - GE.1: by using the “reservation” attribute in the Termination message.
- How will the box “for official use” be available, particularly when the customs authorities do not allow goods under the TIR procedure to enter the territory of their respective country?
 - GE.1: when sending the “refusal to start TIR operation” message, customs can use the “reason” attribute.
- How long is the validity period of an eTIR compared to a TIR Carnet (box 1 and Article 9 of the TIR Convention)?

Questions/Replies by the Expert Group

- GE.1: the procedure to set up the validity should be the same as for paper TIR Carnets. The guarantee chain should be able to clarify if it intends to change the validity of eTIR guarantees.

Annex 9, Part I, paragraph 3 (vi)

- Which impact will the eTIR international system have on the price of an eTIR Carnet?
- GE.1: At this stage, the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) is the only study that has looked into this question. However, only the guarantee chain can indicate the consequences of computerisation on the prices of guarantees.

Annex 9, Part II, paragraph 4

- Does a person who has the authorization to use the paper TIR Carnet have automatically the right to use eTIR?
- GE.1: Yes.

Annex 9, Part III, paragraph 2 (g)

- It is possible that an eTIR Carnet is false or counterfeit?
- GE.1: In principle yes, as Information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems can be hacked, but the highest ICT security standards will be put in place to avoid this. However, considering the exchange of information between all stakeholders, it will be very difficult to use a false or counterfeited eGuarantee without being quickly discovered.

Annex 10, paragraph 2

- How will the reconciliation form (MRF) be used in the context of eTIR (in particular the part concerning the counterfoils)?
- GE.1: Discussions regarding a possible reconciliation procedure are still ongoing at GE.1.

Article 2

- In case of a transport which begins and ends in the same country and crosses another country, an appropriate endorsement is needed on the TIR Carnet. How will this provision be implemented in eTIR?
- Concerning the comment to Article 2 ('Use of TIR Carnets – first indent'): how will the suspension of the eTIR transport be handled?

Article 3

- For bulky goods, how will the eTIR Carnet handle the provision of article 32 (endorsement “heavy or bulky goods”)? Is it included in the specifications?
- Please also describe how the documents mentioned in Article 33 (e.g. packing lists, photographs, drawings) could be treated in the eTIR context. Perhaps they could be uploaded in the eTIR system?

Article 17

- Will it be possible to use eTIR for situations such as described in Article 17 (for a combination of vehicles or for several containers loaded on to a single road vehicle or on to a combination of vehicles)?

Article 18

- Please consider inserting in the specifications an explanation on how eTIR transports, which involve several customs offices of departure/destination will be handled. Such an addition could avoid a lot of questions in the future.

Questions/Replies by the Expert Group

Article 21

- How will the customs authorities insert a note in the eTIR Carnet in case they send the carrier back to the custom office of exit of the adjacent country if no clearance has been given (or not in due form) – E.N. 0.21-3?

Article 23 and 24

- In the exceptional case of an escort, how will the customs authorities insert a note and the indication of the reasons of the escort in the eTIR Carnet?
- How will new seals be recorded (also see Article 34 and 35, it must be clear in the eTIR context)?

Article 28

- In the eTIR context, how will the return of the eTIR Carnet to the holder or any other person be managed? Is a relevant message foreseen? In addition, can a proof of termination be printed?

**Annex 9, Part I,
paragraph 3, new
subparagraph (xi)**

Guaranteeing associations will have the obligation to confirm whether a guarantee is valid. It could be useful to have in the eTIR specifications a list of IT procedures that the national administrations should follow to get this information (see further comments on Article 10 of Annex 11).

Annex 11, Article 6

As TIR advance data could be submitted either directly to the competent authorities (e.g. via customs systems such as NCTS) or via the eTIR international system, could the specification clarify:

- If the eTIR international system will provide a web service?
 - How will the web service identify the holder (or his/her representative)?
 - Will customs administrations have privileged access to the eTIR international system?
 - What will happen if data are provided by the holder at the same time in a customs system and the eTIR international system? In particular which data will prevail?
 - Contracting parties shall accept the submission of advance TIR data via the eTIR international system. How can contracting parties authenticate the holder according to their national law (cf. Article 7)? Or is this not necessary in this case, as in accordance with Article 7, paragraph 2, contracting parties shall accept the authentication of the eTIR international system.
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Annex II

Proposal by the Russian Federation on the use of electronic signatures and trusted third parties to authenticate the holder

In the conceptual eTIR data model (Informal document GE.1 No 6 (2017) paragraph 5 (page 48) and paragraph 21 (page 49) (and also in other paragraphs that duplicate the meaning of those paragraphs) to read as follows:¹

5. After having generated the “key” to insure the integrity of the advance cargo information, the holder **signs the advance cargo information with a digital signature, in accordance with the legislation of his country of residence**, sends the advance cargo information to the Customs system in the country of departure, using a national declaration mechanism of the country of the departure (if he has the required credentials), the declarations mechanism of his country of residence (if available for declarations made in other countries), the web service made available in the eTIR international system or a declaration mechanism provided by the private sector.

...

21. The eTIR international system **verifies the digital signature by means of digital signature verification services (services of trusted third parties) and, in case of a positive verification result**, confirms the reception of the information.

¹ The text in **bold** reflects the amendments proposed by the Russian Federation.

Annex III

[English/French/Russian]

Results of the GE.1 survey on the connection to the eTIR international system and the “opting out” of Annex 11

I. Background

1. At its twenty-ninth session, the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (further referred to as “the Expert Group” mandated the secretariat to prepare a survey and circulate it among TIR and eTIR focal points to assess:

- the readiness of TIR contracting parties to connect to the eTIR international system once Annex 11 and the eTIR specifications have been adopted, and
- the intention of TIR contracting parties not to accept Annex 11 and, if so, for which reason.

2. The Expert Group set the deadline for replying to the survey to 31 January 2019. It also requested the secretariat to present preliminary results to WP.30 at its February 2019 session and the final results at the 30th session of the Expert Group.

3. The secretariat sent out the survey on 5 December 2018 and, at its 151st session, the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) took note of the preliminary results of the GE.1 survey on the connection to the eTIR international system and the “opting out” of Annex 11 and urged all contracting parties to respond to the survey no later than by 28 February 2019. On 1 March 2019, the secretariat sent out a last reminder kindly asking TIR and eTIR focal points to respond to the survey.

II. Survey questions

4. The following two questions were sent in English, French and Russian:

Question 1 / Вопрос 1

How long would your customs administration require to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification have been finalized and Annex 11 will be adopted?

Combien de temps votre administration des douanes aura-t-elle besoin pour se connecter au système international eTIR une fois que les spécifications eTIR auront été finalisées et que l'annexe 11 sera adoptée?

Сколько времени потребуется Вашей таможенной администрации для подключения к международной системе eTIR после того, как спецификация eTIR будет завершена, и Приложение 11 будет принято?

Question 2 / Вопрос 2

The provisions introducing new Annex 11 of the TIR Convention provide the possibility for TIR Contracting parties not to accept the annex, i.e. allowing countries not (yet) interested in eTIR not to be bound by the provisions of Annex 11. Does your administration intend to use this so-called “opt out” clause, and if so, why?

Les dispositions introduisant la nouvelle annexe 11 de la Convention TIR offrent aux parties contractantes TIR la possibilité de ne pas accepter l'annexe, ce qui permet aux pays qui ne sont pas (encore) intéressés par eTIR de ne pas être liés par les dispositions de l'annexe 11. Votre administration a-t-elle l'intention d'utiliser cette «clause de retrait», et si oui, pourquoi?

Положения, включенные в новое Приложение 11 Конвенции МДП, дают возможность Договаривающимся сторонам МДП не принимать Приложение, то есть позволяют странам, которые (пока) не заинтересованы в eTIR, не быть связанными положениями Приложения 11. Будет ли Ваша администрация использовать это в качестве так называемого «отказа» от применения, и если да, то почему?

III. Summary responses

5. Twelve responses were received, one of which was sent on behalf of European Commission and of the Member States of the European Union (28). Consequently, the opinion of 39 contracting parties is reflected in this document.

6. Three contracting parties (North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey) indicated the time it would take to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification have been finalized and Annex 11 will be adopted (respectively 1, 2 and 1.5 years). The European Union and Switzerland reported that there might be an opportunity to integrate eTIR in already planned project which are planned to be deployed in 2025, respectively 2026. Other contracting parties were not in a position to assess the time required or did not indicated it in their response.

7. Only three countries (Montenegro, Norway and Switzerland) indicated that they might use the “opt out” clause provided by Annex 11. The main reason provided being that the low number of TIR Carnets used in those countries does not justify the investments required by eTIR.

IV. Detailed responses

8. The following responses¹ were received by the secretariat:

Belarus

1. The question related to timeframe required by the Republic of Belarus to connect to the eTIR international system is premature for now.

2. The State Customs Committee of the Republic of Belarus (SCC) is interested in the computerization of the TIR procedure. However, the adoption of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention should be considered once issues identified by SCC are resolved, inter alia, those raised in Informal document WP.30 (2018) No. 1.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Pending answer from relevant ministry

European Union

1. In the EU, a common approach is envisaged which is to continue to use the NCTS to follow the TIR movements. In order to facilitate eTIR, an interconnection would be needed, which requires changes in the NCTS. Considering the advanced stage of the current development of the NCTS Phase 5, these changes are only possible in the next phase. The work on the Phase 6 is planned to start in Q4 2019. If the eTIR specifications will be adopted before that, the eTIR interconnection can be considered for that phase. The Phase 6 is planned to be deployed during a deployment window in Q2 2024 – Q2 2025.

2. The European Union is at this stage not intending to use the “opt out” clause and, given the fact that the European Union for the purposes of the TIR Convention is regarded as one territory, also individual Member States cannot decide to use the “opt out” clause. At the moment, ALL Member States and the European Commission are involved in the implementation of numerous IT Systems (new ones or substantial

¹ unofficial translations by the secretariat when required

upgrades of existing IT Systems) in the application of the Union Customs Code (UCC) and its Work Programme. This limits the resources available for other projects of new IT Systems. However, if there are Member States interested in implementing eTIR before the implementation of an EU-wide solution on a pilot basis, they are welcome to study the possibility.

Kirghizstan

1. The timing of connection to the international eTIR system depends on many factors, including the modernization of the information system of the Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic. In this connection, at the present time it is definitely not possible to answer in terms of connection.

2. No

Moldova

The Republic of Moldova supports the adoption of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention, concerning the digitization of the TIR Carnet (eTIR), and we hereby announce that we are positively exposed to its adoption.

At this stage, we are in a continuous process of relaunching the TIR-EPD electronic pre-declaration for Moldova, a part of the implementation of the transit procedure under the coverage of eTIR.

Montenegro

1. Customs administration of Montenegro did not attend and was not involved in project of eTIR international system. Also, Customs administration of Montenegro did not participate at the meetings which were organized related to eTIR project. We are not familiarized with the specific issues covered by this project.

It is important to note that the Customs administration of Montenegro, from November 2018 to November 2021, is implementing one of the most important and the biggest projects, related to implementation of NCTS phase 5 and preparation to accession to Common Transit Convention and Convention on Facilitation of trade in goods.

In this moment of providing answers, we cannot answer with certainty how long our customs administration will take to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification has been finalized and Annex 11 has been adopted.

2. Customs administration of Montenegro, as a candidate country for EU accession, has launched one of the most important and largest projects related to the NCTS implementation. In addition to the development of the NCTS, our organisation has plan to develop guarantee management system, risk analysis system, system of managing authorizations, system of electronic submission of declarations, help desk communicating with the NCTS etc.

During this project, our administration has planned to implement TIR in NCTS such as in the EU countries.

Due to the significance of the project itself, all of our capacities are involving of this project.

According to analyse of the TIR carnet statistics in Montenegro, there are only 2 holders who are using TIR carnets. There are 50 to 100 TIR carnets at annual level.

On the import side, considering the period from 2008 to 2018, we have a constant decrease in TIR carnets, so in 2018 we have only 504.

For these reasons, Montenegro as a contracting party will use the possibilities not to accept the Annex 11 and to remain using the existing system of TIR Carnets.

North Macedonia

1. Customs administration of North Macedonia will require two year to connect to the eTIR international system once the eTIR specification have been finalized and

Annex 11 will be adopted if there will be a need to develop new application. If there will be a need only to translate the application that will be used by other countries also we will require 6 months for translation, testing and training.

2. Customs administration of North Macedonia doesn't intend to use so-called "opt out" clause.

Norway

1. Norway is, as you know, a very small TIR-country with limited number of TIR-carnet issued every year and has pr. 1. January 2019 only four authorised holders. We have unfortunately not had resources to prioritize the TIR meeting and for that reason our knowledge about the connection to eTIR is very incomplete. It's therefore very difficult to estimate how much financial and human resources which will be needed to connect to the eTIR once the specifications have been finalized.

2. We will need more time and knowledge about the eTIR before being able to inform you when and if we are going to connect, and therefore we wish not to be bound by the provisions of Annex 1. Our administration must hence use the so-called "opt-out" clause.

Serbia

1. After the procurement procedure is completed, development of the national component of eTIR system could take approximately one year.

2. The Ministry of Finance and the Customs Administration of the Republic of Serbia consider that the adoption of Annex 11 TIR Convention would improve TIR system and will speedup TIR operations by improving the efficiency and security of customs procedures.

Switzerland

1. AFD is currently in a broad transformation program called DaziT, which will end by 2026. We will examine within this program whether the eTIR can be integrated. Where appropriate, planning for implementation will take place under this program.

2. Presumably, AFD will activate this "opt-out clause" for the moment and will not commit to using the eTIR solution for the following reasons:

- As mentioned in the answer to question 1, we will examine within the DaziT program if the eTIR will be implemented and if so, when.
- Switzerland issues few TIR Carnets. That's why the question of the relationship between costs and benefits is particularly important for us. In the case of implementation, the temporal aspect should also be taken into consideration for the same reason.
- ASTAG, the issuing association responsible in Switzerland, had questions about the TIR guarantee chain (Articles 8 and 11 of the TIR Convention). These issues should be clarified in the context of eTIR.

Turkey

1. As you may be well aware, UNECE is continuing the development work for the e-TIR International System and the software / hardware infrastructure has not been established for the time being. Since the system requirements for the purpose of harmonization with our customs system are not determined yet, Turkish Customs Administration needs at least 18 months to connect to the e-TIR International System.

2. On the other hand, since Turkey is a pioneering country as regards the implementation of e-TIR Pilot Projects with Iran and Georgia respectively, we attach great importance of the e-TIR System to be in use for all the Contracting Parties asap. Hence, we are supporting all the administrative, legal and technical work for the contribution to the e-TIR System. Therefore, we will adopt Annex 11 and launch e-TIR transactions, in this regard.

Ukraine

1. In 2018, Ukraine expressed its intention to participate in the eTIR Pilot Project (Ukraine-Georgia-Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan transport corridor). In this regard, in Ukraine, already now, legal and IT solutions are being applied for the implementation of this Pilot project.

We are planning to carry out the first transport using the electronic guarantee (as part of the eTIR Pilot Project) approximately after first quarter 2019.

2. Ukraine is interested in the adoption and application of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention.

Additionally, we would like to inform that as of December 26, 2018 State Fiscal Service of Ukraine agreed upon carriers proposed by the ASMAP of Ukraine, and customs authorities which are going to participate in the eTIR Pilot Project were determined.
