
Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Joint Meeting of the RID Committee of Experts and the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods

Geneva, 15–19 September 2014

Item 9 of the provisional agenda

Any other business

12 September 2014

Intervention of lobbying entities

Note by the UNECE secretariat

1. The UNECE has received a letter from a national association with activities in a sector represented by an international non-governmental organization possessing consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, well and regularly represented at sessions of the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and other important UNECE Working Parties.
2. This letter expresses a position on an official document submitted by a Government on an issue that will be discussed in this session, while the NGO authorized to represent the sector of the industry concerned, and of which the national association in question is a member, has not so far expressed any position.
3. Apparently, this letter was sent to all delegates of the Joint Meeting, and apparently using a list of contact details available to the public.
4. For the UNECE secretariat, this event put into question two matters of principle: (a) the right of participation in the proceedings of the Joint Meeting; (b) the availability of information on the UNECE website.
5. Regarding the right of participation, the rules of procedure of the Joint Meeting are clear: only NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council or which have been granted consultative status by the Joint Meeting itself may participate. Therefore it does not seem appropriate that a national association which, in addition is a member of an important NGO which is in consultative status, intervenes in the proceedings by bypassing the NGO which is entitled to represent the interests of the sector concerned.
6. The secretariat notes also that the association in question interfered in the consultation process by addressing directly all delegates of the Joint Meeting, using the list of participants posted on the UNECE website. In the past, the secretariat did not post on the website lists of participants, and it is only recently that this has been done for WP.15 and the Joint Meeting, in the same way as this has been done for a long time for the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. It was not done in the past because of fears of lobbying activities and of outside pressure on delegates. It seems new that these fears were well justified and the Joint Meeting may wish to consider whether or not it is appropriate to make such information publicly available.