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Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Road Transport****Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of
Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR)****Twenty-sixth session**
Geneva, 14 June 2021**Report of the Group of Experts on the European Agreement
concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in
International Road Transport on its twenty-sixth session****I. Attendance**

1. The AETR Group of Experts held its twenty-sixth session in Geneva on 14 June 2021, chaired by Mr. R. Symonenko (Ukraine).
2. Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Finland, Germany, Israel, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine.
3. The following non ECE member States participated: Tunisia.
4. United Nations Specialized Agency: International Labour Organization (ILO) participated.
5. The European Commission, EuroMed Transport Project and the following non-governmental organizations were represented: Association of international Road Carriers, International Road Transport Union (IRU), The Confederation of Organization in Road Transport Enforcement (CORTE) and Continental Automotive GmbH, In Group and Scania CV AB participated as observers.

II. Adoption of the Agenda

6. The Group of Experts adopted the session's agenda ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/58.

III. Programme of Work**A. Development of proposals for amending the AETR Agreement,
including Article 22bis**

7. At this session, the European Commission introduced ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2021/2 (submitted by Portugal in its capacity as President of the Council of the European Union). The document proposes to amend AETR Articles 10, 13,

14 and 22 to respectively facilitate the inclusion of a new Appendix 1C, to determine the relevant implementation dates, to introduce the possibility of accession by regional economic integration organizations, and to change the amendment mechanisms for appendices.

8. Also, at this session, the Russian Federation introduced ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2021/3 where it did not agree to references to EU legislation in the AETR Agreement and did not support allowing accessions by regional economic integration organizations. It also argued against having specific implementation dates not related to (possible) entry into force of Appendix 1C.

9. The Group discussed the two documents and the Chair urged the two sides to find a negotiated, compromise solution. The EC noted that the issue of amending Article 14 to accommodate accessions by regional economic organizations could be set aside, at this time, to facilitate making progress on the remaining substantive issues. The Group will revert to this agenda item at the next session.

B. Appendix 1C

10. The European Commission (on behalf of Portugal) introduced ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2018/1/Rev.1 which contains proposals to modify Annex IC in order to adapt the European Union specifications on the smart tachograph to the AETR legal framework.

11. The secretariat explained that translation of this document may not be completed in the next 12 months (despite the previous French and Russian versions being available) due to resource shortages at the UNOG Conference Services.

12. The Russian Federation emphasized that the document needs to be translated and available in three official languages for substantive work to begin while the EC urged all contracting parties to begin working on the English version of this document. The Group decided – while waiting for the document to be translated – to hold consultations and to exchange information on the outstanding issues such as border crossing registration (in relation to cabotage, posting of workers), authentication service, and card formats.

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

13. The Group did not discuss this subject in detail, but the EC volunteered to give a presentation on new rules arising from amendments to Regulation No. 561/2006 (Mobility package 1) at the next session.

IV. Amendment of Article 14

14. At the last session, the Group requested the secretariat to suggest possible wording to amend 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). The secretariat tabled and introduced Informal document No.1 which provides a modified example of “eligibility to accede” from the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic for consideration at this session.

15. The Group will discuss this issue at the next session and requested the secretariat replace the word “convention” with “agreement” in Informal document No.1.

V. TACHOnet

16. The European Commission (on behalf of Portugal) introduced Informal document No. 3 which revises ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.2/2019/1/Rev.2 (that contains a proposal to introduce a new Appendix 4).

The Russian Federation reiterated its comments from ECE/TRANS/SC.1/GE.21/2021/3 where, among others, it had explained that any new Appendix of the AETR Agreement (on the exchange of information between Contracting Parties) should only contain general, technical requirements to be used while seeking and receiving information. The European Commission volunteered to review the document and, if possible, to address the concerns of the Russian Federation. The new document will be presented at the next session (if there are no changes to Informal document No. 3, the secretariat will submit it for translation into French and Russian).

VI. Election of Deputy Chair

17. At the last session, the Group requested the secretariat include the election of the Deputy Chair in the agenda for the current session. At this session, the Group did not elect the Deputy Chair postponing the election until a future session.

VII. Other Business

18. The secretariat informed the Group that, on 24 February 2021, the Inland Transport Committee decided to extend the mandate of the AETR Group of Experts until the end of June 2023 (para. 13, ITC Informal document No. 8/Rev.5).

19. The secretariat introduced Informal document No.2 which contains a draft questionnaire as per Article 12 (5) which tasks the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to issue a report on the application of Article 12 (1) on “measures of enforcement of the Agreement”. The Group of Experts did not have any comments on the questions. It is expected that the questionnaire will be sent out to all Contracting Parties in the coming weeks.

VIII. Date and Place of Next Meeting

20. The next meeting is scheduled for 12 October 2021 at Palais des Nations in Geneva. The deadline for the submission of formal documents is 23 July 2021.

IX. Adoption of the Report

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