
**Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and
Connectivity (TWG-STTC)**

22nd Session
1-2 November 2017
Astana, Kazakhstan

International Conventions and Agreements

(Item 4.2 of the Agenda)

Note by ECE/ESCAP

1. Harmonizing the legal regimes relating to international transport continues to be a prerequisite to ensure the smooth and efficient movement of goods through national borders. During its previous sessions, the Thematic Working Group reaffirmed the importance of the international legal instruments listed in the protocol of its second session and re-iterated the invitation to SPECA countries to intensify their efforts to accede to all of them as soon as possible. The Working Group stressed that accession to UN transport legal instruments would only serve transport facilitation if followed by proper implementation/enforcement measures.
2. The accession status to the conventions recommended by ESCAP resolution 48/11 and the Group is shown in Annex 1. Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have acceded to all the seven conventions recommended by ESCAP resolution 48/11, and Kazakhstan has acceded to six of the seven conventions. There is a need for other SPECA countries to take concrete steps towards accession to the rest of the seven core conventions.
3. In comparison to the last year, with respect to UN legal instruments identified by the second Session of SPECA TWG-STTC, the situation is the following:
 - Turkmenistan has ratified the Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods. Efforts should be made to efficient implementation of the Convention in all SPECA countries, with a view to ensuring territorial continuity and consequently facilitating transport within SPECA region and beyond;

4. SPECA countries could benefit from acceding and implementing the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network which was signed by China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation on 8 December 2016 during the third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport held on 5-9 December 2016 in Moscow, Russian Federation. This Agreement will enhance regional connectivity by providing new links between the Russian Federation and China through the central and western parts of Mongolia, and sea access to landlocked Mongolia. Under the agreement, each party will grant carriers of the other two parties the right to undertake international road transport on their respective national territories along Asian Highway routes 3 and 4. This arrangement signals a new era of economic cooperation between the three signatory countries, opens up new trade prospects for businesses, and will lead to better connectivity for people in rural and remote areas. Once it enters into force, the Agreement will be open for accession by other countries. The Commission, at its 73rd session (May 2017), recognized this agreement as an important initiative to operationalize the AH Network and adopted resolution 73/4, which encourages all Parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the AH Network to consider accession to the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the AH Network and requested the secretariat to continue to support its implementation.

5. Taking into consideration the complexity of dealing with different international, subregional and bilateral agreements, SPECA countries may avail the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation, which was established by the ESCAP Secretariat in February 2014. The Network provides advice and promotes the harmonization and coordination of different legal instruments on transport facilitation. It is a key modality for building an effective legal regime and technical capacity for international transport facilitation in the region.

6. The Database of Agreements on International Road Transport was developed by ESCAP Transport Division under the project on “Harmonization of Legal Environment for Operations of International Road Transport in the ESCAP region” financed by the Government of the Russian Federation, fulfilling the request of the Second Meeting of the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation (25-26 March 2015, Incheon, Republic of Korea). It includes the texts of over 200 documents, including bilateral agreements and other legal instruments related to international road transport or related to it, as well as selected major multilateral agreements containing provisions on international road carriage.

7. The texts of the bilateral and multilateral agreements in the database were collected by the secretariat from ESCAP member countries and international organizations and from different other sources, including official websites of Government agencies (Ministries of Transport, Chambers of Commerce, etc.) and legal databases. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure that information and documents provided in this database are accurate and up-to-date based on available information. However, SPECA countries are invited to access the database and review the information for accuracy. The countries are also encouraged to send updates on the agreements when they appear so allowing the secretariat to include them in the database. The database can be accessed under the following web link:
<http://www.unescap.org/resources/database-agreements-international-road-transport>

The Thematic Working Group may wish to

- Reaffirm the importance of the UN transport legal instruments listed in the protocol of TWG-STTC second Session and reiterate the invitation addressed to SPECA member States to intensify their efforts to accede all as soon as possible;
- Stress the importance of efficient implementation of ratified UN transport legal instruments in SPECA member States;
- Invite SPECA member States to encourage their experts to join the ESCAP Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation and to participate more actively in its activities;
- Encourage SPECA member States to consider acceding to the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network;
- Indicate further technical assistance needed from ECE and ESCAP secretariats in relation to the accession and/or implementation of the transport-related UN legal instruments.
- Provide the text of missing agreements, additions, corrections or updates to the Database of Agreements on International Road Transport

**Accession Status to the UN International Agreements and Conventions Listed in the
Protocol of the 2nd Session of the TWG-STTC
as of 1 August 2016**

№	Agreements and Conventions	AFG	AZE	KAZ	KGZ	TJK	TKM	UZB
<u>Conventions Recommended by UNESCAP Resolution 48/11</u>								
1	Convention on Road Traffic (1968)		X (2002)	X (1994)	X (2006)	X (1994)	X (1993)	X (1995)
2	Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)		X (2011)	X (1994)	X (2006)	X (1994)	X (1993)	X (1995)
3	Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR, 1956)		X (2006)	X (1995)	X (1998)	X (1996)	X (1996)	X (1995)
4	Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	X (1977)	X (2000)		X (1998)			X (1999)
5	Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention) (1975)	X (1982)	X (1996)	X (1995)	X (1998)	X (1996)	X (1996)	X (1995)
6	International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)		X (2000)	X (2005)	X (1998)	X (2011)	X (2016)	X (1996)
7	Customs Convention on Containers (1972)		X (2005)	X (2005)	X (2007)			X (1996)
<u>Additional Agreements and Conventions:</u>								
8	European Agreement on Main International traffic arteries (AGR) (1975)		X (1996)	X (1995)				
9	European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC) (1985)							
10	European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) (1991)			X (2002)				
11	European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Traffic opened for signature at Vienna on 8 November 1968 (1971)			X (2011)				
12	European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1971)		X (2011)	X (2011)				
13	European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR) (1970)		X (1996)	X (1995)		X (2011)	X (1996)	X (1998)
14	Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954)							
15	European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) (1957)		X (2000)	X (2001)		X (2011)		
16	Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (ATP) (1970)		X (2000)	X (1995)	X (2012)	X (2011)		X (1999)

Notes: 1. X - Final signature, ratification, accession;
2. AFG – Afghanistan; AZE – Azerbaijan; KAZ – Kazakhstan; KGZ – Kyrgyzstan; TJK - Tajikistan; TKM – Turkmenistan; and UZB – Uzbekistan.