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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention, 1975

#### Seventy-eighth session

Geneva, 12 (p.m.) and 13 October 2022

Item 3 (a) (i) of the provisional agenda

**Activities and administration of the TIR Executive Board:**

**Activities of the TIR Executive Board:**

**Report by the Chair of the TIR Executive Board**

### **Report of the ninetieth session of the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB)\***

#### **I. Attendance**

1. The TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) held its ninetieth session on 11 October 2021 in Geneva, with the possibility of online participation.
2. The following members of TIRExB were present: Mr. S. Amelyanovich (Russian Federation), Mr. M. Ayati (Iran (Islamic Republic of)), Mr. M. Ciampi (Italy), Mr. R. Kabulov (Uzbekistan), Mr. P. J. Laborie (European Commission), Mr. H. R. Mayer (Austria) and Ms. P. Yalcin Bastirmaci (Türkiye). Mr. F. Valiyev (Azerbaijan) and Ms. C. Zuidgeest (Netherlands) were excused.
3. Ms. T. Rey-Bellet attended the session as observer, representing the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

#### **II. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 1)**

*Documentation:* Informal document TIRExB/AGE/2021/90draft

4. TIRExB adopted the agenda of the session in Informal document TIRExB/AGE/2021/90draft.

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\* The present document is submitted pursuant to Annex 8, Article 11, paragraph 4 of the TIR Convention, 1975, which stipulates that the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) “shall report on its activities to the Administrative Committee at least once a year or at the request of the Administrative Committee”.

### **III. Adoption of the report of the eighty-ninth session of TIRExB (agenda item 2)**

*Documentation:* Informal document TIRExB/REP/2021/89draft with comments

5. TIRExB adopted the report of its eighty-ninth session as in Informal document TIRExB/REP/2021/89draft with comments.

### **IV. Budget proposal and cost plan of TIRExB and the TIR secretariat for the year 2022 (agenda item 3)**

*Documentation:* ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/15, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/16, ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/17 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/18

6. TIRExB took note of its final accounts for the year 2020, together with a report covering the period from 1 January 2021 until 30 June 2021, prepared by the secretariat and contained in documents ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/15 and ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/16, respectively. Further, the Board took note of document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/17, containing the audit certificate for the year 2020 related to the account kept by IRU for the invoicing and advance transfer of the money required for the operation of the TIRExB and the TIR secretariat.

7. The Board considered the budget proposal and cost plan of TIRExB and the TIR secretariat for the year 2022, as well as the net amount to be transferred by IRU contained in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/18. Further to a question by Mr. Laborie (European Commission) on the prediction of IT related expenditures in the mid- and long-term, the secretariat informed the Board that it had started working on this issue in the framework of the results of the decline study from the previous term and the activity 4 of the TIRExB programme of work, which envisaged a study that would address issues for a sustainable future for eTIR operations. Ms. Rey-Bellet (IRU) underlined that the amount per TIR Carnet foreseen for 2022, i.e. 2.25 US\$, was the highest amount in past years.

8. The Board endorsed the budget proposal and cost plan of TIRExB and the TIR secretariat for the year 2022, as well as the net amount to be transferred by IRU as in document ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/18.

### **V. Audit report on the management of the TIR Trust Fund issued by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (agenda item 4)**

*Documentation:* Informal document Nos. 4 (2019)

9. The Board took note of following information by the secretariat about progress in implementing the audit recommendations, since its previous session, while noting that all recommendations by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) were already implemented:

- Recommendation No. 6: Following the decision of the TIR Administrative Committee (AC.2) at its session in June 2021, the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ECE and IRU would be submitted to the Executive Committee (EXCOM) at its meeting on 15 October 2021 for its taking note and it was expected that OIOS would close the recommendation once it received a signed copy of the MoU.

## **VI. Computerization of the TIR procedure (agenda item 5)**

### **A. Interconnection of national customs systems with the eTIR international system**

10. TIRExB took note of the presentation by the secretariat on the outcome of the Group of Experts on Conceptual and Technical Aspects of Computerization of the TIR Procedure (WP.30/GE.1), in particular at its third and last session, that took place on 13–15 September 2021. It took note that the reports of all sessions (four in total, including the extraordinary session) were available online.<sup>1</sup> The Board, recalling the Terms of Reference (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/2019/9 and Corr.1) and the work plan (ECE/TRANS/WP.30/GE.1/2021/2/Rev.1) of WP.30/GE.1, noted that the Group of Experts had completed its mandate within the set timeframe and that it had agreed on a complete version 4.3 of the eTIR specifications, which is consolidated in Informal documents WP.30/GE.1 (2021) No. 11 (introduction), No. 13 (concepts), No. 14 (functional specifications) and No. 12 (technical specifications). The Board also noted that WP.30/GE.1 could not agree on one issue regarding the level of detail to be provided by holders about the itinerary and that it recommended transmitting this issue to the Technical Implementation Body (TIB), established as per Article 58 quater of the Convention.

11. Further, TIRExB welcomed the latest developments in the eTIR international system and in the eTIR data model, based on version 4.3 of the eTIR specifications. The secretariat informed the Board also about the completion of technical guides, describing the eTIR messages<sup>2</sup> and about the next steps foreseen by the secretariat, in particular the preparation of conformance tests. Finally, the secretariat stated that it continued assisting customs authorities of several contracting parties in the interconnection projects, in particular Azerbaijan, Georgia, Pakistan, Tunisia, Türkiye and Uzbekistan for the implementation stage.

### **B. International TIR Data Bank**

*Documentation:* Informal document Nos. 5 (2020) and 3 (2021)

12. The Board was informed about developments related to the International TIR Data Bank (ITDB) projects managed by the secretariat, in particular of the start of the development of the TIR Carnet holder web portal. The secretariat, referring to the limited number of replies received, reminded of the importance for all contracting parties to respond to the two ongoing ITDB surveys. The Board reiterated its suggestion to remind all contracting parties during the next session of AC.2 of the need to communicate their perspective on those two topics (see TIRExB/REP/2021/89draft with comments, para.12).

## **VII. Settlement of disputes between Contracting Parties, associations, insurance companies and international organizations (agenda item 6)**

### **A. Draft new Explanatory Note to Article 6, paragraph 2 of the TIR Convention**

*Documentation:* Informal document WP.30/AC.2 (2021) No. 6, Informal document Nos. 5 and 9 (2021)

13. Regarding the Romanian proposals contained in Informal document WP.30/AC.2 (2021) No. 6, TIRExB welcomed the analysis and amendment proposals in Informal

<sup>1</sup> [unece.org/transport/etir](https://unece.org/transport/etir)

<sup>2</sup> See <https://wiki.unece.org/display/ED/Technical+Guides>

document No. 9 (2021). The Board supported, in principle, the conclusions of the analysis and the amendment proposals based on them.

14. Ms. Rey-Bellet (IRU) stated that while IRU agreed with the amendment proposal in Annex I of Informal document No. 9 (2021) regarding the settlement of disputes, it could not agree with the proposals as contained in Annex II, for several reasons. She added that IRU was not clear either about how the proposed wording could be translated in terms of practical application. The secretariat expressed its availability to discuss with IRU the practical implications of the amendment proposal on IRU procedures.

15. In order to clarify all the aspects before submitting the proposal to AC.2, the Board agreed that IRU would submit a document for its next session explaining the reasons why it could not agree with the proposal contained in Annex II of Informal document No. 9 (2021).

## **B. Letter by the government of Uzbekistan on customs claims**

*Documentation:* Informal document Nos. 4 and 7 (2021)

16. Regarding the letter by the government of Uzbekistan in Informal document No. 4 (2021), TIRExB recalled that, at its previous session, it had invited the parties to communicate bilaterally to discuss the issue on a case-by-case basis (TIRExB/REP/2021/89draft with comments, para. 29). Mr. Kabulov (Uzbekistan) informed the Board that Uzbek authorities were in contact with IRU on the customs claims and that the parties would meet that week to discuss the claims.

17. The Board welcomed the communication between the parties and decided continuing its consideration of the matter at its next session.

## **VIII. Prices of TIR Carnets (agenda item 7)**

18. The Board mandated the secretariat to send out the survey for the collection of the 2022 TIR Carnet prices before 31 December 2021, with a deadline for responding until 1 March 2022.

## **IX. Application of specific provisions of the TIR Convention (agenda item 8)**

### **Exchange of views on the implementation of the TIR procedure during COVID-19 pandemic**

19. Referring to the recommendations by the Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group (see ECE/TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2021/9, para. 14), the secretariat informed the Board that the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) had decided to present its recommendations in the form of an action plan to the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) at its session in February 2022, asking relevant working parties under ITC to take actions.

20. TIRExB welcomed the fact that the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic would be further considered and turned into specific actions by the relevant bodies. On this basis, the Board decided concluding the item for now and reverting to the issue in case of further developments.

## **X. Miscellaneous (agenda item 9)**

### **A. Activities of the secretariat**

21. TIRExB noted that the secretariat had launched the survey on customs claims for the period 2017–2020, as requested at its previous session, with a deadline of 30 October 2021

(TIRExB/REP/2021/89draft with comments, para. 19). Further, the Board noted that the secretariat had sent a letter to the Moldovan national association, summarizing its past considerations and the state of play regarding the problems reported by the transport companies from the Republic of Moldova in Ukraine (TIRExB/REP/2021/89draft with comments, para. 22).

22. Further, the secretariat stated that, in line with the activities foreseen in the TIRExB programme of work, they would initiate preparations to modernize the TIR Convention and enhancing the intermodal use of the TIR procedure, the results of which would be submitted to the Board for consideration at its next session. It was added that the results achieved from the studies on the decline of the use of TIR Carnets and the intermodal transport already provided substantial input and a roadmap on these items.

23. The Chair welcomed the initiative and pointed out the interest from all parties for further simplifications in the TIR system. He added that he believed the Board members, especially with their expertise in simplifications in other transit systems, could well contribute in this process. Mr. Laborie (European Commission) stated that there would be merit in revisiting Informal documents Nos. 16 and 26 (2018) on the intermodal transport as well as considering the possibilities offered by the new Explanatory Note to Article 49 and the need for the recognition of subcontractors. Mr. Kabulov (Uzbekistan) underlined the importance of the confidence by authorities in the TIR system as a reliable transit regime. He added that, while modernization was a need for the TIR system, it should be realized without sacrificing the security of the TIR procedure, particularly in terms of the information/data provided by the declaration. The secretariat clarified that utmost attention would be paid to keeping the pillars of the TIR system intact to maintain it as a sustainable and reliable transit regime.

24. Ms. Rey-Bellet (IRU) stated that the private sector fully supported the work on the modernization of the TIR Convention so that it responds to the business needs. She added that already important achievements took place to that end with the entry into force of Annex 11 and other amendments to the Convention and that their member associations submitted other issues to them to be considered for further facilitation. Finally, providing examples such as opportunities for e-commerce shipments and postal consignments, the use of authorized consignor/consignee status and simplifications of the certificate of approval of vehicles, she said that they would present their proposals as a document to the next session of the Board.

25. The secretariat asked Board members to transmit further comments/suggestions after the session, if any.

## **B. Other matters**

26. TIRExB did not consider any other matter.

## **C. Restriction in the distribution of documents**

27. TIRExB decided to keep documents issued in relation to the current session restricted.

## **D. Date and place of next session**

28. The Board decided to conduct its ninety-first session on 7 February 2022 in Geneva and requested the secretariat to make the appropriate arrangements, subject to the COVID-19 limitations.