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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Customs Questions  
affecting Transport

(18 to 22 October 1999)

**PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE NINETY-THIRD SESSION**

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
starting at 14.30 hours on Monday, 18 October 1999 \*/**

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\*/ For reasons of economy, delegates are requested to bring copies of the documents mentioned in this provisional agenda to the meeting. There will be no documentation available in the meeting room. Before the meeting, missing documents may be obtained directly from the ECE Transport Division (Fax: +41-22-917-0039; E-mail: martin.magold@unece.org). Documents may also be downloaded (in their original language only) from the Internet web site of the ECE Transport Division (www.unece.org/trans). During the meeting, missing documents may be obtained from the UNOG Documents Distribution Section (Room C.111, 1st floor, Palais des Nations).

New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings held at the Palais des Nations. Therefore, delegates are requested to fill-in the attached registration form (also available from the Internet web site of the ECE Transport Division) and to transmit the duly filled-in form at the latest two weeks before the session to the ECE Transport Division, either by fax (+41-22-917-0039) or by e-mail (martin.magold@unece.org). In Geneva, prior to the session, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at Villa Les Feuillantines, 13 Avenue de la Paix (see attached map), for issuance of an identification badge. In case of difficulties, phone the ECE secretariat (Int. 72453).

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- 7. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975)
  - TIR Handbook (Publication E, F, R)  
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|--------|---|--|
| (viii) | Validity of curtain-sided vehicles  | TRANS/WP.30/1999/15<br>TRANS/WP.30/184<br>TRANS/WP.30/1998/14<br>TRANS/WP.30/180<br>TRANS/WP.30/168<br>TRANS/WP.30/166<br>TRANS/WP.30/R.166    |
| (ix)   | International directory of<br>TIR focal points  | Restricted document<br><a href="http://www.unece.org/trans/tir/welctir.htm">www.unece.org/trans/tir/<br/>welctir.htm</a>                       |
| (x)    | International register on Customs<br>sealing devices                                  | Restricted document  |
| (xi)   | Example of a TIR Carnet duly filled-in  | Informal document<br>(available at the session)<br>TRANS/WP.30/1999/7  |
| (xii)  | TIR Handbook  | Publication<br>(available at the session)<br><a href="http://www.unece.org/trans/tir/welctir.htm">www.unece.org/trans/tir/<br/>welctir.htm</a> |
| (xiii) | Other matters   |  |
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| 9.     | Prevention of the abuse of Customs<br>transit systems by smugglers                    |  |
| 10.    | Programme of work   | TRANS/WP.30/185, annex   |

11. Other business

(a) Date of next sessions

(b) Restriction on the distribution of documents

12. Adoption of the report

Annex: Programme of work for 1999-2003

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

The secretariat proposes the following schedule of work:

Monday, 18 October 1999 (afternoon):	WP.30 agenda items 1 to 7
Tuesday, 19 October 1999:	WP.30 agenda item 7
Wednesday, 20 October 1999:	WP.30 agenda items 7 to 10
Thursday, 21 October 1999:	TIR Administrative Committee
Friday, 22 October 1999 (morning):	Adoption of the report (WP.30)
(afternoon):	Adoption of the report (TIR Administrative Committee)

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### 1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

In accordance with the Commission's rules of procedure, the first item to be considered is the adoption of the agenda (TRANS/WP.30/185).

### 2. ACTIVITIES OF ECE BODIES AND OTHER UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party will be informed about the results of the fifty-fourth session of the Economic Commission for Europe (4-6 May 1999) as well as of activities of other subsidiary bodies of the UN/ECE as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party. Information will also be provided on the activities by the UN/ECE, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to implement UN/ECE transport facilitation conventions in Asia and on the Indian sub-continent.

### 3. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY

The Working Party may wish to be informed about recent activities of the World Customs Organization (WCO), the European Commission (DG XXI), the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) as well as of other governmental and non-governmental organizations as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party.

In particular, the Working Party may wish to take note of a report on the removal of obstacles at border crossings as well as of a resolution and a report on combating crime in transport that have been approved by the ECMT Council of Transport Ministers (Warsaw, 19 and 20 May 1999). A limited number of these documents will be available at the session. These documents can also be accessed via the ECMT web site ([www.oecd.org/cem](http://www.oecd.org/cem)).

Relevant documentation transmitted will be distributed during the session.

#### **4. CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF PRIVATE ROAD VEHICLES (1954)**

##### Initiation of the amendment procedure for Article 13, new paragraph 4 of the Convention

The Working Party may wish to note that on 5 February 1999 the Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, has issued Depositary Notification C.N.801.1998.TREATIES-1 containing amendment proposals for a new paragraph 4 to Article 13 of the Convention as had been agreed upon at the eighty-fourth session of the Working Party in June 1986 (TRANS/WP.30/178, para. 85; TRANS/WP.30/168, para. 72). The amendment proposal has been formally transmitted by Italy on behalf of the Working Party.

The amendment proposal will come into force on 5 October 1999 if, by 5 July 1999, none of the Contracting States have expressed an objection to the proposed amendment.

The Working Party will be informed about the acceptance of this amendment proposal.

#### **5. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE HARMONIZATION OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS, 1982**

##### Preparation of a new annex on efficient border crossing procedures

The Administrative Committee for the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods considered at its third session (Geneva, 21 and 24 June 1999) a proposal for the insertion of a new annex to the Convention on facilitation of the passage of ATP vehicles carrying perishable goods. This proposal had been prepared by the UN/ECE Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11) (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/5). The Administrative Committee welcomed in principle this proposal and decided to review it at its forthcoming session together with other amendment proposals on efficient border crossing procedures (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/6, paras. 12-14).



The Administrative Committee also considered the results of the joint meeting of the UN/ECE Working Parties on Road Transport (SC.1) and on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) which had been held on 21 October 1998 (TRANS/WP.30/182, paras. 10 and 11). In this context, the Administrative Committee invited WP.30 to study concrete proposals for another annex to the Convention that had been proposed by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) (TRANS/WP.30/1999/12 - TRANS/SC.1/1999/6). This proposal contained provisions relating to the issuance of visas for professional drivers, exchange of information on border crossing procedures, preparation and mutual acceptance of weight and vehicle inspection certificates as well as minimum requirements for border crossing points.

The Working Party may wish to study these proposals in detail, to complement them with required technical and administrative provisions and to transmit tangible and comprehensive amendment proposals for consideration at the next session of the Administrative Committee to be held in the year 2000.

## **6. DRAFT UN/ECE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS TRANSIT PROCEDURES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF GOODS BY RAIL**

### **(a) Revised draft Convention**

At its eighty-second session, the Working Party has completed, in principle, its work on the preparation of a Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail with the exception of Article 26, paras. 8 and 10 (TRANS/WP.30/164, paras. 59-61). The text of the draft Convention is contained in document TRANS/WP.30/R.141. A few minor amendments to it are contained in the report of the eighty-second session of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/164, para. 60).

The Working Party may wish to take a decision on the representation and the number of votes of regional economic integration organizations (article 26, paragraphs 8 and 10 of the draft Convention). At its eighty-seventh and ninety-second sessions, no progress had been made towards a consensus on this matter (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 66; TRANS/WP.30/174, para. 46; TRANS/WP.30/164, para. 61; TRANS/WP.30/162, paras. 66-71). Alternatively, the Working Party may wish to await the result of the preparatory work on a revised draft Convention incorporating also the relevant provisions of the SMGS Agreement (see below).

(b) Extension of the scope of the draft Convention to cover the SMGS Agreement

Following lengthy considerations on possibilities of extending the scope of the draft Convention also to countries applying the SMGS Agreement, the Inland Transport Committee had stressed in 1997 that work on the draft Convention should be continued under the auspices of the UN/ECE and that two legal options should be considered: (a) the preparation of two similar, but independent United Nations conventions and (b) the preparation of a single convention with two separate annexes, one covering the COTIF member countries, the other covering SMGS member States with a link to be established between the two different Customs transit systems. The secretariat had been requested to prepare a first draft of such a Convention. Due to lack of resources such draft has not yet been established by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 67; ECE/TRANS/119, paras. 136-139; TRANS/WP.30/174, paras. 47-49).

At its ninety-second session, the Working Party felt that, in due course, practical results on this matter should be achieved. It therefore decided to prepare, as a first step, two similar, but independent United Nations conventions, one providing for the use of the CIM consignment note as a Customs document in those countries applying the COTIF railway regime and another convention, providing for the use of the SMGS consignment note as a Customs document in the countries applying the SMGS regime. The offer of the organization for co-operation between Railways (OSZhD) to prepare a revised draft convention covering the SMGS countries was welcomed (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 68 and 69).

The Working Party may wish to consider briefly the proposed draft convention covering the SMGS countries only as prepared by the OSZhD (TRANS/WP.30/1999/13). Detailed considerations of a United Nations draft Convention covering all UN/ECE member countries in line with the mandate of the Inland Transport Committee could then start at one of the next sessions of the Working Party in the first half of 2000.

## **7. CUSTOMS CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT OF GOODS UNDER COVER OF TIR CARNETS (TIR CONVENTION, 1975)**

(a) Status of the Convention

The Working Party will be informed of the situation concerning the scope and the number of Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention, 1975. On 11 July 1999 the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has become the sixty-fourth Contracting Party to the Convention.

Updated information on the status of the Convention will be provided at the session.

The complete text of the latest amendments to the Convention entering into force on

17 February 1999 (Phase I of the TIR revision process) is contained in document ECE/TRANS/17/Amend.19/Rev.1 and is available in English, French, Russian and Spanish. This text also includes the corrigendum to Depositary Notification C.N.433.1997.TREATIES-1 of 17 November 1997 that has been issued by the Legal Office of the United Nations as Depositary Notification C.N.336.1999.TREATIES-1 of 26 May 1999 to which no objection has been lodged.

(b) Revision of the Convention

(i) Phase II of the TIR revision process

The Working Party may wish to review the amendment proposals prepared by the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Phase II of the TIR Revision Process as contained in the reports of its first (2-3 April 1998), second (24-26 June 1998), third (19-20 October 1998) and fourth sessions (TRANS/WP.30/1998/5 and Corr 1; TRANS/WP.30/1998/11; TRANS/WP.30/1998/17; TRANS/WP.30/1999/7).

As the final part (Addendum 7) of the draft report of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts, at its fourth session, could not be adopted properly due to lack of time, the Working Party may wish to review this report of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on the basis of comments received from the Russian Federation and the IRU (TRANS/WP.30/1999/14). Following the session, the secretariat will issue, if required, a revised version of this report of the Ad Hoc Group of Experts.

At its ninety-second session, the Working Party has already reviewed the proposals made by the group of experts at its three sessions in 1998 (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 23-40). Following this review, the group of experts at its fourth session (Geneva, 21-24 June 1999) further refined these proposals relating to the following subjects:

- Status and functions of the international organization(s)
- Definition of termination and discharge procedures
- Recommended procedures for the termination of a TIR operation
- Recommended procedures for the discharge of a TIR operation
- Recommended inquiry procedures
- Alternative forms of evidence
- Definition of the holder of TIR Carnets
- Inclusion of additional information into the TIR Carnet.

In order to facilitate the discussions by the Working Party, the secretariat has prepared a document containing in a consolidated manner all amendment proposals accepted so far during phase II of the TIR revision process (TRANS/WP.30/1999/9).

In addition the secretariat has prepared a document on the status and functions of an international organization for review by the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/1999/8). Furthermore, the secretariat has prepared, as requested, a document on recommended procedures for the termination and discharge of TIR operations as well as on recommended inquiry procedures (TRANS/WP.30/1999/10).

On the basis of these secretariat documents, the Working Party may wish to review the proposals made by the group of experts with a view to arriving at a consistent and comprehensive package of amendment proposals that could be transmitted under phase II of the TIR revision process to the Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention for approval, possibly in spring 2000.

(ii) Phase III of the TIR revision process

At its ninety-first and ninety-second sessions, the Working Party had recommended the Inland Transport Committee to prolong the mandate of the group of experts on the TIR revision process to the year 1999 in order to conclude phase II of the TIR revision process and to start phase III focusing on a revision of the TIR Carnet and the computerization of the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/182, para. 29; TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 41). In this context, it was noted that further work would need to be undertaken on the legal basis of the EDI control system for TIR Carnets (Recommendation of the TIR Administrative Committee of 20 October 1995) and on the related so-called SAFETIR system administered by the IRU (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 38).

At its ninetieth session, the Working Party had already considered briefly a revised TIR Carnet on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat and the IRU. Unfortunately, due to lack of time, the group of experts could not study this matter in detail as had been requested earlier by the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/180, paras. 28-30; Informal document No. 5 (1997); TRANS/WP.30/R.176).

The Working Party may wish to consider in detail the elements for revision under phase III as well as the procedure and the time frame required to achieve tangible results. In this respect, the Working Party may wish to recommend a prolongation of the mandate of the group of experts for the year 2000.

(c) Application of the Convention

(i) Status of resolution No. 49: Draft questionnaire

Resolution No. 49: "Short-term measures to ensure the security and the efficient functioning of the TIR transit system" adopted by the Working Party at its eighty-first session (TRANS/WP.30/162, annex 2) has been officially accepted so far by the following Contracting Parties to the Convention: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Ireland; Italy; Jordan; Latvia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; United Kingdom; European Community.

As requested by the Working Party, the secretariat is preparing a draft questionnaire for transmission to Contracting Parties having accepted resolution No. 49 inquiring about its implementation (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 43). The draft will be available at the session for consideration and approval by the Working Party.

(ii) EDI control system for TIR Carnets: Implementation of the Recommendation adopted by the TIR Administrative Committee on 20 October 1995

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its eighty-ninth session, the representatives of the IRU had announced that in due course the IRU would make available on-line information on discharged TIR Carnets as well as on stolen or otherwise "invalid" TIR Carnets to interested Customs authorities by means of either (a) telephone lines using a PC and a modem; (b) the Internet or by (c) e-mail systems. These facilities would improve inquiry procedures by Customs authorities to obtain precise information about the place and the time of discharge of TIR Carnets (TRANS/WP.30/178, paras. 41-45). As of August 1998 access to the IRU database providing the above information is possible for registered users. A handbook on the so-called "CUTE-WISE" procedure allowing access by Customs authorities to the IRU data bank has been published jointly by the UN/ECE and the IRU and was distributed at the sixth session of the TIR Contact Group in Istanbul (2-4 December 1998) (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/51, para. 30).

The Working Party may wish to have an exchange of views on experiences made by Customs authorities in using these on-line information service and to consider possible improvements of the system itself and access thereto.

In accordance with the decision at its ninety-second session, the Working Party may also wish to consider possible standard forms and procedures providing for efficient reconciliation of information in case the SAFETIR system provided different information on the termination of TIR operations than the returned TIR Carnets (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 46). As a basis for discussion, the IRU has prepared a document on this subject (TRANS/WP.30/1999/11).

Additional copies of the Handbook on the so-called "CUTE-WISE" procedure will be available at the session and/or may be obtained directly from the IRU or the secretariat (English only).

(iii) Settlement of claims for payments

The Working Party may wish to be informed by the IRU on further progress made in the current arbitration procedure, initiated by the IRU, to obtain payment for Customs claims presented to the previous insurers of the international guaranteeing chain which had denounced their contract with the IRU at the end of 1994 (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 51 and 52; TRANS/WP.30/182, paras. 37 and 38; TRANS/WP.30/180, para. 36; TRANS/WP.30/178, para. 47; TRANS/WP.30/174, para. 32; TRANS/WP.30/172, para. 17; TRANS/WP.30/168, paras. 28-35).

The Working Party had noted in spring 1999 that some payments had been made during the last few months, but deplored the extremely lengthy procedures in the settlement of such claims. In this context, the Working Party may wish to note that the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) is considering this matter at present.

The Working Party may also wish to be informed by Customs authorities and the IRU of the present situation with regard to the settlement of claims for payments made by Customs authorities against national guaranteeing associations (in terms of amounts and reasons given for payment claims).

(iv) Re-introduction of the guarantee for sensitive and other excluded goods

The Working Party may wish to be informed of progress made in the re-introduction of guarantee coverage for those goods and TIR Carnets for which the national guaranteeing associations and the international insurers had denounced their insurance contracts. At its ninety-second session, the Working Party had once more urged the international insurers to re-establish full guarantee coverage for these sensitive goods as soon as possible and had invited the TIR Executive Board to consider all necessary steps that could be taken in order to arrive at guarantee coverage for all goods to be transported under the TIR regime (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 48-50; TRANS/WP.30/178, paras. 80 and 81).

The Working Party may wish to consider once more necessary steps that could be taken in order to arrive at full guarantee coverage for all goods to be transported under the TIR regime.

(v) Interpretation of article 3 of the Convention

As decided at its eighty-ninth session, the Working Party may wish to continue its consideration on the validity of article 3 of the Convention and, specifically, on the question as to whether it is acceptable to apply the TIR procedure for the transport of buses and trucks whether unloaded or loaded being driven on their own wheels, implying that these vehicles themselves were regarded as the "goods" transported under the TIR procedure. Taking account of a draft comment on this matter prepared by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.30/R.191), the Working Party had approved in principle the comment contained in annex 1 to its report (TRANS/WP.30/178, paras. 53 and 54).

As no common position has been achieved on this issue during its ninety-second session, the Working Party decided to revert once more to this matter at its forthcoming session on the basis of a more flexible wording of the proposed comment (for example, stating that road vehicles could be regarded as goods) (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 54).

The Working Party may wish to reconsider this comment for inclusion into the TIR Handbook and to transmit it to the TIR Administrative Committee for endorsement.

(vi) Improved procedures in the use of TIR Carnets by transport operators

With a view to reducing the possibilities for fraudulent discharge of TIR Carnets at Customs offices of destination, the Working Party, at its eighty-ninth session, had a first exchange of views on the feasibility of recommending or prescribing in the Convention that the holder of a TIR Carnet or his agent (driver) should deal directly with Customs agents in the discharge of TIR Carnets. It had felt that, in principle, the procedure described in secretariat document TRANS/WP.30/R.196 was in line with the provisions and the spirit of the Convention. Since the TIR Carnet was a Customs document providing also proof of a financial guarantee by the transport operator (the holder), the transport operator had the right to insist on dealing directly with Customs agents in the discharge of TIR Carnets (TRANS/WP.30/178, paras. 55-58).

At its ninety-second session, the Working Party felt that, in principle, the procedures and solutions described in secretariat document TRANS/WP.30/R.196 and in the informal IRU document No. 3 (1998) were in line with the provisions and the spirit of the Convention. The secretariat and the IRU were requested to prepare on this basis concrete proposals, including specimen forms of special vouchers for inclusion into the TIR Carnet as well as a draft comment on this matter, for consideration by the Working Party at its forthcoming session (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 55 and 56).

As the considerations on definitions for "discharge and termination of TIR operations" has not yet been completed neither in the group of experts on Phase II of the TIR revision process nor in the

Working Party, the secretariat felt that it was premature to propose at that stage concrete proposals on this matter.

(vii) Application of article 18 of the Convention with regard to the number of places of loading and unloading

At its ninety-second session, the representative of the IRU proposed to allow for an increase in the maximum number of Customs offices of departure (places of loading) and Customs offices of destination (places of unloading) from the present four to six such offices. Such a proposal would require modification of article 18 and Annex 1 of the Convention.

The Working Party may wish to consider this proposal and, if acceptable, should decide whether this proposal should be part of phase II of the TIR revision process or should be included at a later stage.

(viii) Validity of curtain-sided vehicles

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at earlier sessions, it had considered and not approved the validity of curtain-sided vehicles under the Convention on the basis of a document transmitted by the United Kingdom (TRANS/WP.30/R.166). At that time, some delegations had been of the view that the type of construction as described in the document of the United Kingdom was Customs secure, but that its inspection at Customs offices would be very complicated and time consuming.

Noting that this unresolved question caused concern among transport operators and taking account of a document transmitted by the Czech Republic (TRANS/WP.30/1998/14), the Working Party continued its discussions on this subject at its ninety-second session with a view to providing guidance to transport operators and manufacturers of load compartments. Several delegations agreed with the conclusions made in document TRANS/WP.30/1998/14 that the construction of the curtain-sided vehicle as described therein was Customs secure and in line with the provisions of annex 2 of the Convention.



Before taking a final decision on whether (a) the technical description of curtain-sided vehicles should be included into the technical annexes of the Convention, (b) the Working Party should voice an opinion, possibly in the form of a comment, on the validity of curtain-sided vehicles as long as their construction complied with the provisions of annex 2, article 3, paragraphs 6, 8 and 9 as well as annex 6 of the Convention or (c) it should be left to the discretion of national approval authorities to approve such vehicles as they deem it appropriate, the Working Party decided to request the secretariat to prepare a draft comment on this matter for possible inclusion into the TIR Handbook and to revert to this question at its forthcoming session (TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 59-61).

As a basis for its consideration, the Working Party may wish to consider a draft comment for inclusion into the TIR Handbook prepared by the secretariat (TRANS/WP.30/1999/15).

(ix) International directory of TIR focal points

In accordance with resolution No. 49, the secretariat has set up and maintains an international directory of TIR focal points that could be addressed in case of inquiries in relation to the TIR procedure. The directory contains names and addresses of persons as well as other useful information on Customs administrations and national associations dealing with the TIR procedure. The distribution of the directory is restricted to Customs authorities, national associations and the TIR Department of the IRU.

An updated hard copy version of the directory will be available at the session and/or may be obtained as of mid-October 1999 from the secretariat. The directory which is permanently updated may be consulted on the web site of the UN/ECE Transport Division ([www.unece.org/trans/tir/welctir.htm](http://www.unece.org/trans/tir/welctir.htm)). The required password for access to the relevant web site may be obtained from the secretariat.

(x) International register on Customs sealing devices

The international register on Customs sealing devices used for the TIR regime, maintained by the secretariat in English, French and Russian, covers at present more than 40 countries utilizing the TIR procedure. The Working Party has stressed that the register must be kept up to date on a permanent basis; otherwise its use could be counterproductive. It therefore requested all Customs authorities to inform the secretariat immediately in case of modifications in the approved sealing devices (TRANS/WP.30/180, para. 46).

An updated hard copy version of the register will be available at the session for restricted use by Customs authorities (English, French and Russian). Copies or excerpts of the register may also be obtained directly from the secretariat.

(xi) Example of a TIR Carnet duly filled-in

The Working Party may wish to note that the Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Phase II of the TIR Revision Process has requested the secretariat to prepare, in cooperation with the Customs authorities of Austria, Hungary, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, a new example of a duly-filled in TIR Carnet for inclusion into the revised version of the TIR Handbook. This new example should serve as a model for transport operators and Customs authorities for the correct filling-in and stamping of the TIR Carnet and its vouchers.

If already available at the time of the session, the Working Party may wish to review the example of the duly filled-in TIR Carnet reflecting a fictitious TIR transport operation between Austria and the Russian Federation.

(xii) TIR Handbook

The Working Party may wish to note that a revised version of the TIR Handbook will be available for delegations during the session. This 1999 version of the TIR Handbook contains the latest amendments to the Convention as well as all relevant comments adopted by the UN/ECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) and the Administrative Committee.

The TIR Handbook is available in English, French and Russian. A limited number of copies will be available free of charge.

The complete text of the TIR Handbook is also available on the TIR web site of the UN/ECE in Czech, English, French, German and Russian (a Spanish version is under construction) ([www.unece.org/trans/tir/welctir.htm](http://www.unece.org/trans/tir/welctir.htm)).

(xiii) Other matters

The Working Party may wish to consider any other issues and difficulties in the application of the Convention faced by Customs authorities, national associations, the international insurers or the IRU.

## **8. CONVENTION ON CUSTOMS TREATMENT OF POOL CONTAINERS USED IN INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT**

The "Container Pool" Convention had come into force on 17 January 1998 and has at present eight Contracting Parties: Austria, Cuba, Italy, Malta, Slovakia, Sweden, Uzbekistan, European Community. The text of the "Pool" Convention is contained in document ECE/TRANS/106. An introduction to the Convention and to the new concept of "equivalent compensation" contained therein had been issued by the secretariat already in 1994 and had been distributed at previous sessions of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/162, para. 77; TRANS/WP.30/159, para. 80; TRANS/WP.30/157, paras. 72-78).

At its ninety-second session, the Working Party decided to consider at its forthcoming session the consolidated model Container Pool Agreement that had been prepared already in 1994 by an Ad Hoc Expert Group (TRANS/WP.30/R.128) with a view to facilitating the application of the Convention and the new Customs concept of "equivalent compensation" (TRANS/WP.30/184, para. 65).

In view of the many items on the agenda of the present session of the Working Party, the secretariat proposes to postpone consideration of this matter to one of the next sessions of the Working Party.

## **9. PREVENTION OF THE ABUSE OF CUSTOMS TRANSIT SYSTEMS BY SMUGGLERS**

Having discussed at earlier sessions a number of drug seizures involving TIR vehicles, the Working Party felt that it should be informed of any special devices and facilities used by smugglers abusing the TIR transit system. The Working Party invited all Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention, 1975, and the World Customs Organization (WCO) to transmit all relevant information on such cases so that it could take the necessary steps, falling within its competence and mandate, to prevent such occurrences (TRANS/WP.30/127, paras. 55-57).

As in the past, the Working Party may wish to exchange views and report on experiences on this subject, if any, on a confidential basis.

## **10. PROGRAMME OF WORK**

The Working Party may wish to consider its new programme of work covering the years 2000 to 2004.

On the basis of its present programme of work (1999-2003) as reproduced in the annex to this agenda, and in accordance with relevant decisions of the Inland Transport Committee and the Commission, the Working Party may wish to review its future activities taking account that (a) the output to be expected within the next two years (or earlier) of each work element should be indicated, (b) work elements with a permanent character and those to be executed within a limited time period should be listed separately and (c) the programme of work should be streamlined as much as possible and the broad objectives and the measures to be carried out should be clearly stated.

## **11. OTHER BUSINESS**

### (a) Dates of next sessions

The Working Party may wish to decide on the dates for its next sessions.

Pending a final decision of the Inland Transport Committee at its February 2000 session, the secretariat has already scheduled the ninety-fourth session of the Working Party to be held in the week from 21 to 25 February 2000, possibly in conjunction with the twenty-eighth session of the TIR Administrative Committee.

### (b) Restriction on the distribution of documents

The Working Party should decide whether there shall be any restrictions with respect to the distribution of documents issued in connection with its current session.

## **12. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

In accordance with established practice, the Working Party will adopt the report on its ninety-third session on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. Given the present resource restrictions with regard to translation facilities, parts of the final report may not be available for adoption in all working languages.

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Annex

**Programme of work for 1999-2003**

**PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.10: CUSTOMS QUESTIONS AFFECTING TRANSPORT**

**Harmonization and simplification of requirements for border crossing procedures concerning modes of inland transport**

Priority: 1

Description:

- (a) Preparation, review, implementation and, where appropriate, modification of international legal instruments.
- (b) Simplification of administrative formalities, documents and procedures.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport will pursue the following activities:

**CONTINUING ACTIVITIES**

- (a) Study of specific legal and other measures to combat fiscal fraud resulting from simplified Customs and other border crossing procedures, such as the TIR regime, including periodic review of the status of implementation of resolution No. 220 (prevention of the abuse of Customs transit systems by drug smugglers). Setting-up of mechanisms and administrative procedures for the regular exchange of information with other Governmental and non-governmental organizations to combat such fraud.

Priority: 2

Output expected in 2000:

Preparation of adequate instruments and measures to improve international cooperation among Contracting Parties to the TIR Convention, 1975 and concerned national and international organizations to prevent fraud.

Activities towards implementation of the Recommendation adopted by the TIR Administrative Committee on 20 October 1995 on an international EDI control system for TIR Carnets.

Exchange of intelligence among Customs authorities of Contracting Parties to relevant ECE Conventions on border crossing facilitation on abuses with a view to identifying measures to combat such occurrences.

- (b) Study of the possible extension of relevant ECE conventions on border crossing facilitation to other regions, particularly relating to legal and administrative aspects. Priority: 3

Output expected in 2000:

Preparation of regional and/or national workshops, possibly in cooperation with ESCAP and ESCWA, on the implementation of relevant ECE Conventions on border crossing facilitation in Asia and the Middle East.

- (c) Periodic review of relevant ECE conventions on border crossing facilitation in order to ensure their coherence with other international or sub-regional treaties and to keep them in line with modern transport and border control requirements. Priority: 2

Output expected in 2000:

Analysis of the application of the following ECE conventions on border crossing facilitation: TIR Convention 1975; Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private (1954) and Commercial (1956) Road Vehicles; Customs Convention Concerning Spare Parts Used for the Repair of EUROPE Wagons; and Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport.

- (d) Study to facilitate formalities for container pools in international transport and follow-up activities within the framework of the Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport. Priority: 2

Output expected in 2000:

Preparation and negotiation of two model container pool agreements providing guidance to the transport industry and the Contracting Parties on the implementation of the provisions of the "Customs Container Pool Convention" covering international rail and international maritime transport.

- (e) Analysis of difficulties encountered relating to border crossing formalities with a view to devising administrative procedures eliminating such difficulties. The analysis will cover health, phytosanitary, veterinary and quality controls, application of standards, public safety controls, etc.), including the promotion of the implementation and extension of the scope of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods of 1982 (Harmonization Convention). Priority: 2

Output expected in 2000:

Study of the possibilities to prepare and negotiate a new annex to the “Harmonization Convention” on road transport, including possibly an international lorry weight certificate, in close cooperation with the Working Party on Road Transport.

Study of concrete measures facilitating border crossing procedures for railway transport in cooperation with the Working Party on Rail Transport.

- (f) Study of Customs questions with a view to simplification of Customs formalities and documents in the field of transport, in particular taking account of the possibility of electronic data interchange solutions, including UN/EDIFACT messages. Priority: 2

Output expected in 2000:

Analysis of the impact on the TIR regime of the New Customs Transit System (NCTS) to be applied in the countries of the Common Transit System (European Community, EFTA and Visegrad countries) and coordination of work with the relevant bodies within the European Community on this subject.

## **ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION**

- (a) Revision of the TIR Convention, 1975 with a view to stabilizing the TIR Customs transit procedure. Priority: 1

Output expected in 1999:

Completion of phase II of the TIR revision procedure and initiation of work on phase III, focusing on the revision of the TIR Carnet and on provisions for a modernized, possibly EDI-based Customs administration and control system.

- (b) Study to facilitate railway transit traffic on the basis of the CIM and the SMGS Consignment Notes, including the preparation of a new Customs transit regime allowing the use of the CIM and the SMGS consignment notes as a Customs document. Priority: 2

Output expected in 1999 and 2000:

Study on legal and administrative requirements for using the CIM and SMGS consignment notes as a Customs document (1999).

Preparation of a draft Customs transit convention covering international rail transport in all COTIF and SMGS member States (2000).

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# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE - GENEVA

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Date: .....

**Title of the Conference**

WP.30 - Ninety-third session

**Delegation/Participant of country, Organization or Agency)**

**Participant: Name** Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.  **First name(s)**

**Participation Category**

Head of delegation <input type="checkbox"/>	Observer (organization) <input type="checkbox"/>
Delegation Member <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
Observer Country <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify below) <input type="checkbox"/>
.....	
.....	
Participation from/until	
from 18 October 1999	to 22 October 1999

**In which language do you prefer to receive documents**

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Validity until:

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**Address in Geneva:**

**Accompanied by spouse**

Yes  No

**Family name (spouse)**

**First Name (spouse)**

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Date :	

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