


Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport
157th session

Geneva, 9 and 10 June 2021

**Report of the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting
 Transport on its 157th session**

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I. Attendance

1. The Working Party held its 157th session on 9 and 10 a.m. June 2021, virtually and in-person, in Geneva. The session was attended by representatives of the following countries: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Representatives of the European Union were present. The following intergovernmental organization was represented: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU).
2. The Working Party warmly welcomed Mr. Dimitry Mariyasin as newly appointed Deputy Secretary-General of ECE, wishing him success in the pursuit of his functions.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

3. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda, prepared by the secretariat (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/313).

III. Activities of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 2)

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

4. The Working Party recalled that, at its 156th session (February 2021), as a first assessment, it had 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.30/2020/1:¹

- (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.

5. With regard to the latter Convention, the European Commission informed the Working Party that various member States (Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy and Netherlands) 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.

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.

The Working Party took note of the denunciation of this Convention by Luxembourg (see also para. 11). Also, Denmark was in the process of denouncing the Convention.

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

6. With regard to the latter 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).

7. 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.

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 (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/312, paras 6-8).

8. Based on the above, the Working Party continued its deliberations. In this context, the Working Party took note of the Istanbul Convention on Temporary Importation, of 26 June 1990. This Convention contains a set of Annexes, some of which contain so-called rescinding provisions, meaning that, upon their entry into force, they terminate and replace certain other legal instruments in the field of temporary importation or some provisions thereof. This is the case for the following United Nations legal instruments:

- European Convention on Customs Treatment of pallets used in international transport, Geneva 9 December 1960.

Annex B.3 to the Istanbul Convention entered into force on 17 April 1996. It has 54 contracting parties. The European Convention (30 contracting parties) continues to apply in relation to only three contracting parties: Australia, Cuba and Norway only.

- Articles 2-11 and Annexes 1 (paras. 1 and 2) – 3 to the Customs Convention on Containers, Geneva 2 December 1972.

Annex B.3 to the Istanbul Convention entered into force on 17 April 1996. It has fifty-four contracting parties. The Container Convention, 1972 (forty contracting parties) continues to apply in relation to only fourteen contracting parties: Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada, Cuba, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liberia, Morocco, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Saudi-Arabia, Tunisia and the United States of America.

- Articles 2 and 5 of the Convention concerning Customs facilities for Touring, New York, 4 June 1954

Annex B.6 entered into force on 11 August 1995. It has fifty-one contracting parties. The 1954 Touring facilities Convention continues to apply for forty-five contracting

parties: Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Haiti, India, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tonga, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America and Uruguay.

- Additional Protocol to the Convention concerning Customs facilities for touring, related to the importation of tourist publicity documents and materials, New York, 4 June 1954.

Annex B.7 entered into force on 18 September 1997. It has forty-six contracting parties. The 1954 Additional Protocol continues to apply for forty contracting parties: Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Haiti, India, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Syrian Arab Republic, Tonga, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania.

- Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles, New York, 4 Jun4 1954.

Annex C entered into force on 17 April 1996 and has forty-six contracting parties. The 1954 Temporary Importation Convention continues to apply for forty-four contracting parties: Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Haiti, India, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tonga, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

- Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles, New York, 18 May 1956.

Annex C entered into force on 17 April 1996 and has forty-six contracting parties. The 1956 Temporary Importation Convention continues to apply for only five contracting parties: Argentina, Cuba, Kyrgyzstan, Norway, Sierra Leone, Singapore and Uzbekistan.

- Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation for Private Use of Aircraft and Pleasure Boats, Geneva, 18 May 1956.

Annex C entered into force on 17 April 1996 and has forty-six contracting parties. The 1956 Convention continues to apply for only five contracting parties: Jamaica, Malta, Mauritius, Sierra Leone and Solomon Islands.

9. The Working Party took note that, in the view of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, Treaty Section (OLA-TS), this development does not affect the number of contracting parties of the abovementioned legal instruments deposited with the depositary.

10. In general, the Working Party established that, although there seemed limited interest of delegations in this exercise, it had nevertheless led to some important insights and that, therefore, it seemed appropriate to continue the exercise at its next session. The secretariat requested delegations to further pursue their assessment of the future relevance of the legal instruments under the aegis of the Working Party and report back any development at the next session.

11. Under this agenda item, the Working Party took note that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, had issued depositary notification C.N.128.2021.TREATIES-XI.A.12 of 12 April 2021, informing that, on 6 April 2021, Luxembourg denounced this Convention. The denunciation shall take effect for Luxembourg on 6 October 2021. With this action, the Customs Convention concerning Spare Parts Used

for Repairing EUROP Wagons, of 15 January 1958, will have eight remaining contracting parties: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Switzerland. In accordance with its Article 8, the Convention will cease to have effect if, for any period of twelve consecutive months after its entry into force, the number of contracting parties is less than five.

IV. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975) (agenda item 3)

A Status of the Convention

12. The Working Party was informed about any changes in the status of the TIR Convention, 1975 and the number of contracting parties. In particular, the Working Party took note that, since the accession of Egypt on 16 December 2020, the Convention has seventy-seven contracting parties, whereas, since the activation of the system for Qatar on 1 June 2021, TIR operations can be established with sixty-five countries.

13. The Working Party was informed that, since its previous session (February 2021), the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, issued the following depositary notifications: (i) C.N.81.2021.TREATIES-XI.A.16, of 3 March 2021, informing that, by 25 February 2021, none of the contracting parties to the TIR Convention, 1975 had communicated an objection to the proposals to amend various provisions of the body of the TIR Convention and introducing new Annex 11 on eTIR. Therefore, in accordance with Article 59, paragraph 3 of the Convention, the said amendments entered into force on 25 May 2021 for all contracting parties, except for those States which would notify, under Article 60 bis, paragraph 1, between 25 February 2021 and 25 May 2021, the depositary of their non-acceptance of Annex 11; (ii) C.N.85.2021.XI.A.16, of 9 March 2021, communicating that, by 1 March 2021, none of the Parties to the TIR Convention had communicated to the Secretary-General an objection to an amendment to Annex 6 of the Convention, introducing new Explanatory Note 0.49 of the TIR Convention, which grants operators greater facilities, such as, but not limited to, the possibility to become authorized consignor. Consequently, in accordance with the provisions of article 60 (1) of the Convention, the amendment entered into force with respect to all parties to the Convention on 1 June 2021; (iii) C.N.99.2021.TREATIES-XI.A.16 of 25 March 2021, informing of the submission of a proposal to amend Article 18 and Annexes 1 and 6 of the TIR Convention, 1975. In accordance with the provisions of Article 59 (3) of the Convention, the amendments shall enter into force on 25 June 2022, unless an objection has been communicated to the Secretary-General not later than by 25 March 2022; (iv) C.N.102.2021.TREATIES-XI.A.16 of 24 March 2021, informing that, on 22 March, Switzerland had notified, in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 60 bis of the TIR Convention, that it does not accept Annex 11 at this time; (v) C.N.157.2021.TREATIES-XI.A.16, of 3 June 2021, communicating that, within the period of three months after the expiry, on 25 February 2021, of a period of twelve months to communicate any objection to new Annex 11 to the TIR Convention, 1975, one contracting party (Switzerland) notified the Secretary-General of its non-acceptance of Annex 11; (vi) C.N.158.2021.TREATIES-XI.16, of 3 June 2021, communicating that certain errors in the English, French and Russian texts of Annex 11 as contained in Annex I to the report of the Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention, 1975, at its seventy-second session held in Geneva on 5 and 6 February 2020 (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/147) and circulated in depositary notification C.N.71.2020.TREATIES-XI.A.16 of 25 February 2020 (reissued on 26 February 2020) had been brought to his attention. Objections to these corrections should be communicated to the Secretary-General no later than by 1 September 2021.

14. The delegation of Hungary informed the Working Party that the unfortunate inaccuracies in the presentation of Annex 11 had led to considerable complications in the national ratification process. The delegation of the European Commission supported this statement, while pointing, at the same time, at the joint responsibility of the secretariat and delegations for the accuracy of texts submitted for adoption. Also, the delegation of Turkey

raised the unfortunate oversight, which had luckily been corrected with the issuance of depositary notification C.N.158.2021.TREATIES-XI.16 of 3 June 2021.

15. Furthermore, the Working Party recalled that the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, had issued depositary notification C.N.513.2020.TREATIES-XI.A.16, of 4 November 2020, 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 2021. 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

16. The Working Party established that, at present, no amendment proposals to the Convention had been submitted for its consideration.

C. Application of the Convention

1. Comments to the TIR Convention

17. The Working Party recalled that, at its 156th session (February 2021), it considered and adopted the following comments contained in Annex I of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/1: (i) comment to Annex 6, Explanatory Note 0.8.3; (ii) comment to Annex 6, Explanatory Note 0.49 and (iii) comment to Annex 9, Part II “Model Authorization Form (MAF) and had requested the secretariat to transmit them to AC.2 for endorsement. The Working Party noted that, while endorsement by AC.2 was still pending, this did not prevent their application.

18. 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 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 (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/312, para. 12).

19. Based on the above findings, the Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/2 containing in Annex I the current text of the comment to Article 18 “Possibilities of increasing the total number of loading and unloading places to more than four in exceptional cases”, in Annex II, a proposal for a new comment to Article 18 “Possibilities of increasing the total number of loading and unloading places to more than eight in exceptional cases”, in Annex III a generic proposal “Possibilities of increasing the total number of loading and unloading points”. Annex IV of the said document states, for information purposes, the text of the comment “Possibility of using two TIR Carnets for a single TIR transport” which could remain, why deleting the comment to Article 18 altogether.

20. The Working Party discussed the various options and established that, for now, there seemed to be a slight favour for the proposal in Annex II, (amended wording of the comment). The delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) as well as some other delegations stated that they could also see some merit in the proposal for a generic comment, as contained in Annex III of the said document. Delegations were requested to, once more, review both options. The Working Party decided to revert to the issue at its next session.

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

2. eTIR

(a) eTIR international system: interconnection projects

21. The Working Party welcomed a summary of the recent developments regarding the eTIR international system. The Working Party was also informed that work continues on upgrading the eTIR international system, the eTIR data model and on finalizing the eTIR specifications v4.3. The Working Party was further informed that six new technical guides for message pairs I15/I16, I17/I18, E1/E2, E3/E4, E9/E10 and E13/E14 have been published on the eTIR documentation portal, which brings the number of technical guides available to fourteen.³

22. The Working Party also 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 that currently 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, Belarus, Georgia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. It also took note that the following seven countries had already started an interconnection project: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

23. The Working Party was informed about progress made with the NCTS-eTIR Proof of Concept, which will be presented as a document at the third session of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (WP.30/GE.1).

(b) Activities of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure

24. The Working Party took note that an extraordinary session of WP.30/GE.1 took place on 7 and 8 (a.m.) April 2021 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/39) and that the second session of WP.30/GE.1 took place on 25–28 May 2021. Further to a request from Belgium, the secretariat clarified that the outcome of the eTIR ceremony, which had been organized on the first morning of the WP.30/GE.1 session to mark the entry into force of Annex 11, has been summarized on the eTIR website [<https://unece.org/sustainable-development/press/electronic-tir-framework-enters-force-across-globe-huge-boost-trade>] and will be included as an Annex to the report of the second session of the WP.30/GE.1 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/4).

25. In reply to a question by the delegation of the European Commission about the three year implementation process of eTIR, as mentioned by the Executive Secretary of ECE, the secretariat clarified that, although implementation is not obligatory, it is the firm intention of the secretariat to accelerate the process of interconnecting national customs systems to the international system within the said period.

26. Under this agenda item, the Working Party considered and approved the list of questions and answers (Q&A) on the application of various provisions of the TIR Convention for TIR transports carried out under the eTIR procedure, contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/6 and requested the secretariat to include them in the Q&A section of the eTIR website.

3. New developments in the application of the Convention

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

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

4. TIR-related electronic data interchange systems

28. 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. 4).

5. Settlement of claims for payments

29. 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. 5).

30. Under this agenda item, the Working Party recalled that, at the 156th session (February 2021), 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 (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/312, para. 26).

31. The Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/3 by the Government of Uzbekistan. The Working Party was informed by the Chair of TIRExB that part of the raised issues (payment of due amounts of customs duties by the international organization) were currently under discussion of TIRExB. Therefore, the Working Party, focused on the proposal by the Uzbek authorities for a new paragraph 5 to Annex 10 of the TIR Convention, stipulating that the international organization should notify the customs authorities about discrepancies between the TIR Carnet and SafeTIR data. The delegation of the European Union as well as the secretariat pointed at the fact that the notification to the customs authorities by the international organization of discrepancies was already addressed by point 2 of Annex 10 and the use of the Model Reconciliation Form (MRF). With regard to the issue currently under discussion of TIRExB, the delegation of the European Union stated that, in its view, any fraud related to corruption should be attributed to the customs administration(s) involved.

6. Audit of the accounts of the TIR Executive Board and the TIR secretariat, recommendation No. 7a: Study on the decline of TIR Carnet sales

32. Under this agenda item, the Working Party recalled that, at the specific request of AC.2 at its seventy-first session (October 2019) (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/145, paras. 76 and 77), it started, at its February 2020 session, considering recommendation No. 7a of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)⁴ to study the reasons for the decline in the sale of TIR Carnets, contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/3. The Working Party, at its October 2020 session, asked the secretariat to send a reminder to TIR focal points from customs and associations, seeking their views on the study on the reasons for the decline in the sale of TIR Carnets, with 31 October 2020 as final deadline (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/310, paras. 23 and 24). Due to a lack of time, the issue was not discussed at the February 2021 session of the Working Party (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/312, para. 27).

33. The Working Party considered and approved the final study, contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/3/Rev.1, subject to the deletion of paragraph 6 of the said document. With this deletion, the Working Party, at the request of AC.2, established that OIOS recommendation No. 7a should be considered implemented and closed.

7. Other matters

34. The Working Party did not consider any other issues or difficulties in the application of the TIR Convention faced by customs authorities, national associations, the international insurers or IRU.

⁴ For the full report, please refer to: unece.org/DAM/trans/bcf/ac2/documents/2019/ECE-TRANS-WP30-AC2-2019-25e.pdf

V. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls for Goods, 1982 (Harmonization Convention) (agenda item 4)

A. Status of the Convention

35. 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. In addition, the Working Party was informed that, on 5 March 2021, the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his capacity as depositary, issued depositary notification C.N.83.2021.TREATIES-XI.A.17, informing that, by 27 February 2021, none of the parties to the Harmonization Convention, 1982 had communicated an objection to a proposal to amend Annex 8, Article 7 of the said Convention, extending the interval between surveys among contracting parties on progress made to improve border crossing procedures in their countries from two to five years. Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of Article 22, paragraph 3 of the Convention, the amendment came into force with respect to all contracting parties to the Convention 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.⁵

B. Issues in the application of the Convention

36. Under this agenda item, the Working Party took note that, at its eighty-third session, ITC, *inter alia*, adopted a decision in which it “entrusted the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) and WP.30 to include on the agenda of the meetings the issue of monitoring the implementation of Annex 9 “Facilitation of border crossing procedures for international rail freight traffic” to the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (ITC Informal document No. 8/Rev.5 (2021), decision No. 57). In an effort to respond to this request, the Secretaries of SC.2 and WP.30 prepared a survey for circulation among stakeholders.

37. The Working Party took note of document ECE/TRANS/WP.302021/4, in combination with Informal document WP.30 (2021) No. 6 by the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) with some additional proposals for questions to add to the draft survey. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party decided to revert to the issue at its next session, inviting delegations to carefully consider the accuracy and efficiency of the questions raised.

38. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party did not consider another decision of ITC, taken at that same session, in which it “encouraged interested countries to accede to the United Nations Conventions in the field of border crossing facilitation, to foster digital information exchange, and promptly implement the provisions of Annex 11 to the TIR Convention, launching the eTIR system, and urged all contracting parties to comply with the provisions of the Harmonization Convention, 1982 for the sake of addressing the COVID-19 pandemic (ITC Informal document No. 8/Rev. 5 (2021), decision No. 58).” The Working Party decided to revert to this issue at its next session.

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

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

Status of the Convention

39. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party did not discuss this agenda item, but decided to revert to it at its next session.

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

A. Status of the Conventions

40. 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

41. The Working Party recalled that, at its 156th session (February 2021), it 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 (MoU) on the revitalization and digitalization of relevant United Nations inland transport conventions (see (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/312, para. 34). The Working Party took note of a presentation by AIT/FIA on the main objectives of the MoU.

42. The Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/5, containing the MoU. On the understanding that no financial implications were involved on either side, the Working Party endorsed the MoU and invited parties to engage in its implementation. The Working Party mandated the secretariat to submit the MoU to the Executive Commission (EXCOM) of ECE for final approval. The Working Party requested parties to regularly report on progress made. The delegation of the European Commission encouraged stakeholders to draw from the recent experiences in the dematerialization of the ATA⁷ Carnet and to inform the World Customs Organization about this initiative. It also expressed a word of caution with regard to any Information Technology (IT) development which could lead to new IT developments in customs administrations.

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

43. This item was not discussed, due to a lack of time.

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

⁷ ATA stands for "Admission Temporaire / Temporary Admission".

IX. Activities of other organizations and countries of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 8)

44. This agenda item was not discussed due to a lack of time.

X. Other business (agenda item 9)

A. Dates of the next sessions

45. The Working Party decided to hold its 158th session on 12, 13 and 15 (a.m.) October 2021 and the 159th session on 8, 9 and 11 (a.m.) February 2022, subject to potential adjustments due to the ongoing COVID pandemic and the United Nations liquidity crisis.

46. Against this background, the delegation of the European Union noted that the reduced time allotted to the meetings of WP.30 had led to the situation where the Working Party was no longer in a position to carefully consider agenda items, leading to the situation where various agenda items could not be discussed due to a lack of time. It called upon the competent services at UNOG to ensure that more time was allotted to future sessions of the Working Party in order to allow for a reasonable conduct of business.

B. Restriction on the distribution of documents

47. 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

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

D. Tribute to Mr. Roland Kristiansson

49. The Working Party paid tribute to Mr. Roland Kristiansson from Swedish customs, thanking him for his valuable contributions over the last decade to the work of the Working Party and, in particular, for having chaired WP.30 from 2017 until 2020, wishing him the best in the pursuit of his personal life.

XI. Adoption of the report (agenda item 10)

50. The Working Party adopted the report of its 157th 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 was not available in the 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.

51. 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 157th session of the Working Party

<i>Reference in final report (para.)</i>	<i>Short description of decision</i>	<i>Actor</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
10	10. The Working Party established that, although there seemed limited interest of delegations in this exercise, it had nevertheless led to important insights and that, therefore, it seemed appropriate to continue this exercise at its next session. The secretariat requested delegations to further pursue their assessment of the future relevance of the legal instruments under the aegis of the Working Party and report back any development at the next session.	Delegations	Agenda
20	20. The Working Party discussed the various options and established that, for now, there seemed to be a slight favour for the proposal in Annex II, (amended wording of the comment). The delegation of Iran (Islamic Republic of) as well as some other delegations stated that they could also see some merit in the proposal for a generic comment, as contained in Annex III of the said document. Delegations were requested to, once more, review both options. The Working Party decided to revert to the issue at its next session.	Delegations	Agenda
26	26. Under this agenda item, the Working Party considered and approved the list of questions and answers (Q&A) on the application of various provisions of the TIR Convention for TIR transports carried out under the eTIR procedure, contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/6 and requested the secretariat to include them in the Q&A section of the eTIR website.	Secretariat	a.s.a.p.
33	33. The Working Party considered and approved the final study, contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2020/3/Rev.1, subject to the deletion of paragraph 6 of the said document. With this deletion, the Working Party, at the request of AC.2, established that OIOS recommendation No. 7a should be considered implemented and closed.	Secretariat	a.s.a.p.
37–38	37. The Working Party took note of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/4, in combination with Informal document WP.30 (2021) No. 6 by the Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD) with some additional proposals for questions to add to the draft survey. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party decided to revert to the issue at its next session, inviting delegations to carefully consider the accuracy and efficiency of the questions raised. 38. Due to a lack of time, the Working Party did not consider another decision of ITC, taken at that same session, in which it “encouraged interested countries to accede to the United Nations Conventions in the field of border crossing facilitation, to foster digital information exchange, and promptly implement the provisions of Annex 11 to the TIR Convention, launching the eTIR system, and urged all contracting parties to comply with the provisions of the Harmonization Convention, 1982 for the sake of addressing the COVID-19 pandemic (ITC Informal document No. 8/Rev. 5 (2021), decision No. 58).” The Working Party decided to revert to this issue at its next session.	Secretariat	Agenda + document (?)

<i>Reference in final report (para.)</i>	<i>Short description of decision</i>	<i>Actor</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
42	42. The Working Party considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2021/5, containing the MoU [between ECE and AIT/FIA]. On the understanding that no financial implications were involved on either side, the Working Party endorsed the MoU and invited parties to engage in its implementation. The Working Party mandated the secretariat to submit the MoU to the Executive Commission (EXCOM) of ECE for final approval. The Working Party requested parties to regularly report on progress made. The delegation of the European Commission encouraged stakeholders to draw from the recent experiences in the dematerialization of the ATA ¹ Carnet and to inform the World Customs Organization about this initiative. It also expressed a word of caution with regard to any Information Technology (IT) development which could lead to new IT developments in customs administrations.	Secretariat	a.s.a.p.
45–46	45. The Working Party decided to hold its 158th session on 12, 13 and 15 (a.m.) October 2021 and the 159th session on 8, 9 and 11 (a.m.) February 2022, subject to potential adjustments due to the ongoing COVID pandemic and the United Nations liquidity crisis. 46. Against this background, the delegation of the European Union noted that the reduced time allotted to the meetings of WP.30 had led to the situation where the Working Party was no longer in a position to carefully consider agenda items, leading to the situation where various agenda items could not be discussed due to a lack of time. It called upon the competent services at UNOG to ensure that more time was allotted to future sessions of the Working Party in order to allow for a reasonable conduct of business.	Secretariat	
	Prepare 158th session 12, 13 and 15–10 (a.m.) October 2021	Secretariat	19 July 2021 – agenda 3 August 2021 – documents

¹ ATA stands for “Admission Temporaire / Temporary Admission”