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Working Party on Road Transport

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

Twenty-fourth session
Geneva, 13 October 2020

Report of the Group of Experts on the European Agreement concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport on its twenty-fourth session

I. Attendance

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its twenty-fourth session in Geneva on 13 October 2020, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine).
2. Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Andorra, Austria, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Liechtenstein, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.
3. The European Commission, EuroMed Transport Project and the following non-governmental organizations were represented: International Transport Forum (ITF-OECD), Moscow Chamber of Commerce and Industry, National Association of Automobile and Urban Passenger Transport Enterprises, The Confederation of Organization in Road Transport Enforcement (CORTE) and International Road Transport Union (IRU). Continental Automotive GmbH, In Group and Scania CV AB participated as observers.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

4. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/54/Rev.1). The Group also noted that this document revises the annotated agenda prepared for the session of 15 June 2020 (ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/54) which did not take place due to COVID-19 restrictions.
5. The secretariat explained that the current session is taking place in a dual format due to the COVID-19 situation. Participants can attend in-person or can connect via an Internet platform with simultaneous interpretation in three official languages. In addition, due to United Nations resource challenges and the reduction in duration of regular sessions from three to two hours, this session would last only three hours.

III. Programme of Work

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

6. At the last session, the Group of Experts had reviewed ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.4, agreed on some changes, and requested the secretariat to prepare ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.5 for the current session. At this session, the Russian Federation indicated that it intends to submit a document which proposes to revise Article 10 in ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2017/2/Rev.5. The Group deferred a more detailed discussion of this document to the next session.

7. At the last session, the Group of Experts had also discussed the need to introduce a provision on the transition mechanism necessary to facilitate the introduction of “smart tachographs” once Appendix 1C enters into force. At this session, the Group took note of ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2020/1 (submitted by the Russian Federation) which contains amendments to Article 13 on transitional provisions and it deferred any further discussions until the next session.

B. Appendix 1C

8. The European Commission gave a presentation about a new version (“Version 2”) of smart tachograph to be implemented in the EU area by August 2023 for newly registered vehicles and by end of 2025 for all vehicles engaged in international road transport (ie. by retrofitting).

9. After discussion, the Group invited the European Commission to make a formal proposal related to amending the AETR Agreement to include “Version 2” of smart tachograph to be tabled at its next session.

10. The Group took note of the draft final version of Appendix 1C (except the tables of contents which remain to be modified) submitted by the Government of Croatia in its role of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The secretariat has made this document available as submitted (Informal document No.1).

C. Dedicated Short Range Communication (DSRC)

11. The Group decided to discontinue this agenda item as it had reached the wording agreement at the last session.

D. Application of Regulation (European Commission) No. 561/2006 in the AETR area

12. Due to time constraints, the Group requested that the European Commission defer its presentation on “Mobility Package I” until the next session. The Group was informed that the presentation has been uploaded onto the AETR website.

IV. Amendment of Article 14

13. The secretariat reminded the Group of Experts that in order to accommodate the request of the Government of Egypt to amend Article 14 (to make the country eligible to accede), an AETR Contracting Party is required to formally submit an amendment proposal. An amendment proposal has yet to be received. The Chair invited an AETR Contracting Party to consider making such a proposal as soon as possible. The secretariat again invited the Group to consider amending Article 14 to make – for example - all United Nations member States eligible to accede (as per the ITC Strategy in ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2).

V. TACHOnet

14. At the last session, the European Commission made a presentation and the Russian Federation proposed a number of changes to ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2019/1/Rev.2 and also suggested that the document as well as TACHOnet in general be a subject of bilateral discussions with the European Commission prior to this session. The Russian Federation re-emphasized its comments. The Group agreed that the discussion will continue at the next session.

VI. Reconciliation of “AETR regimes” in the European Union and non-European Union contracting parties after 15 June 2019

15. The Group of Experts decided to discontinue this agenda item as it forms part of the discussions related to item 2(b).

VII. Other Business

16. The Group of Experts agreed to request that SC.1 extend its mandate from June 2021 to June 2023 and also requested that UNOG Conference Services provide the meeting rooms, interpretation services, and document translation for three meetings per year. The Group also agreed to extend the Memorandum of Understanding between ECE and the European Commission which recognizes the Joint Research Centre as the authority for Root and Interoperability for non-European Union AETR Contracting Parties to December 2022. Finally, the secretariat informed the Group that a non-European Union AETR Contracting Party had written to the ECE Executive Secretary earlier this year about alleged violations of the AETR Agreement by European Union AETR contracting parties, but that a reply had not been received. The European Commission will follow up on the status of the reply.

VIII. Date and Place of Next Meeting

17. The next meeting is scheduled for 22 February 2021 at Palais des Nations in Geneva. The deadline for the submission of formal documents is 1 December 2020.

IX. Adoption of the Report

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