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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Customs Questions
affecting Transport

(16 to 20 October 2000)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE NINETY-SIXTH SESSION

**to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting at 10.30 hours on Monday, 16 October 2000 */**

*/ 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 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).

In accordance with the accreditation procedures applicable to all meetings held at the Palais des Nations, delegates are requested to fill-in the attached registration form (also available from the Internet web site of the UN/ECE Transport Division) and to transmit the duly filled-in form at the latest two weeks before the session to the UN/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, contact the UN/ECE secretariat (91-72453).

GE.00-

1. Adoption of the agenda TRANS/WP.30/191
2. Activities of UN/ECE bodies and other United Nations organizations of interest to the Working Party
3. Activities of other organizations of interest to the Working Party
4. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982
("Harmonization Convention") ECE/TRANS/55
www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/conventions/list.htm

Preparation of a new annex on efficient border crossing procedures TRANS/WP.30/2000/16
(TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/2000/1)
TRANS/WP.30/2000/11
Informal Document No. 6 (1999)
TRANS/WP.30/1999/12
TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/6
5. Draft UN/ECE Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail

Extension of the scope of the draft Convention to cover the SMGS Agreement TRANS/WP.30/2000/17
TRANS/WP.30/1999/13
TRANS/WP.30/164
TRANS/WP.30/R.141
6. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975) ECE/TRANS/17 and
Amendments 1-19
1999 TIR Handbook
www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/welctir.htm
 - (a) Status of the Convention TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/57,
annex
www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/conventions/list.htm

- (b) Revision of the Convention
- (i) Adoption of amendment proposals under Phase II of the TIR revision process
TRANS/WP.30/2000/18
(TRANS/WP.30/2000/AC.2/12)
TRANS/WP.30/190
TRANS/WP.30/2000/12
 - (ii) Adoption of recommended procedures related to the amendment proposals under Phase II of the TIR revision process
TRANS/WP.30/1999/10
TRANS/WP.30/1999/7
 - (iii) Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process
Informal document No.1 (2000)
Informal document No.7 (2000)
Informal document No.8 (2000)
Informal document No.5 (1997)
- (c) Extension of the scope of the Convention
TRANS/WP.30/190
TRANS/WP.30/188
- (d) Application of the Convention
- (i) Settlement of claims for payments
TRANS/WP.30/190
TRANS/WP.30/188
TRANS/WP.30/184
TRANS/WP.30/182
 - (ii) Re-introduction of the guarantee for sensitive and other excluded goods
TRANS/WP.30/188
TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2000/1
TRANS/WP.30/184
TRANS/WP.30/178
TRANS/WP.30/162
 - (iii) Validity of vehicles and containers with sliding sheets
TRANS/WP.30/2000/19
(TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2000/13)
TRANS/WP.30/2000/14
and Add.1/Corr.1

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| (iv) | Procedures to be applied in case of suspension of a TIR operation | TRANS/WP.30/2000/15 TRANS/WP.30/188 TRANS/WP.30/2000/7 TRANS/WP.30/186 |
| (v) | Transport of containers, semi-trailers or trailers without tractor units | TRANS/WP.30/190 |
| (vi) | Other matters | |
| 7. | Prevention of the abuse of Customs transit systems by smugglers | TRANS/WP.30/127 |
| 8. | Programme of work for the years 2001 to 2005 | TRANS/WP.30/191, annex |
| 9. | Other business | |
| | (a) | Date of the next session |
| | (b) | Restriction on the distribution of documents |
| 10. | Adoption of the report | |

Annex: Programme of work for the years 2001 to 2005

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

The secretariat proposes the following schedule of work:

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| Monday, 16 October 2000: | WP.30 Agenda items 1 to 6 |
| Tuesday, 17 October 2000: | WP.30 Agenda item 6 |
| Wednesday, 18 October 2000 (morning): | WP.30 Agenda item 6 (cont'd) |
| Wednesday, 18 October 2000 (afternoon): | Administrative Committee "Harmonization" Convention |
| Wednesday, 18 October 2000 (afternoon) | Administrative Committee "Container Pool" Convention |
| Thursday, 19 October 2000 (morning): | TIR Administrative Committee |
| Thursday, 19 October 2000 (afternoon): | WP.30 Agenda items 7-9 |
| Friday, 20 October 2000 (morning): | Adoption of the reports: Administrative Committee "Harmonization" Convention Administrative Committee "Container Pool" Convention |
| Friday, 20 October 2000 (afternoon): | WP.30 Agenda item 8 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.30/191).

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

The Working Party will be informed about the results of relevant sessions of subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee as they relate to matters of interest to the Working Party.

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 TAXUD), 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.

4. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE HARMONIZATION OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS, 1982 (“Harmonization Convention”)

Preparation of a new annex on efficient border crossing procedures

The Working Party may wish to recall that the Administrative Committee for the “Harmonization Convention”, at its third session (Geneva, 21 and 24 June 1999), had examined proposals for the insertion of new annexes to the Convention on (a) facilitation of the passage of ATP vehicles carrying perishable foodstuffs prepared by the Working Party on the Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11) and (b) efficient border crossing procedures prepared by the International Road Transport Union (IRU) (TRANS/WP.30/AC.3/6, paras. 12-19).

Following preliminary discussions on the feasibility of such new annexes, based on further contributions made by Transfrigoroute International and the IRU (TRANS/WP.30/1999/12; Informal document No. 6 (1999)), the secretariat, in accordance with the decisions of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/186, paras. 14-17), convened an informal ad hoc group of experts (4-5 April 2000) which considered the key elements required for efficient border crossing procedures and prepared a first draft of a new Annex 8 to the Convention.

Considering the results of the expert group meeting (TRANS/WP.30/2000/11), the Working Party, at its ninety-fifth session, felt that, in principle, the draft provisions of the new Annex 8 to the Convention seemed to be acceptable, but required further studies by competent national authorities and technical experts before they could be considered and adopted by the Administrative Committee at its forthcoming session in October 2000. In order to make rapid progress in this matter, the Working Party decided to create an informal ad hoc group of experts to be convened by the secretariat within the next few weeks in order to consider the establishment of an International Technical Inspection Certificate for Lorries as well as an International Vehicle Weight Certificate, based on a draft prepared by the SECI Regional Road Transport Committee (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 8-12 and 48).

On 1 August 2000, the secretariat convened an ad hoc expert group on technical questions which focused its work on the establishment of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate with a view to avoiding repetitive and time-consuming weighing procedures at border stations. On the basis of the results of this expert group meeting, the secretariat has prepared a new draft Annex 8 to the Convention for consideration by the Working Party and the forthcoming session of the Administrative Committee (18 and 20 October 2000).

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

Extension of the scope of the draft Convention to cover the SMGS Agreement

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its eighty-second session in November 1995, it had already completed, in principle, the preparation of a Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail providing for the use of the CIM consignment note as a Customs document (TRANS/WP.30/164, paras. 59-61; TRANS/WP.30/R.141).

Following considerations on possibilities of extending the scope of the draft Convention also to countries applying the SMGS Agreement, the Working Party, at its ninety-second session, 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).

At its ninety-fourth session, the Working Party took note that the 22 countries applying the Common Transit Convention no longer seemed to be interested in the preparation of a separate United Nations convention, as the CIM consignment note was already used in these countries as a Customs document for rail transit operations. Since it was expected that other countries would join the Common Transit Convention in the near future, the value-added of a new Convention would be limited for those countries. Since, on the other hand, UN/ECE member countries, members of the SMGS Agreement, still seemed to be very interested in the preparation of a Customs transit regime for railway transport, the Working Party invited all countries interested to prepare comments to the draft convention on international Customs transit procedure for the carriage of goods by rail using the SMGS consignment note.

On the basis of a draft convention prepared by the OSZhD (TRANS/WP.30/1999/13), an expert group convened by OSZhD (Warsaw, 19 June 2000) reviewed this draft and amended it in line with new legal and administrative requirements that had come into force in OSZhD member States.

The Working Party may wish to consider this revised draft convention prepared by the OSZhD (TRANS/WP.30/2000/17) and to analyse, in particular, if all requirements for the functioning of an efficient Customs transit system are addressed. The Working Party may also wish to hear the views of delegations of SMGS member States with regard to the possible acceptance of such a convention.

Relevant background information is contained in the following documents: TRANS/WP.30/186; TRANS/WP.30/1999/13; TRANS/WP.30/186; TRANS/WP.30/184; ECE/TRANS/119; TRANS/WP.30/174; TRANS/WP.30/168; TRANS/WP.30/166; TRANS/WP.30/164; TRANS/WP.30/162; TRANS/WP.30/R.161; TRANS/WP.30/R.160; TRANS/WP.30/R.159; TRANS/WP.30/R.140/Rev.1 and Corr.1 (Russian only).

6. 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.

A complete list of Contracting Parties to the Convention as well as a list of countries in which TIR operations can be undertaken is annexed to the report of the twenty-eighth session of the TIR Administrative Committee (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/57, annex 1).

Permanently updated information on the scope of the TIR Convention as well as of other conventions and agreements administered by the Working Party is available on the relevant UN/ECE web site (www.unece.org/trans/new_tir/conventions/list.htm).

(b) Revision of the Convention

(i) Adoption of amendment proposals under Phase II of the TIR revision process

The Working Party may wish to recall that the main objective of Phase II of the TIR revision process is to facilitate the application of the Convention at the national level. For this purpose, the roles and responsibilities of the various parties involved in the TIR procedure will be clearly defined and specified. Furthermore, guidance will be provided on the required national administrative procedures providing for an efficient functioning of the TIR procedures and, if required, for a speedy recovery of Customs duties and taxes at risk from the holder of a TIR Carnet or, if this turned out not to be possible, from national guaranteeing associations.

On the basis of a consolidated document prepared by the secretariat taking account of earlier deliberations of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/2000/12), the Working Party, at its ninety-fifth session, approved in principle the package of amendment proposals constituting Phase II of the TIR revision process subject to some modifications as contained in the report of its ninety-fifth session (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 16-21).

With a view to concluding work on Phase II of the TIR revision process and to transmitting a comprehensive and consistent package of amendment proposals to the twenty-ninth session of the TIR Administrative Committee for consideration and possible adoption, the secretariat has prepared another consolidated document in accordance with the decisions of the Working Party containing the complete package of amendment proposals under Phase II of the TIR revision process as approved so far by the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/2000/18).

Document TRANS/WP.30/2000/18 will also be forwarded to the TIR Administrative Committee as document TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2000/12 (double code) for consideration and adoption at its twenty-ninth session (19-20 October 2000). In addition, the secretariat has transmitted this document together with the official convocation for the twenty-ninth session of the TIR Administrative Committee to all Contracting Parties for comment. This procedure should ensure that those Contracting Parties that do not participate regularly in the sessions of the Working Party and/or the TIR Administrative Committee will be informed of the status of work under Phase II of the TIR revision process.

The Working Party may wish to review once more the amendment proposals and comments contained in document TRANS/WP.30/2000/18 with a view to their transmission to the TIR Administrative Committee for adoption.

For reference, the following documents prepared during Phase II of the TIR revision process contain relevant background information: TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 15-21; TRANS/WP.30/2000/12; TRANS/WP.30/188, paras. 23-30; TRANS/WP.39/2000/9; TRANS/WP.30/2000/2; TRANS/WP.30/186, paras. 25-41; TRANS/WP.30/1999/14; TRANS/WP.30/1999/10; TRANS/WP.30/1999/9; TRANS/WP.30/1999/8; TRANS/WP.30/1999/7 and Add.1; TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 23-40; TRANS/WP.30/1998/17; TRANS/WP.30/1998/11; TRANS/WP.30/1998/5 and Corr.1.

(ii) Adoption of recommended procedures related to the amendment proposals under Phase II of the TIR revision process

The Working Party may wish to consider and adopt recommended procedures on the termination and discharge of TIR operations as well as on recommended inquiry procedures that have been prepared by the secretariat in line with a decision of the ad hoc group of experts on phase II of the TIR revision process in June 1999. As requested, the secretariat has also prepared a list of recommended documents to substantiate claims for non-discharged TIR Carnets by Customs authorities (TRANS/WP.30/1999/10; TRANS/WP.30/1999/7, paras. 28, 31 and 36).

At its ninety-fifth session, the Working Party felt that such recommendations would allow for transparency and harmonization in the implementation of the TIR procedure at the national level and thus would be of great interest to the transport industry and to many countries, in particular those which have only recently acceded to the Convention or are considering to do so. The Working Party stressed that the recommended procedures would need to be adopted by the Working Party and the TIR Administrative Committee as part of Phase II of the TIR revision process. The Working Party also invited all Contracting Parties to provide the secretariat with comments on document TRANS/WP.30/1999/10 for consideration at the next session of the Working Party (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 22-24).

The Working Party may wish to consider the proposed recommended procedures as contained in document TRANS/WP.30/1999/10 with a view to their inclusion into the TIR Handbook or into a separate publication on recommended procedures or best practices.

(iii) Preparation of Phase III of the TIR revision process

At its ninety-fourth and ninety-fifth sessions, the Working Party considered Informal Documents No. 1 and 7 (2000) prepared by the secretariat, Informal Document No. 8 (2000) prepared by the European Commission and Informal Document No. 7 (1997) prepared by the secretariat which provided some reflections on the necessary steps to be taken and the elements to be considered in order to arrive at a consistent and target-oriented package of amendment proposals under Phase III of the TIR revision process (Informal document No. 1 (2000)). In particular, the document listed a number of Customs requirements which would need to be addressed by EDI procedures in the framework of the TIR Convention as well as some remarks on possible approaches that might be taken in the computerization of the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 25-30; TRANS/WP.30/188, paras. 31-38).

In order to make progress in this complex field, the Working Party decided to establish an ad hoc group of experts on the computerization of the TIR regime which should be composed of experts from interested countries and industry groups. The expert group should (a) analyze the administrative and legal requirements relevant for computerization of the TIR regime, (b) study suitable technological solutions in this respect and (c) consider the experiences made with similar automated systems at the national as well as sub-regional levels, such as the NCTS, with a view to preparing possible alternative solutions and scenarios, specifying the benefits as well as the disadvantages of the various approaches. The findings of the expert group could then be considered by the Working Party and/or the TIR Contact Group in the first half of 2001 (TRANS/WP.30/190, para. 30).

The first session of the expert group is planned to be held in November/December 2000 depending on progress made in the preparation of the necessary documentation by the secretariat on the administrative and legal requirements relevant for computerization of the TIR regime. It is planned to invite to this session of the expert group selected experts of the EDI industry to present, following consultations with the secretariat, possible technological solutions in the areas as identified by the Working Party at its ninety-fifth session (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 27-29).

The Working Party will be informed at the session of progress made in this field.

(c) Extension of the scope of the Convention

At its ninety-fourth and ninety-fifth sessions, the Working Party had briefly discussed the proposal of the secretariat to consider an extension of the scope of the TIR Convention to rail transport with a view to establishing a single pan-European Customs transit system providing facilities for all land transport modes on an equal basis. This proposal had been put forward against the background of the little progress that had been made since 1995 in the establishment of a UN/ECE Convention on International Customs Transit Procedures for the Carriage of Goods by Rail (see also agenda item 5).

The Working Party was of the view that work towards a single pan-European rail transit system should be pursued, as an ideal solution, by the Working Party on the basis of a new United Nations Convention. At its next session, the Working Party would review progress made in this field and decide on any further action and possible re-direction of work (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 31 and 32; TRANS/WP.30/188, para. 18).

(d) Application of the Convention

(i) 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.30/190, para. 37; TRANS/WP.30/188, paras. 46-47; TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 51-52; TRANS/WP.30/182, paras. 37-38).

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 particular, the Working Party may wish to have an indication of the amounts paid out by the international insurers and the IRU in the year 1999 and for the first half of the year 2000 as well as information on the reasons for payment claims by Customs authorities. Regular information in this respect would allow for better risk assessment in the application of the Convention by Customs authorities and the TIR Executive Board.

(ii) 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-fourth 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 (TRANS/WP.30/188, paras. 48-51; TRANS/WP.30/184, paras. 48-50; TRANS/WP.30/178, paras. 80-81).

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

- (a) Re-establishment of insurance coverage for all excluded goods on the territory of the EU (see the list of these goods in TRANS/WP.30/190, annex 1);
- (b) Re-introduction of insurance coverage for small quantities of tobacco and alcohol (TRANS/WP.30/162, paras. 41-43);
- (c) Re-introduction of insurance coverage for the "Tobacco and Alcohol" TIR Carnet (TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/2000/1).

(iii) Validity of vehicles and containers with sliding sheets

The Working Party may wish to recall that, at its ninety-fifth session, it had considered the results of a technical expert group which had been convened by the secretariat to prepare concrete proposals on the validity of vehicles and containers for transport under the TIR procedure (TRANS/WP.30/2000/14 and Add.1/Corr.1).

The Working Party agreed, in principle, with the approach taken by the expert group. One delegation felt, however, that the newly proposed provisions in Annex 2, Article 4, paragraph 3 as well as in Annex 7, Article 5, paragraph 3 of the Convention might need to be reviewed as they might dilute the strict requirements for vehicles and containers with sliding sheets proposed in the preceding paragraph 2 of Articles 4 and 5 respectively. The Working Party requested the secretariat to add an additional sketch to the proposed amendments showing clearly the overall construction of vehicles and containers with sliding sheets. It decided to review briefly the amendment proposals at its forthcoming session and to transmit them also to the forthcoming session of the TIR Administrative Committee (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 43-47).

In accordance with the request of the Working Party, the secretariat has prepared consolidated amendment proposals to Annexes 2 and 7 of the Convention for review by the Working Party and the TIR Administrative Committee (TRANS/WP.30/2000/19).

(iv) Procedures to be applied in case of suspension of a TIR operation

The Working Party may recall that, at its ninety-third session, it had noted that the Hungarian Customs authorities seemed not to accept TIR Carnets following the suspension of the TIR procedure in transit through the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in accordance with Article 26 of the Convention (TRANS/WP.30/186, para. 70).

On the basis of a document transmitted by Hungary, the Working Party, at its ninety-fourth session, had considered applicable procedures following the suspension of the TIR procedure in accordance with Article 26 of the Convention (TRANS/WP.30/2000/7). As there were different views on the interpretation of this article taking account of the objective and the spirit of the Convention, particularly in cases in which Customs seals or identifying marks had been removed or when Contracting Parties were involved, in which, due to the lack of an authorized guarantee association, no TIR procedure could be applied, the Working Party invited the representatives of the European Community to prepare a clear interpretation of this provision, possibly in the form of an explanatory note to Article 26 (TRANS/WP.30/188, para. 58).

The Working Party may wish to consider this matter on the basis of a document transmitted by the European Community (TRANS/WP.30/2000/15).

(v) Transport of containers, semi-trailers or trailers without tractor units

The Working Party, at its ninety-fifth session, was informed by the representative of the IRU that Customs authorities in some Contracting Parties had requested the opening of a second TIR Carnet for a single TIR transport in cases when a TIR transport operation of a container, semi-trailer or trailer was continued by road following transport by sea (ferry boat, etc.). In such type of a TIR transport, the container, semi-trailer or trailer is often not accompanied by a tractor unit nor by the holder of a TIR Carnet or a successive road transport operator.

Reference is made in this context to the considerations of the Working Party and the TIR Administrative Committee on the validity of multi-user TIR operations at its ninety-fifth and twenty-seventh sessions respectively (TRANS/WP.30/190, paras. 33-36; TRANS/WP.30/AC.2/55, paras. 9-12; TRANS/WP.30/2000/1).

The Working Party may wish to consider the following draft comment to Article 3 of the Convention for inclusion into the TIR Handbook which has been transmitted by the IRU:

“ Comment

Validity of a TIR Carnet for transport of containers, semi-trailers and trailers without tractor units.

Sometimes containers, semi-trailers and trailers are being transported under cover of TIR Carnets without the tractor unit. In such cases, Customs authorities of the countries in which the TIR transport is continued by road shall not request the opening of a second TIR Carnet. ”

(vi) 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.

**7. 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.

8. PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE YEARS 2001 TO 2005

The Working Party may wish to consider its programme of work covering the years 2001 to 2005.

On the basis of its present programme of work (2000-2004) as reproduced in the annex to this agenda, and in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Inland Transport Committee and the Commission, the Working Party may wish to review its future activities taking into 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.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Date of the next session

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

Pending a final decision of the Inland Transport Committee to be taken at its annual session in February 2001, the secretariat has already scheduled the ninety-seventh session of the Working Party to be held in the week from 19 to 23 February 2001. This session of the Working Party is planned to be held in conjunction with the thirtieth session of the TIR Administrative Committee (22 and 23 February 2001).

(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.

10. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

In accordance with established practice, the Working Party will adopt the report on its ninety-sixth 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.

Annex

Programme of work for the years 2001-2005

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 2001:

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 2001:

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 2001:

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 2001:

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: 1

Output expected in 2001:

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 2001:

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 2000:

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 2000 and 2001:

Study on legal and administrative requirements for using the CIM and SMGS consignment notes as a Customs document (2000).

Preparation of a draft Customs transit convention covering international rail transport in all COTIF and SMGS member States (2001).



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE - GENEVA

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Date:

Title of the Conference

UN/ECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30) - 96. session

Delegation/Participant of country, Organization or Agency)

Participant: Name Mr. ' Mrs. ' Ms. '

First name(s)

Participation Category

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Head of delegation ' / | Observer (organization) ' / |
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