

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General
15 November 2019

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport****154th session**

Geneva, 4–7 February 2020

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda**Annotated provisional agenda for the 154th session* ****

to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 4 February 2020, and finishing Friday 7 February 2020 until around 6 p.m., Room VII, Palais des Nations.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of officers.
3. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party:
 - (a) The Inland Transport Committee recommendations for enhancing national road safety systems;

* For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of the documents mentioned in this provisional agenda to the meeting. There will be no official documentation available in the meeting room. Before the meeting, documents may be obtained directly from the ECE Sustainable Transport Division (email: wp.30@un.org). Documents may also be downloaded from the ECE Border Crossing Facilitation website www.unece.org/trans/bcf/welcome.html. During the meeting, documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.337, third floor, Palais des Nations).

Delegates are requested to register online at: uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=JxiYHc at the latest one week prior to the session. Prior to the session, delegates who do not hold a long-term access badge should obtain an identification badge at the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate (14, Avenue de la Paix). In case of difficulty, please contact by telephone the ECE secretariat (internal extension 75975). For a map of the Palais des Nations and other useful information, see www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html.

** The full text of the Conventions, as well as complete lists of contracting parties to the Conventions referred to in this agenda are available on the ECE website: www.unece.org/trans/conventn/legalinst.html#customs.



- (b) Alignment of the work of the Working Party with the Inland Transport Committee Strategy.
- 4. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975):
 - (a) Status of the Convention;
 - (b) Revision of the Convention:
 - (i) Amendment proposals to the Convention;
 - (ii) Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process:
 - a. eTIR pilot projects;
 - b. Activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure;
 - c. Conversion of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure into a formal Group of Experts.
 - (c) Application of the Convention:
 - (i) New developments in the application of the Convention;
 - (ii) TIR-related electronic data interchange systems;
 - (iii) Settlement of claims for payments;
 - (iv) Other matters:
 - a. Issues in the application of the Convention in the Republic of Belarus;
 - b. Decline in the sale of TIR Carnets;
 - c. Other matters.
- 5. Convention on the Facilitation of Border Crossing Procedures for Passengers, Luggage and Load-Luggage carried in International Traffic by Rail:
Status of the Convention.
- 6. Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956):
 - (a) Status of the Conventions;
 - (b) Issues in the application of the 1954 Convention in Egypt and Jordan.
- 7. Introduction of new technologies in rail, road, road-based mobility, inland waterway, logistics and intermodal transport until 2030.
- 8. Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party:
 - (a) European Union;
 - (b) Economic Cooperation Organization;
 - (c) Eurasian Economic Union;
 - (d) World Customs Organization.
- 9. Other business:
 - (a) List of decisions;
 - (b) Dates of the next sessions;
 - (c) Restriction on the distribution of documents.
- 10. Adoption of the report.

11. List of decisions taken at the 153rd session of the Working Party.

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.30/307

2. Election of officers

In accordance with the Commission's rules and procedures and established practice, the Working Party (WP.30) should elect a Chair and, possibly, a Vice-Chair for its sessions in 2020.

3. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party

(a) The Inland Transport Committee recommendations for enhancing national road safety systems

The Working Party may wish to recall that, on 24 April 2019, the Chair of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and the Director of the Sustainable Transport Division, in a joint letter, had invited the Chairs of Working Parties and Administrative Committees under the purview of ITC to take follow-up actions on aligning their work with the ITC strategy, in particular its road safety related aspects.

Against that background, at its 153rd session (October 2019), WP.30 considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/7/Rev.1, containing the results of a short survey among TIR customs focal points, with copy to WP.30 delegates, soliciting national experiences with customs-related activities in the field of road safety. The Working Party expressed its satisfaction with the fact that twenty-nine countries had replied to the survey. The Working Party confirmed the preliminary conclusions by the secretariat underscoring, in particular, the impression that the roles and tasks of customs authorities in the field of road safety enforcement are extremely limited, with the exception of the inspection of the technical status of vehicles upon exportation or importation or the involvement of customs in controls of tachographs, weight and dimensions of vehicles or in checking for compliance with dangerous goods regulations. The Working Party requested the secretariat to transmit the document to ITC for information (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/305, paras. 3–4).

The secretariat will inform WP.30 about follow-up activities.

(b) Alignment of the work of the Working Party with the Inland Transport Committee strategy

The Working Party may wish to recall that, on 26 June 2019, the Chair of ITC and the Director of the Sustainable Transport Division, in a joint letter, had invited the Chairs of Working Parties and Administrative Committees under the purview of ITC, to support the implementation of the ITC strategy by proposing a concrete plan aligning their work with the ITC strategy. The deadline for suggestions was set at 15 November 2019, after which date the ITC Bureau would prepare a concrete plan for presentation and, possibly, adoption at the eighty-second session of ITC (February 2020).

Against this background the Working Party, at its 153rd session (October 2019), considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/8 and its Corr.1 (English only), containing a list of

tasks that the Working Party should undertake in the coming years in addition to its regular work. The Working Party expressed its readiness, in principle, to support the implementation of the ITC strategy and, thus, tentatively agreed with the proposed timetable for the tasks to be undertaken, subject to further assessment at any time in the future. As a first step, the Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare, for its next session, a document summarizing the main scope of the seventeen legal instruments under the auspices of the Working Party, reviewing the final clauses and proposing, where required, amendments. At the same time, the Working Party expressed caution that the imposed tasks (a) should not intervene with its regular tasks; (b) should not lead to mechanical changes for the simple sake of alignment with the ITC strategy and that (c) it would be the sole prerogative of the Working Party to establish the relevance of proposing or adopting amendments to the legal instruments or to undertake any further related action. As a word of caution, the delegation of the European Union advised ECE not to let its efforts to be considered as a global actor for legal instruments in the field of transport become detrimental to its task as guardian of the interest of the ECE region. The delegation of Ukraine recalled the extensive set of questions and answers developed by the TIR Executive Board as training material for the various stakeholders of the TIR system, inviting the Working Party to review and, where required, amend or update them, in order to reflect the latest state of play of the TIR Convention (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/305, paragraph 5).

The secretariat prepared document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/1, summarizing the main scope of the seventeen legal instruments under the auspices of the Working Party, reviewing the final clauses and proposing, where required or deemed appropriate, amendments.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/1

4. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975)

(a) Status of the Convention

The Working Party will be informed about any changes in the status of the TIR Convention, 1975 and the number of contracting parties. In particular, the Working Party may wish to be informed that, further to the accession of Oman, the Convention now has seventy-six contracting parties, whereas TIR operations can be established with sixty-two countries. More detailed information on this issue as well as on depositary notifications is available on the TIR website.¹

(b) Revision of the Convention

(i) Amendment proposals to the Convention

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its previous session, it noted that no amendment proposals had been submitted for its consideration (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/306, para. 7).

At the same time, against the background of proposals adopted by the Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention, 1975 (AC.2), at its seventy-first session (October 2019), to increase the number of loading and unloading places in Article 18 of the Convention from four to eight, the Working Party is invited to consider and, possibly, adopt Informal document WP.30 (2020) No. 1 by IRU, containing a proposal to accommodate up to eight customs offices in the TIR Carnet (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/145, paragraph 48).

Documentation

¹ www.unece.org/tir/tir-depositary_notification.html.

Informal document WP. 30 (2020) No. 1

(ii) *Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process*

a. eTIR pilot projects

The Working Party will be informed about the latest developments in the field of computerization of the TIR procedure and the eTIR pilot projects.

b. Activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure

Under this agenda item, the Working Party will be asked to endorse the report of the thirtieth session of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (GE.1), convened in Budapest on 18–19 September 2019, at the kind invitation of the Hungarian customs administration (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/2).

c. Conversion of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure into a formal Group of Experts

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its 153rd session (October 2019), it considered the pros of having the status of GE.1 formalized (particularly, the availability of official documents in the three ECE languages and interpretation during sessions), versus continuing the current practice. The Working Party considered that any request to the Executive Commission (EXCOM) could only be launched after having received endorsement from ITC at its forthcoming session at the end of February 2020. In order not to frustrate the excellent work performed by GE.1 in its informal status, the Working Party requested the secretariat to seek endorsement from ITC to launch the formalization of GE.1 by EXCOM, while maintaining GE.1 as an informal group until such formalization was obtained. At the request of the delegation of the European Union, the secretariat was asked, upon submission of the proposal for conversion to ITC, that GE.1 would meet, at least, twice in 2020 and, at least, twice in 2021, so that more sessions of GE.1 could possibly be organized, with shorter intervals (see document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/9 and its Corr.1). The delegation of Ukraine stressed the importance of providing pertinent reasons to warranted conversion (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/306, paragraph 14).

The secretariat will inform WP.30 about follow-up activities.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/2, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/9,
ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/9/Corr.1

(c) **Application of the Convention**

(i) *New developments in the application of the Convention*

The Working Party is invited to raise new developments in the application of the TIR Convention, if any.

(ii) *TIR-related electronic data interchange systems*

The Working Party will be informed by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) about the latest statistical data on the performance of contracting parties in the control system for TIR Carnets — SafeTIR system.

(iii) *Settlement of claims for payments*

The Working Party may wish to be informed by customs authorities and IRU about the current situation on the settlement of claims for payments made by customs authorities against national guaranteeing associations.

(iv) *Other matters*

a. Issues in the application of the TIR Convention in the Republic of Belarus.

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its 153rd session (October 2019), it considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/11, containing a letter from the Lithuanian National Road Carriers Association (LINA) on the introduction of mandatory payment for electronic services in Belarus. When introducing the topic, the delegation of Lithuania clarified that the issue evolved around the introduction, on 1 July 2019, of a unified system of transmission of pre-declarations in Belarus, meaning that all advance cargo information including the one transmitted by the IRU application TIR Electronic Pre-Declaration (EPD) would be sent to the Belarusian customs exclusively through this unified platform operated by the “National Centre for Electronic Services” (NCES). According to Presidential Decree No. 515 of 8 November 2011, NCES would provide electronic services to state bodies, other organizations and citizens, both on a paid and unpaid basis. At the same time, services linked to the transmission of advance cargo information to the customs offices of Belarus would be carried out exclusively on a paid basis. According to inquiries, non-residents of Belarus would not have direct access to the unified platform, but would need to pass through customs brokers. The delegation of the European Union underlined that, in its view, the fees charged by the customs authorities of Belarus to European carrier are not in line with the spirit of the TIR Convention. For normal customs services (i.e. within regular working hours, at customs premises), the customs administrations of member States of the European Union do not charge any fees, and this could serve as a good example. The delegation of Uzbekistan supported the statements by the delegations of Lithuania and the European Union, stressing that charging a fee was not only against the TIR Convention but may also be an issue with regard to the principles of the World Trade Organization of free transit and the charging of fees. IRU specified that charging a fee for regular customs services constitutes a violation of Article 46 of the Convention. Allowing such practice forms a real threat to the continuation of the TIR system in general and the introduction of eTIR in particular. The delegations of the Republic of Moldova supported the previous speakers. The secretariat was requested to transmit the findings of the Working Party to the Belarus authorities (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/306, paras. 20–21).

The secretariat will inform WP.30 about follow-up activities.

b. Decline in the sale of TIR Carnets

Under this agenda item, the Working Party may wish to be informed that AC.2 at its seventy-first session (October 2019), took note that the secretariat had prepared a study on the reasons for the decline in sale of TIR Carnets over the years for consideration by the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) at its October 2019 session and that the study as amended with comments by TIRExB would be submitted as formal document for consideration at the February 2020 session of the Committee. IRU requested the secretariat to bring the results of the study to WP.30, where the transport industry was also represented. The Committee agreed that the study be first submitted to WP.30 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/145, paras. 76–77).

Against this background, WP.30 is invited to consider document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/3.

c. Other matters

The Working Party may wish to consider any other issues or difficulties in the application of the TIR Convention faced by customs authorities, national associations, the international insurers or IRU.

Documentation

ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/11, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/3

5. Convention on the Facilitation of Border Crossing Procedures for Passengers, Luggage and Load-Luggage carried in International Traffic by Rail

Status of the Convention

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its 153rd session (October 2019), the secretariat informed WP.30 that, on 27 September 2019, at the annual Treaty Event, held at the occasion of seventy-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Chad had signed the convention. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed the Working Party that, at the proposal of the Ministry of Transport, the Russian Government, on 30 September 2019, had approved the signing of the convention. The Ministry of Transport had been instructed to sign the document on behalf of the Russian Federation. Recalling the importance of the new Convention for the development of international rail passenger traffic, he called on countries to accede to it (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/306, paras. 29–30).

More detailed information on this issue as well as on depositary notifications is available on the TIR website.²

6. Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)

(a) Status of the Conventions

The Working Party will be informed about the status of the Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private (1954) and Commercial (1956) Road Vehicles.

(b) Issues in the application of the 1954 Convention in Egypt and Jordan

The Working Party may wish to recall the ongoing issues in Egypt and Jordan in the application of the 1954 Convention, particularly due to the fact that customs authorities do not seem to respect the deadlines and procedures laid down in the Convention.

The secretariat will inform the Working Party about the latest developments of this issue, if any, possibly assisted by the International Touring Alliance / International Automobile Federation (AIT/FIA).

Under this agenda item, the secretariat will brief WP.30 about its participation in a seminar co-organized by FIA and the Automobile and Touring Club of Egypt (ATCE) “The Istanbul Convention and the United Nations transport conventions affecting customs” on 3 November 2019 in Cairo.

7. Introduction of new technologies in rail, road, road-based mobility, inland waterway, logistics and intermodal transport until 2030.

As part of the contribution of the Working Party to the ITC Strategy until 2030, delegations are invited under this standing agenda item to raise technological developments that could be introduced or applied within the context of the legal instruments under the auspices of the Working Party.

² www.unece.org/tir/tir-depositary_notification.html.

8. Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party

The Working Party will take note of activities by various regional economic commissions or Customs Unions as well as by other organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, and countries as far as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party.

(a) European Union

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent developments in the European Union related to the activities of the Working Party.

(b) Economic Cooperation Organization

The Working Party may wish to be informed about relevant activities and ongoing projects carried out by the Economic Cooperation Organization.

(c) Eurasian Economic Union

The Working Party may wish to be informed about further progress in relevant activities and projects carried out by Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

(d) World Customs Organization

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities of the World Customs Organization as far as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party.

9. Other business

(a) List of decisions

Under this agenda item, the Working Party may wish to recall that, as requested at the 145th session, the secretariat includes a list of decisions as Annexes to the final reports of sessions. At its previous session, the Working Party requested the secretariat to continue this practice, thus keeping track of the status of decisions and include the practice as a separate agenda item for its future sessions. The secretariat agreed to this, adding that the list would also be attached to future draft agendas (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/290, para. 51), (see agenda item 11).

The Working Party is invited to review the list of decisions and provide guidance to the secretariat.

(b) Dates of the next sessions

The Working Party may wish to decide on the dates of its next sessions. The secretariat has made arrangements for the 155th session to take place in the week of 8–12 June 2020 and for the 156th in the week of 12–16 October 2020.

(c) Restriction on the distribution of documents

The Working Party should decide whether or not there shall be any restrictions on the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

10. Adoption of the report

In accordance with established practice, the Working Party will adopt the report on its 154th session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. Given the present translation resource restrictions, parts of the final report may not be available at the session for adoption in all working languages.

11. List of decisions taken at the 153rd session of the Working Party

<i>Reference in final report (para.)</i>	<i>Short description of decision</i>	<i>Actor</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
4	Transmit the results of the survey to ITC	secretariat	a.s.a.p.
5	Transmit the work alignment document to ITC	secretariat	a.s.a.p.
14	Request extension informal GE.1 for 2020 and seek endorsement for conversion into formal GE.1 from ITC	secretariat	a.s.a.p.
21	Transmit WP.30 findings to Belarus	secretariat	a.s.a.p.
27	Organize twelfth session AC.3 (5 February 2020)	secretariat	13 November 2019
