


Economic Commission for Europe
Inland Transport Committee
Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport
156th session

Geneva, 9 and 11 February 2021

**Report of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting
Transport on its 156th session**
Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Attendance.....	1–2	3
II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)	3	3
III. Election of officers (agenda item 2).....	4	3
IV. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 3).....	5–8	3
Alignment of the work of the Working Party with the Inland Transport Committee Strategy.....	5–8	3
V. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975) (agenda item 4)	9–28	5
A. Status of the Convention.....	9–10	5
B. Revision of the Convention	11	5
Amendment proposals to the Convention.....	11	5
C. Application of the Convention.....	12–28	5
1. Comments to the TIR Convention.....	12	5
2. eTIR.....	13–23	6
(a) eTIR pilot projects	13–17	6
(b) New developments in the eTIR international system.....	18	6
(c) eTIR interconnection projects.....	19–20	7
(d) Activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure into a formal Group of Experts	21–22	7
(e) eTIR website	23	7
3. New developments in the application of the Convention.....	24	8

4.	TIR-related electronic data interchange systems.....	25	8
5.	Settlement of claims for payments	26	8
6.	Other matters.....	27–28	8
(a)	Decline in the sale of TIR Carnets	27	8
(b)	Other matters.....	28	8
VI.	International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls for Goods, 1982 (Harmonization Convention) (agenda item 5)	29–31	8
A.	Status of the Convention.....	29	8
B.	Issues in the application of the Convention	31	9
VII.	Convention on the Facilitation of Border Crossing Procedures for Passengers, Luggage and Load-Luggage carried in International Traffic by Rail (agenda item 6).....	32	9
	Status of the Convention	32	9
VIII.	Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956) (agenda item 7).....	33–34	9
A.	Status of the Conventions	33	9
B.	Issues in the application of the Conventions.....	34	9
IX.	Introduction of new technologies in rail, road, road-based mobility, inland waterway, logistics and intermodal transport until 2030 (agenda item 8)....	35	10
X.	Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 9).....	36–41	10
A.	European Union.....	37	10
B.	Economic Cooperation Organization.....	38	10
C.	Eurasian Economic Union	39	10
D.	World Customs Organizations.....	40	11
E.	Bureau International des Conteneurs	41	11
XI.	Other business (agenda item 10)	42–44	11
A.	Dates of the next sessions	42	11
B.	Restriction on the distribution of documents	43	11
C.	List of decisions.....	44	11
XII.	Adoption of the report (agenda item 11)	45	11
Annex			
	List of decisions taken at the 156th session of the Working Party.....		12

I. Attendance

1. The Working Party held its 156th session on 9 a.m. and 11 p.m. February 2021, virtually and in-person, in Geneva. The session was attended by representatives of the following countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. A representative of the State of Palestine was present as observer. Representatives of the European Union were present. Representatives of the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Commission and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe were also present. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), International Bureau of Containers (BIC) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

2. At the start of the session, French and Russian speaking delegates deplored that no interpretation was available on 9 February, which had made it complicated, if not impossible, for them to fully engage in the preliminary discussions, leading to the text of the draft report as submitted for adoption on 11 February 2021, with interpretation. These delegations requested the secretariat to undertake all efforts to ensure interpretation for the complete duration of future sessions. In reply, the secretariat explained that it merely followed the instructions imposed by the competent services of the United Nations Office Geneva (UNOG), the ECE hierarchy and, ultimately, the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM), but remained committed to providing the maximum possible assistance to facilitate meetings, within the limitations set by the ongoing pandemic and liquidity crisis.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

3. WP.30 adopted the provisional agenda, prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/311).

III. Election of officers (agenda item 2)

4. In accordance with the Commission's rules and procedures and established practice, the Working Party (WP.30) elected Mr. O. Fedorov (Ukraine) as Chair for its sessions in 2021.

IV. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 3)

Alignment of the work of the Working Party with the Inland Transport Committee strategy

5. The Working Party recalled that, at its 154th session (February 2020), it started considering 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 (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/308, paras. 8 and 9). At its 155th session (October 2020), the Working Party took note of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/8 and comments by the European Commission on behalf of the member States of the European Union and decided to continue discussions at its 156th session, requesting delegations to pursue their national consultations about the status and relevance of the 17 legal instruments under the auspices of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/310, para. 4).

6. As a first assessment, the Working Party confirmed that, within the context of the current exercise (consider amending legal instruments with geographical or procedural barriers), there was no need to further discuss the following legal instruments, as enumerated in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/1¹:

- (a) Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, 1954;
- (b) Additional Protocol to the Convention concerning Customs Facilities for Touring, 1954;
- (d) TIR Convention, 1959
- (h) International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage, carried by Rail, 1952;
- (i) International Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Goods, carried by Rail, 1952;
- (j) Customs Convention concerning Spare Parts Used for Repairing EUROPE Wagons, 1958;

With regard to this Convention, the European Commission informed the Working Party that various member States had expressed an intention (in the long term) to withdraw from this Convention, whereas some others considered it obsolete, without being able to provide a final position.

- (o) Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport, 1994;

With regard to this Convention, the European Commission informed the Working Party that it had started internal consultations, which were still ongoing.

- (p) Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail under Cover of SMGS Consignment Notes, 2006 (not yet entered into force);
- (q) Convention on the Facilitation of Border Crossing Procedures for Passengers, Luggage and Load-Luggage carried in International Traffic by Rail, 2019 (not yet entered into force).

6bis. Considering that the following legal instruments were under constant review by either the Working Party, the Administrative Committee of the TIR Convention (AC.2) or the Administrative Committee for the Harmonization Convention (AC.3):

- (c) Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, 1954;
- (e) TIR Convention, 1975;
- (g) Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles, 1956;
- (n) Harmonization Convention, 1982.

7. the Working Party confirmed that its further activities on this topic be limited to:

- (f) Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation for Private Use of Aircraft and Pleasure Boats, 1956;
- (k) Customs Convention on Containers, 1956;
- (l) Customs Convention on Containers, 1972;
- (m) European Convention on Customs Treatment of Pallets Used in International Transport, 1960.

¹ To respect the official United Nations formatting rules, the original enumeration in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/1, being 1-17, has been adjusted to respect the formatting rules for the current document.

8. The Working Party reiterated its request to delegations to keep it informed about any consideration regarding those four Conventions and decided to continue its deliberations at the next session.

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

A. Status of the Convention

9. The Working Party was informed about changes in the status of the TIR Convention, 1975 and the number of contracting parties. In particular, the Working Party was informed that, further to the accession by Egypt on 16 December 2020 (see C.N.570.2020.TREATIES-XI.A.16 of 22 December 2020), the Convention now has seventy-seven contracting parties, whereas TIR operations can be established with sixty-four countries. The TIR Convention will enter into force for Egypt on 16 June 2021.

10. The Working Party was further informed that, on 4 November 2020, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, issued the following depositary notifications: (i) C.N.513.2020.TREATIES-XI.A.16, informing of the submission of various proposals to amend the body and annexes of the TIR Convention, 1975, including those that make the electronic submission of data to ITDB obligatory. In accordance with the provisions of Article 59 (3) of the Convention, the amendments shall enter into force on 4 February 2022, unless an objection has been communicated to the Secretary-General not later than by 4 November 2020; (ii) C.N.514.2020.TREATIES-XI.A.16, informing of the submission of a proposal to amend Annex 6 of the TIR Convention, 1975 with a new Explanatory Note 0.49, granting operators greater facilities. In accordance with the provisions of article 60 (1) of the Convention, the Administrative Committee decided, at its seventy-third session (11 October 2020) that the amendment shall enter into force on 1 June 2021, unless, by 1 March 2021, five or more objections were raised. More detailed information on this issue as well as on depositary notifications is available on the TIR website.²

B. Revision of the Convention

Amendment proposals to the Convention

11. The Working Party was informed that, at present, no amendment proposals to the Convention have been submitted for its consideration.

C. Application of the Convention

1. Comments to the TIR Convention

12. The Working Party recalled that, further to the adoption of various amendment proposals to the provisions of the Convention, there are certain (new or updated) comments that need to be adopted by the Working Party and, consequently, endorsed by the Committee. These concern: (i) comment to Article 18; (ii) comment to Annex 6, Explanatory Note 0.8.3; (iii) comment to Annex 6, Explanatory Note 0.49 and (iv) comment to Annex 9, Part II "Model Authorization Form (MAF)". The Working Party considered and adopted the comments contained in Annex I of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/1 and requested the secretariat to transmit them to AC.2 for endorsement. With regard to the comment "Possibilities of increasing the total number of loading and unloading places to more than four in exceptional cases" to Article 18, in Annex II of the said document, the Working Party tentatively agreed that it could be adjusted to accommodate maximally 16 places of loading

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

and unloading, subject to further assessment at the next session. From the side of the private sector, IRU requested, at least for now, to keep the existing comment as long as the current model of the TIR Carnet with maximum four places of loading and unloading is still in circulation.

2. eTIR

(a) eTIR pilot projects

13. The secretariat informed the Working Party that, in November 2020, it had received, in reply to OIOS recommendation No. 6, which was referring to the apparent conflict of interest arising from its arrangement with the external partner of the TIR project – clearly referring to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between ECE and IRU in 2017 – the advice from the Ethics office, recommending that the existing MOU of October 2017 should be revisited, revised and updated, once Annex 11 enters into effect, to ensure full alignment of the MOU with the updated financing structure, as proposed in the regulatory framework on Annex 11. Thus, the secretariat pointed out that there are no eTIR pilot projects to report under this agenda item based on the 2017 MOU, in which the secretariat was involved. Furthermore, the secretariat informed the Working Party that it was working closely together with IRU to prepare a new, revised MOU which will be based on the following principles:

- Secretariat will no longer report to IRU but only to AC.2;
- Preparation of annual workplans for approval by AC.2;
- Funding of the P3 post based on the same remaining funds but for longer period.

14. In the framework of a project from 2019, funded by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) the delegation of Uzbekistan recalled its interest in organizing pilot projects with Kazakhstan, China and other border States before the end of 2020. In order to organize these projects, Uzbek customs had signed all necessary conceptual documents for the participation of the project and to put the appropriate technical tools in motion. Then, the State Customs Committee (SCC) of Uzbekistan, together with the customs authorities of Kazakhstan, IRU, the Turkish Council and GIZ, organized a first pilot transport as a contribution towards the full computerization of the TIR procedure, as stipulated in Annex 11, between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan. Two Uzbek cargo vehicles left in the direction of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the basis of electronic guarantees and electronic declarations. Until today, 25 transport operations have been carried out between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan within the framework of the pilot project. The pilot project is ongoing. In the future, SCC also plans to implement pilot transports in the direction of Tajikistan and China. The delegation of Uzbekistan expressed its full support for the transition to Annex 11 and stressed that its current activities constitute the basis for the implementation of Annex 11.

15. The secretariat invited delegations wishing to report, at future occasions, on its efforts to contribute to the digitalization of the TIR Convention, to do so under the agenda item “Introduction of new technologies in rail, road, road-based mobility, inland waterway, logistics and intermodal transport until 2030”.

16. Iran (Islamic Republic of) recalled the successful conduct of an eTIR pilot project with Azerbaijan and Turkey, as already reported at earlier occasions. It was also ready to continue its effort to work on developing the eTIR module with the existing electronic tools and the implementation of Annex 11, in cooperation with ECE and IRU.

17. IRU welcomed all efforts undertaken in the framework of the GIZ project, clarifying that these projects were performed as first steps towards the full computerization and interconnection with the eTIR international system, as Annex 11 stipulates.

(b) New developments in the eTIR international system

18. The Working Party welcomed a summary of the recent developments regarding the eTIR international system. The Working Party was informed that the secretariat had been assisting customs authorities of several contracting parties with interconnection projects and,

in particular, Azerbaijan and Georgia for the implementation stage and Pakistan for the design stage. The Working Party was also informed that work continues on upgrading the eTIR international system and the eTIR data model. The Working Party was further informed that technical guides for message pairs I5/I6, I9/I10, I11/I12 and I13/I14 have been published on the eTIR documentation portal which brings the number of technical guides available to seven.³

(c) eTIR interconnection projects

19. The Working Party recalled that, further to the adoption of Annex 11 by the TIR Administrative Committee (AC.2) at its February 2020 session, the Executive Secretary of ECE, Ms. Olga Algayerova, invited contracting parties to start projects to interconnect their national customs systems with the eTIR international system. The Working Party was informed about these projects and their progress. To date, the following countries have indicated an interest in such interconnection project, either in the form of a request for additional information or the willingness to start a connection project: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine. It also took note that the following seven countries had already started an interconnection project: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Morocco, Pakistan, Tunisia and Turkey. The delegation of Uzbekistan informed the Working Party that a letter of reply would soon be addressed to the Executive Secretary of ECE.

20. The Working Party further welcomed a presentation on the NCTS-eTIR Proof of Concept carried out by the European Commission and some European Union member States with assistance of the secretariat. The Working Party also noted that the secretariat had welcomed a proposal by the Russian Federation to carry out a similar exercise with the Eurasian Economic Commission.

(d) Activities of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure into a formal Group of Experts

21. The Working Party was briefed about the outcome of the informal preparatory information meeting for the first session of Group of Expert on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (WP.30/GE.1) on 3 and 4 November 2020, the first session of WP.30/GE.1 on 20–21 January 2021 as well as the informal preparatory meeting for the second session of WP.30/GE.1 on 22 January 2021. The Working party further noted that the second and third sessions of WP.30/GE.1 are planned on 25-28 May 2021 and 13-15 September 2021 respectively. The Working Party further noted that countries were invited to send any proposed amendments to the eTIR specifications to be discussed at the second sessions not later than 2 March 2021.

22. Taking into account the current limitations in the organization of sessions with interpretation and the uncertainties with regard to the number of days with interpretation for the second session of the WP.30/GE.1, the Working Party mandated the secretariat to organize an additional WP.30/GE.1 session with interpretation on 7 and 8 (am) April 2021.

(e) eTIR website

23. Under this unannounced agenda item, the secretariat presented a new web site for eTIR, which is still under preparation. The secretariat explained that a dedicated, and more modern and business oriented eTIR website was necessary, one that would include all information of interest to the eTIR main stakeholders. This website will work as an e-learning platform and it will include, among others, case studies, news, interviews, access to different services such as ITDB etc. The new website will not replace the regular ECE website, where all documentation of intergovernmental bodies will still be uploaded. The address of the new web site will be: www.etir.org. When ready, all delegations will be informed in order to provide feedback and corrections before going live. The secretariat mentioned that this website would not be a reality if the Organization for Security and Co-operation for Europe

³ See <https://wiki.unece.org/display/ED/Technical+Guides>

(OSCE) would not financially have supported this endeavour. The relationship between OSCE and the secretariat is a long-standing one, focusing mainly on the preparation of guidelines as well as the development of the Euro-Asian transport linkages.

3. New developments in the application of the Convention

24. No new developments in the application of the TIR Convention were raised under this agenda item.

4. TIR-related electronic data interchange systems

25. The Working Party was informed by IRU about the latest statistical data on the performance of contracting parties in the control system for TIR Carnets — SafeTIR system (Informal document WP.30 (2021). No. 1).

5. Settlement of claims for payments

26. The Working Party was informed by IRU about the current situation on the settlement of claims for payments made by customs authorities against national guaranteeing associations (Informal document WP.30 (2021) No. 2). The delegation of Uzbekistan informed the Working Party that there were some issues in the number of outstanding claims, but that it would submit an official document to that extent for consideration by the Working Party at its next session. In a first reply, IRU stated that, from its side, it had sent out requests for clarification of the outstanding claims, and that the matter had its full attention.

6. Other matters

(a) Decline in the sale of TIR Carnets

27. Not discussed due to a lack of time.

(b) Other matters

28. No other issues or difficulties in the application of the TIR Convention faced by customs authorities, national associations, the international insurers or IRU were brought to the attention of the Working Party under this agenda item.

VI. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls for Goods, 1982 (Harmonization Convention) (agenda item 5)

A. Status of the Convention

29. The Working Party was informed about the status of the Convention. Since the tenth session of the Committee in 2014, Turkmenistan acceded to the Convention in 2016, becoming the fifty-eighth contracting party to the Convention.

30. In addition, the Working Party recalled that, on 27 February 2020, the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity of depositary, issued depositary notification C.N.77.2020.TREATIES-XI.A.17, informing of the submission of a proposal to amend Annex 8, article 7 of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls for Goods, 1982, extending the interval between surveys among contracting parties on progress made to improve border crossing procedures in their countries from two to five years. In accordance with the provisions of article 22 of the Convention, the proposed amendments shall come into force with respect to all contracting parties to the Convention three months after the expiry of a period of twelve months following the date of the communication during which no objection to the proposed amendments has been communicated to the Secretary-General by a contracting party. This means that, if no objection is raised by 27 February 2021, the proposal shall come into force on 27 May 2021.

More detailed information on the status of the Convention as well as on various depositary notifications is available on the ECE website.⁴

B. Issues in the application of the Convention

31. At the invitation of the secretariat, the Secretary of UN/CEFACT delivered a presentation on its semantic work on dematerializing transport and logistics documentation, how this integrates into the wider supply chain, providing concrete, relevant examples of electronic messages used today based on UN/CEFACT standards. The Working Party encouraged the secretariat to further engage with the UN/CEFACT secretariat in order to establish to which extent the dematerialization of transport and logistics documents could be introduced in the Harmonization Convention.

VII. Convention on the Facilitation of Border Crossing Procedures for Passengers, Luggage and Load-Luggage carried in International Traffic by Rail (agenda item 6)

Status of the Convention

32. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed the meeting that, at the national level, all required procedures in preparation of signing the Convention had been completed and that a Government decree to that extent had been issued. Steps were currently being undertaken at the level of the Ministry of Transport in order to facilitate signing the Convention in New York. The delegation requested the Chair to repeat the call on interested countries to sign the Convention at the forthcoming session of ITC (23–26 February 2021).⁵

VIII. Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954) and Commercial Road Vehicles (1956) (agenda item 7)

A. Status of the Conventions

33. The Working Party was informed that the status of and the number of contracting parties to the Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private (1954) and Commercial (1956) Road Vehicles had not changed and that the Conventions had 80 and 26 contracting parties respectively. More detailed information on this issue as well as on depositary notifications is available on the TIR website.⁶

B. Issues in the application of the Conventions

34. The Working Party took note of progress in the efforts of ECE and the Alliance Internationale de Tourisme / Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (AIT/FIA) to conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on the revitalization and digitalization of relevant United Nations inland transport conventions, as contained in Informal document WP.30 (2021) No. 3. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party requested the secretariat to submit the draft as an official document for discussion and, possibly, endorsement at the next session.

⁴ www.unece.org/tir/tir-depositary_notification.html.

⁵ www.unece.org/tir/tir-depositary_notification.html.

⁶ www.unece.org/tir/tir-depositary_notification.html.

IX. Introduction of new technologies in rail, road, road-based mobility, inland waterway, logistics and intermodal transport until 2030 (agenda item 8)

35. No delegation raised an issue under this agenda item. Delegations were encouraged to raise any initiative of national, sub-regional or regional interest in this regard at further sessions of the Working Party or at, for example, the forthcoming session of ITC (23–26 February 2021).

X. Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 9)

36. The Working Party took 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

37. The European Commission informed the Working Party that, on 28 October 2020, it had proposed a new initiative that will make it easier for different authorities involved in goods clearance to exchange electronic information submitted by traders. The “EU Single Window Environment for Customs” will enhance cooperation and coordination between different authorities and will support the automatic verification of non-customs formalities for goods entering or leaving the European Union.⁷ The European Commission also informed the Working Party that further to it having left the European Union, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland had now joined the Common Transit Convention. Transports between the United Kingdom and the European Union can now be conducted by means of a common transit procedure under NCTS or TIR.

B. Economic Cooperation Organization

38. The secretariat of ECO reported on its main activities in 2020. Foremost, the secretariat assisted member states in mitigating the impact of Covid-19 in their respective transport sections. To that end, a set of “ECO Practical Guidelines on Cross Border Facilitation Measures under conditions of Covid-19” were developed. Furthermore, a new chapter was added to the field study on the Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) and Kyrgyz-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) road corridors. In July and August 2020, a test run of loaded trucks carrying goods under cover of a TIR Carnet along the KTAI was successfully conducted. The test run once more showed the complications for drivers to obtain visas. The ECO has developed a “Visa Pilot Scheme for Drivers” which is due to be tested out in 2021 along the ITI and KTAI corridors. Workshops, to be organized in collaboration with ECE, on eTIR and eCMR had to be postponed and are now included in the calendar of events for 2021.

C. Eurasian Economic Union

39. There was no intervention from the Eurasian Economic Commission under this agenda item.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/general-information-customs/electronic-customs/eu-single-window-environment-for-customs_en

D. World Customs Organization

40. The Working Party was informed that the Administrative Committee for the Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 had held its eighteenth session on 28 January 2021. The report of the session would soon be available at the WCO website.

E. Bureau International des Conteneurs

41. The Working Party took note of a presentation by BIC of its recent activities.

XI. Other business (agenda item 10)

A. Dates of the next sessions

42. The Working Party decided to hold its 157th session on 9 and 10 a.m. June 2021 and the 158th session in the week of 11–15 October 2021, subject to potential adjustments due to the ongoing COVID pandemic and the United Nations liquidity crisis.

B. Restriction on the distribution of documents

43. The Working Party decided that there would be no restrictions on the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

C. List of decisions

44. The list of decisions is attached as Annex to the final report.

XII. Adoption of the report (agenda item 11)

45. The Working Party adopted the report of its 156th session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. During the adoption of the report, French and Russian speaking delegations deplored that the draft report was not available in all three official languages and underscored the importance of ensuring that the final report be made available in all three working languages well in advance of its next session.

46. Further to the adoption of the report, the secretariat will circulate it among registered participants seeking their approval or comments before finalizing the report.

Annex

List of decisions taken at the 156th session of the Working Party

<i>Reference in final report (para.)</i>	<i>Short description of decision</i>	<i>Actor</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
7–8	The Working Party confirmed that its further activities on this topic be limited to: (f) Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation for Private Use of Aircraft and Pleasure Boats, 1956; (k) Customs Convention on Containers, 1956; (l) Customs Convention on Containers, 1972; (m) European Convention on Customs Treatment of Pallets Used in International Transport, 1960 The Working Party reiterated its request to delegation to keep it informed about any considerations regarding those four Conventions and decided to continue its deliberations at the next session.	secretariat	Agenda
12	The Working Party considered and adopted the comments in Annex I of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/1 and requested the secretariat to transmit them to AC.2 for endorsement. The comment in Annex II could be tentatively adopted subject to further assessment at the next session	secretariat	31 March 2021
22	The Working Party mandated the secretariat to organize an additional WP.30/GE.1 session with interpretation on 7 and 8 (a.m.) April 2021.	secretariat	a.s.a.p.
26	The Working Party decided to revert to some issues between Uzbekistan and IRU regarding the settlement of claims	secretariat	Agenda + at session
27	Revert to study on decline in the sale of TIR Carnets	secretariat	Agenda + document (?)
31	Secretariat to further engage with UN/CEFACT	secretariat	ongoing
32	Chair of WP.30 to encourage interested countries to accede to the Convention	Chair/secretariat	ITC
34	Submit draft MoU ECE/FIA as official document	secretariat	31 March 2021
44	Provide information on silence procedure	secretariat	Circulate document ECE/EX/2020/L.12
	Prepare 157th session 9–10 (a.m.) June 2021		17 March 2021 – agenda 31 March 2021 – documents