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Inland Transport Committee

**Working Party on Customs Questions affecting
Transport**
**Group of Experts on Conceptual and
Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure**
Second session

Geneva, 25–28 May 2021

**Report of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical
Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure on its
second session**

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I. Attendance

1. The Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (further referred to as “the Group of Experts”) held its second session in hybrid format from 25 to 28 May 2021. The morning of the 25 May 2021 was dedicated to an eTIR ceremony on the occasion of the entry into force of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention, co-organized by ECE and the International Road Transport Union (IRU). Considering that no interpretation could be made available in the afternoon of 25 May 2021, the Group of Experts agreed to dedicate the afternoon to agenda items which do not require decisions.
2. The session and/or the ceremony were attended by delegations from Afghanistan, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lithuania, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, State of Palestine, Sweden, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uzbekistan. Representatives from the European Union were present. Delegations from the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) also attended.
3. A summary of the eTIR ceremony on the occasion of the entry into force of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention is presented in the Annex.

II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/3 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/3/Corr.1

4. The Group of Experts adopted the provisional agenda, as contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/3 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/3/Corr.1. It further noted that Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 10 (2021), containing the Decision of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission of 11 November 2013, No. 254 (as revised on 29 May 2018) "On the structures and formats of electronic copies customs documents" (Russian only) was added to the list of documents for consideration at the session.
5. The Group of Expert regretted that not all documents were available in all ECE working languages, but noted that advance copies of the Russian version of documents ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/14/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/24, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/28, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/33, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/35, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/36 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/39 could, exceptionally, be sent, by email, to Russian speaking delegations that had registered for the session.

III. Report of the first session of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (agenda item 2)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/2

6. The Group of Experts endorsed the report of its first session, which took place on 20–21 January 2021, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/2, and noted that the secretariat had already included the changes, decided at the first session, in the documents composing the eTIR specifications presented at the session.

IV. Report of the preparatory meetings for the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (agenda item 3)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/21 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/40

7. The Group of Experts endorsed the report of the informal preparatory meeting for the second session of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure, which took place on 22 January 2021, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/21.

8. The Group of Experts also endorsed the report of the extraordinary session of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure which took place on 7 and 8 April 2021, as contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/40.

9. Furthermore, the Group of Experts decided to consider the advice provided by the experts during those meetings to speed up its work, in particular with regard to the discussion on amendments (agenda item 6 (e)).

V. Work plan (agenda item 4)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/2/Rev.1

10. The Group of Experts took note of its revised workplan, as approved at its first session and contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/2/Rev.1.

VI. eTIR international system (agenda item 5)

A. Progress report on the development of the eTIR international system

11. The Group of Experts welcomed a presentation by the secretariat on the developments of the eTIR international system since the first session of the Group of Experts, in particular that the secretariat was working on upgrading the eTIR international system and the eTIR data model to include the changes brought by version 4.3 of the eTIR specifications. The secretariat also presented notable improvements of the International TIR Data Bank (ITDB), in particular the upgrade of its underlying framework, and mentioned the intense work performed in preparing the eTIR specifications v4.3. The secretariat further reported that it finalized nine technical guides aimed at helping eTIR stakeholders to connect their Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) systems to the eTIR international system. Finally, the secretariat also mentioned the work performed on the new eTIR public facing web site as well as an informative video, which was presented at the eTIR ceremony.

B. Progress report on the connection of national customs systems to the eTIR international system

12. The Group of Expert noted that seventeen countries had indicated an interest in interconnection projects, 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, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) and that eight countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey and Uzbekistan) had already started an interconnection project.

13. The Group of Expert also noted that the secretariat had contacted the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and its Member States proposing to launch a study on how to best interconnect the countries of the Eurasian Customs Union with the eTIR international

system. It further noted that EEC had responded that, as it was not a contracting party to the TIR Convention, such a study would have to be carried out directly with its Member States.

C. NCTS-eTIR Proof of Concept

14. The Group of Experts welcomed a presentation by the European Commission on the eTIR-NCTS¹ Proof of Concept (PoC) and noted that, while it is still being finalized and, therefore, could not be submitted as Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 7 (2021) as planned, it would now be presented for information as a formal document at the third session of the Group of Experts. The Group of Expert also took note that, while differences have been identified between NCTS and eTIR requirements, no major blocking factors had been identified, so far.

VII. eTIR conceptual, functional and technical documentation version 4.3 (agenda item 6)

A. Introduction

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/9, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/10, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/11, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/12, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/13 and Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 1 (2021)

15. The Group of Experts took note that version 4.3 of the Introduction document was contained in documents ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/9, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/10, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/11, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/12 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/13, which were all available in all ECE working languages. It also welcomed the consolidated version of the introduction as contained in Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 1 (2021).

16. Recalling the discussion on the matter at the extraordinary session (7–8 April 2021), the Group of Experts reconfirmed that, while the Introduction is not part of the documents mentioned in Annex 11 and is, therefore, not legally binding, it remains an important document that contains the background of the eTIR project and a detailed analysis of the paper TIR system and was, therefore, included in the work plan as a deliverable. The Group of Expert reiterated that the background part of the Introduction document will have to reflect all decisions taken by the Group of Experts and, possibly, the Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) during 2021 and decided that it would be more appropriate to agree on it at the third session, in September 2021.

17. One expert pointed at an issue which had been discussed at the thirty-first session of the Informal Ad hoc Expert Group on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (GE.1), namely the cardinality of the national itinerary which can be imposed at the start of a TIR operation (see Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 1 (2021), page 32) and which had been forwarded to TIRExB for clarification. He recalled that TIRExB had not been in a position to clarify the issue and the Group of Experts agreed to raise the issue during a meeting of WP.30 or ask TIR focal points.

B. eTIR concepts

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/14/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/15/Rev.1 and Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 2 (2021)

18. The Group of Experts took note that version 4.3 of the eTIR concepts document was contained in documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/14/Rev.1 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/15/Rev.1. It regretted that document

¹ New Computerized Transit System

ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/14/Rev.1 was not available in all ECE working languages and that a consolidated version of the eTIR concepts could only be prepared in English in Informal document GE.1 No. 2 (2021). The Group of Experts acknowledged that the terminology of the eTIR concepts had been duly aligned with the wording of Annex 11.

19. Experts from Turkey indicated that, in the course of the project aimed at interconnecting their customs system with the eTIR international system, they realized that in order to allow for the processing of the declaration data by the customs office of entry (en route) ahead of the arrival of the transport, the itinerary, which is at the moment defined at the level of countries, would have to be specified in terms of customs offices. Experts from the European Union supported the idea as NCTS would also require that information in order to be able to forward the declaration data to the relevant customs offices. Considering that the itinerary information, which is not originally part of the data contained in the TIR Carnet, was introduced to allow for the advance processing of declaration data, the Group of Experts considered the options available in the World Customs Organization (WCO) data model and considered the inclusion of the WCO class "ItineraryGovernmentOffice" in the class "CountriesOfRouting" and give it the eTIR name "Customs office". In that class, while the "identification" attribute will allow to indicate the customs office code, the Group of Experts was of the view that a "Role" attribute should also be added, and a relative data modification request should be submitted to WCO. The Group of Experts requested the secretariat to prepare an amendment proposal in that sense for its next session.

20. One expert from the Russian Federation reiterated concerns about the fact that the eTIR messages structures and formats were different from those used by their transit system and with regard to possible inconsistencies between the eTIR specifications and the Eurasian Customs Union (EACU) Customs Code. He specifically indicated that some additional information, such as the value of the goods, is required for transit by the EACU Customs Code. He further emphasized the need to ensure legal significance of the declaration data and the potential use of Trusted Third Parties (TTP) for this purpose. The Group of Expert decided to return to these issues under agenda item 6 (e).

C. eTIR functional specifications

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/22, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/23, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/24, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/25, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/26, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/27, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/28, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/29, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/35, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/36 ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/16/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/17/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/18/Rev.1 and Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 8 (2021)

21. The Group of Experts considered version 4.3 of the eTIR functional specifications, contained in documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/22, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/23, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/24, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/25, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/26, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/27, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/28, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/29, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/35, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/36 ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/16/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/17/Rev.1, and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/18/Rev.1 It noted that, in view of the fact that various documents had not been translated on time for the meeting, the secretariat had not been in the position to prepare Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 8 (2021), which should have contained a consolidated version of the eTIR functional specifications.

22. Further to summary introductions by the secretariat of each of the documents, the Group of Experts only requested the secretariat to improve the resolution of the larger UML diagrams in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/24. Experts also welcomed the newly devised fallback activity diagrams in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/29.

D. eTIR technical specifications

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/30, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/31, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/32, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/33, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/34 and Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 9 (2021)

23. The Group of Experts considered the first parts of version 4.3 of the newly developed eTIR technical specifications, contained in documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/30, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/31, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/32, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/33 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/34. It noted that, in view of the fact that various documents had not been translated on time for the meeting, the various language versions of Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 9 (2021) did not have the same content. The Group of Experts noted that parts 1, 2 and 3 were complete in the English version of Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 9 (2021) and that parts 4 and 5 will be prepared for its third session.

24. Since these documents were entirely new, the secretariat started by detailing the content of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/30. The Groups of Experts welcomed this document and one expert proposed to change the definition of the Technical Implementation Body (TIB) to better align the document with Annex 11. In the same vein, the expert also requested to amend the text related to the submission by holders of advance TIR data to the eTIR international system, to mention the possibility for them to submit this information using a web portal, in addition to web services. Furthermore, another expert proposed to add a disclaimer to the parts and figures related to the architecture of ICT systems of Customs Unions, mentioning that other architectures than the one presented would be possible. Apart from these modifications, the Group of Experts agreed with the content of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/30.

25. The secretariat then presented documents ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/31 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/32. The Group of Experts agreed with the content of those documents. The secretariat continued by presenting document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/33, on which several experts had questions related to change management. The secretariat explained that several sections of the document already included important aspects related to this topic. The secretariat proposed to further detail the processes and procedures to migrate from one version of the eTIR international system to another in the next version of the eTIR specifications. The Group of Experts agreed with document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/33.

26. Finally, the secretariat presented document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/34, which presents the security of the eTIR international system. The Groups of Experts agreed with the content of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/34.

E. Amendments

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/37, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/38 and Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 10 (2021)

27. The Group of Experts considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/37, which contains a list of proposed amendments to the eTIR specifications, and took the following decisions:

1. Accompanying document and fallback procedure

28. The Group of Experts took note that the secretariat included activity diagrams for the fallback procedures in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/29 and considered this part of the eTIR specifications completed.

2. Minor corrections

29. The Group of Experts agreed to the corrections of several minor issues of editorial, consistency or logical nature, identified by the secretariat during the development and improvement of the eTIR international system.

3. Issues related to cardinalities

30. The Group of Experts agreed to the corrections of various issues related to cardinalities, identified by the secretariat when developing and improving the eTIR international system.

31. While agreeing to the change of cardinality between the Consignment Item and Packaging classes from 1..1 to 1..unbounded, the Group of Experts also agreed to add a sequence number in the Packaging class and revise condition C002 as follows:

```
IF ( CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.Type, coded ) = "VQ", "VG", "VL",  
"VY", "VR" OR "VO"  
THEN OPTIONAL ( CONSIGNMENT.CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.  
Marks and numbers )  
AND EMPTY ( CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.Number of packages )  
ELSE IF ( CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.Type, coded ) = "NE", "NF" OR  
"NG"  
THEN OPTIONAL ( CONSIGNMENT.CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.  
Marks and numbers )  
AND NOT EMPTY ( CONSIGNMENT.CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.Number of packages )  
ELSE NOT EMPTY ( CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING. Marks and numbers )  
AND NOT EMPTY ( CONSIGNMENT.CONSIGNMENTITEM.PACKAGING.Number of packages )
```

4. Validity of the guarantee

32. The Group of Experts decided to remove the "Validity" attribute from the Guarantee class in the I7 message.

5. Status of the Postcode identification

33. The Group of Experts agreed to change the status of the "Postcode identification" to optional in all relevant messages.

6. Type of the Binary File

34. The Group of Experts agreed to remove the "Type" attribute from the "Binary File" class in all relevant messages.

7. Type of the Classification

35. The Group of Experts agreed to reinsert the "Type, coded" attribute (CL03) in the "Classification" class in all relevant messages.

8. Renaming codes and identifiers

36. The Group of Experts agreed with the proposal by the secretariat to rename codes and identifiers by following a naming convention for consistency.

9. Rename date attributes

37. The Group of Experts agreed with the proposal by the secretariat to rename the date and date/time attributes by following a naming convention for consistency.

10. Updated list of error codes

38. The Group of Experts considered the updated list of error codes. However, one expert from Turkey questioned the legal value of the newly introduced error code 306 (Country not connected: The country is not yet connected to the eTIR international system and cannot be part of the itinerary of a TIR transport using the eTIR procedure). In his view, countries, bound by Annex 11 but not yet connected to the eTIR international system, could still be part of the itinerary and, while not able to receive or process any information electronically or in advance, they could process the accompanying document.

39. Other experts were of the view that countries, bound by Annex 11 but not yet connected to the eTIR international system, cannot process the accompanying document, because it is solely intended for the fallback procedure, in case of a system failure, but not to make up for the fact that a national customs system has not yet been connected to the eTIR international.

40. The Group of Experts decided that the issue should be presented to AC.2, because such a fundamental interpretation of Annex 11 was outside the mandate of the Group of Experts. In the meantime, the Group of Experts decided to remove the error code 306 from the code list CL99.

11. Add a Sequence number in the Transport Means class

41. The Group of Experts agreed to add a “Sequence number” attribute in the “Transport Means” class in all relevant messages.

12. Add a Sequence number in the Subcontractor class

42. One expert questioned the pertinence of adding a “Sequence number” attribute in the “Subcontractor” class and mentioned that this type of modification might also be questioned by the WCO data model project team. The secretariat proposed to reconsider this amendment, to which the Group of Experts agreed.

13. Extending the usage of messages I3/I4 and I19/I20 to customs authorities

43. The Group of Experts agreed with the proposal to allow customs to use messages I3/I4 and I19/I20 to obtain data from ITDB via the eTIR international system.

14. Suspension of an eTIR intermodal transport

44. The Group of Experts agreed with the mechanism, proposed by the secretariat, to register the suspension of a TIR transport and the inclusion of a new “suspended” status for the guarantee.

15. New descriptions for the classes and attributes

45. The Group of Experts took note that the secretariat had prepared a new set of eTIR descriptions to complement the WCO descriptions of classes and attributes used in the eTIR data model. It agreed that, while the new descriptions would be submitted for translation as part of the technical specifications, those new eTIR descriptions will ultimately be integrated in the functional specifications, in particular in the consolidated document to be prepared for the third session of the Group of Experts.

16. Revised modelling of the “heavy or bulky” goods

46. The Group of Experts agreed to replace the current “Heavy and bulky goods indicator” attribute in the “Additional Information” class at the declaration level by a new “Heavy or bulky goods indicator” attribute in the “Consignment” class in all relevant messages.

17. Clarifications related to messages E9/E10, E11/E12 and E13/E14

47. The Group of Experts agreed with the proposed changes in the usage of the attributes in the “Message” class of messages E9/E10, E11/E12 and E13/E14.

18. Versions of external code lists

48. The Group of Experts agreed with the proposed methodology to keep track of the different versions of code lists and requested the secretariat to include it in the eTIR specifications. The Group of Experts also pointed out that the methodology applies to both internal and external code lists.

19. Review of the rules and conditions

49. The Group of Experts agreed with the proposed definitions for Rules and Conditions

and supported the amendments to the list of Rules and Condition proposed by the secretariat, However, the Group of Expert took note of a comment by IRU regarding the fact that holders generally do not have any information regarding the Certificate of Approval of containers and that condition C005 should be revised accordingly. The Group of Experts agreed to amend condition C005 as follows.

```
IF(CONSIGNMENT.Heavy or bulky goods indicator ) = FALSE AND
TRANSPORTEQUIPMENT.Size and type identification= 14, 17, 42 or T1)
THEN NOT EMPTY( TRANSPORTEQUIPMENT.CERTIFICATEOFAPPROVAL )
ELSE EMPTY( TRANSPORTEQUIPMENT.CERTIFICATEOFAPPROVAL )
```

, where “T1” represents a new value to be included in the CL01 for the loading unit of a simple truck.

50. The Group of Experts also considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/38, in conjunction with Informal document WP.30/GE.1 No. 10 (2021) (English only), which were transmitted by the Russian Federation. One expert from the Russian Federation introduced the documents and stressed the need to align the structures and content of eTIR messages to those used in EACU, e.g. by including the value of the goods, to ensure the legal significance of the messages exchanged via the eTIR international system and to ensure that the authentication is performed in line with the legislation of EACU. He also pointed out the fact that his technical colleagues will consider the inclusion, in the eTIR technical specifications, of the possibility to use a TTP in the interconnection of a national customs system with the eTIR international system.

51. The Group of Experts recalled the discussion which took place during its extraordinary session (7 and 8 April 2021) and various experts reiterated the suggestion to carry out an analysis, similar to the NCTS-eTIR Proof of Concept (PoC), aimed at identifying the differences in the requirements of the EACU and those contained in the eTIR specifications, in order to formulate concrete proposal, targeted at bridging identified gaps. The secretariat recalled that it had already contacted EEC and its Member States, proposing to launch a study on how to best interconnect the countries of EACU with the eTIR international system. The Group of Experts noted that while EEC had declined the offer, because it is not a contracting party to the TIR convention, its Member States had not yet responded, with the exception of Belarus that had contacted the secretariat, indicating their possible interest to interconnect their national customs system with the eTIR international system.

52. Hopeful that other Member States of EACU will soon contact the secretariat to carry out such an analysis, the Group of Experts recalled that its mandate ends after its third session and that a PoC is a complex and time-consuming exercise. With that in mind, the Group of Experts recommended that any request for changes to the eTIR specifications that would result from a PoC should be brought to the attention of the Technical Implementation Body (TIB) in the framework of preparing version 4.4 of the eTIR specifications. In the meantime, several experts also recalled that Annex 11 allows for customs administrations to request holders for additional information when that information is required by national law.

VIII. Other business (agenda item 7)

A. Annex 11 of the TIR Convention

53. The Group of Experts noted that the twelve month period to raise an objection to various amendments to the TIR Convention, including new Annex 11, had elapsed on 25 February 2021 and that, in the course of the three month period (between 25 February 2021 and 25 May 2021) during which contracting parties could inform the Secretary General of the United Nations that they would not accept Annex 11, only Switzerland had done so. Consequently, as of 25 May 2021, all contracting parties to the TIR Convention, except Switzerland, are bound by Annex 11.

B. National and regional developments

54. The Group of Experts did not have any national or regional development to report.

C. Date and place of Group of Experts sessions

55. The Group of Experts took note of the dates reserved for its third session, i.e. 13–15 September 2021, and that, as long as the epidemiologic situation limits international travel and the Swiss and UNOG rules on public gatherings remain in place, the secretariat would organize sessions in hybrid format (allowing both virtual and limited in-person attendance).

Annex

Summary of the eTIR Ceremony on the occasion of the entry into force of Annex 11 of the TIR Convention

The new legal framework for the full digitalization of the TIR system (so-called eTIR) entered into force on 25 May 2021, opening eTIR to 77 countries across five continents.

To mark this momentous occasion, a special ceremony was held at the United Nations in Geneva, hosted by ECE and IRU with 16 ambassadors and dignitaries, speaking in support of TIR digitalization.

Olga Algayerova, ECE Executive Secretary, said:

“The launch of eTIR, the global United Nations border crossing facilitation tool, will further secure the TIR system, making it more efficient and competitive. eTIR will allow paperless and contactless border crossing operations. We have seen how crucial that is during the COVID-19 pandemic. By keeping drivers and customs officers safe, eTIR can be a game changer in ensuring borders can remain open under such emergency situations.”

Umberto de Pretto, IRU Secretary General, said:

“For over 70 years IRU has represented the road transport operators who run the trucks moving goods across borders, having the iconic blue TIR plate on the back of millions of trucks. With the advent of fully paperless TIR, we will now see even more benefits for the transport operators and their clients, the importers and exporters, who are at the heart of global trade.”

Mr. Osman Beyhan, Chair of the TIR Administrative Committee (AC.2) and Deputy Director General Ministry of Trade Ministry of Trade, Turkey said:

“The entry into force of eTIR is a real milestone for us and for all those involved in international trade, logistics and transportation. To my mind, this development is like constructing a high quality, high standard highway for transporters and traders, in order to make their operations as easy and flawless as possible. Most importantly, this achievement was made possible thanks to joint efforts by all stakeholders involved in TIR operations, including governments, the private sector, national and international associations.”

Mr. Farid Valiyev, Head of Transit Operations Division, State Customs Committee, Azerbaijan said:

“Full digitalization of the only global transit system provided by the TIR Convention (1975) is a milestone in increasing the effectiveness of customs formalities in international transport. The entry into force of Annex 11 opens a new era for all stakeholders - including customs, economic operators and the trade community - by ensuring smooth and efficient trade.”

Mr. Akbar Khodaei, Director Transport Division, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO Secretariat) said:

“We are pleased that ECO Member States are at the forefront of interconnecting their customs information systems to the eTIR international system. The ECO secretariat fully supports these initiatives and the digitalization of customs and transport documents, which will further enhance transport and trade facilitation as well as regional economic integration.”
