

G3118

Istanbul, 3 November 2011



19TH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

International-Bucharest Hotel
Bucharest-Romania
Monday, 16 May 2011, at 10:00 hrs

MINUTES

FIRST SESSION

I. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Florinel Andrei, Secretary General of the host association ARTRI welcomed the participants and guests of the 19th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Bucharest and thanked the BSEC Secretary General, H.E. Ambassador Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos, the Director for Western Balkans and Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, Mr. Alexandru Ene and the Director of Road Transport, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Romania, Mr. Sorin Sirbu for their participation in the meeting.

Mr. Viorel Comanita, the Head of Customs Administration of Romania, expressed his pleasure to attend the 19th meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly and extended his greetings to the guests and participants of the meeting. He emphasized the good cooperation with the ARTRI as the national TIR guaranteeing association as well as with the UNTRR. Both associations highly contribute to the proper functioning of the TIR System in Romania. At the same time Mr. Comanita expressed his appreciation for the work done in the BSEC Working Group on Customs and for the excellent cooperation among the Customs administrations of the BSEC Member States.

Mr. Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos, Secretary General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), extended his greetings to the participants of the 19th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly. He briefed about the recent developments within the BSEC Organization and underlined the importance of the Pilot Project of the BSEC Transit Permit. He informed that the meeting of the seven Participating Member States of the Pilot Project, which was held in Istanbul on 12-13 April 2011, made an assessment of the project implementation and confirmed that the project provides a useful tool in facilitating the international transport of goods. The Participating Member States agreed that the BSEC Permit will allow bilateral road transport operations in addition to transit journeys only. Finally, His Excellency thanked for being invited to the meeting and wished everybody a successful meeting.

Mr. Alexandru Ene, Director for Western Balkans and Regional Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, and Senior Official representative of Romania at the BSEC Organization welcomed the participants, expressed his high appreciation for the work done by the BSEC-URTA for promotion and facilitation of the road transport of goods in the BSEC region and emphasized the support and commitment of Romanian authorities to continue the BSEC Permit as a regional facilitation tool developed between interested BSEC Member States.

Mr. Sorin Sirbu, Director of Road Transport, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Romania, made a presentation on the road transport system and on the challenges and problems faced by the development of the road infrastructure in Romania. He noted that the BSEC Permit is not used by the Romanian hauliers, yet. However, Romanian Government is committed to further develop the BSEC Permit system and supported to extend its usage in order to contain both bilateral and transit road transport operations starting from 1 July 2011. On this occasion, Mr. Sirbu expressed his hope that the BSEC Permit will be developed even further in the future by transforming it to a multiple use document and expanding its geographical coverage. Finally he wished a successful meeting and nice stay of participants in Bucharest.

COFFEE BREAK

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Vladimir Florea, as Chairman, invited participants to consider the adoption of the Agenda of the 19th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly (G2834).

The Agenda of the Meeting (G2834) was adopted, unanimously

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairman invited to consider the Minutes of the 18th General Assembly.

Minutes of the 18th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly (G2835) were adopted, unanimously.

IV. REPORT OF THE BSEC-URTA MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Chairman reported that the BSEC-URTA Management Council (MC) held its meeting prior to the General Assembly meeting. *The Chairman* briefed on the progress achieved regarding main BSEC-URTA objectives in 2011. Also **Mr. Florea** brought to attention of the meeting the proposal of the BSEC-URTA Management Council to organize a special Public-Private Search Conference in Antalya, Turkey, on 7-10 September 2011, which would target, with professional support, a joint future design for the BSEC road transport industry and a common strategic map for implementation of public and private stakeholders. The BSEC-URTA President stressed that this Search Conference shall be open only to Presidents/Vice-Presidents or Secretaries General of the Member Associations or Observers, who will be responsible to ensure personal participation of a senior representative of each Ministry of Transport at the level of General Director or even higher.

The General Assembly approved organization of the above mentioned Search Conference and decided that accommodation expenses of one representative from each Association and one representative from each Ministry of Transport and their spouses will be covered by the BSEC-URTA through own resources and sponsors.

The President informed the meeting that the Management Council analyzed the results of the Survey on Free and Fair Competition in the BSEC Road Transport Market (2837) and recommended the General Assembly to adopt a Resolution in this regard.

V. BSEC-URTA REGIONAL OUTLOOK REPORT

Mr. Adrian Albu, BSEC-URTA Deputy Secretary General presented the BSEC-URTA Regional Outlook Report for 2010 (G2836).

The Chairman thanked **Mr. Albu** for his detailed presentation and opened the floor for comments and questions.

The General Assembly studied the Report and observed that the total number of trips by the BSEC transport operators increased by 31.7 % in 2010 compared with the 2009, peak of the crisis, which indicates to a very strong recovery in 2010. The data shows that the trips to the trade partners outside the BSEC and the EU have increased significantly. This major increase in the number of trips is also confirmed by increasing foreign trade of the BSEC Member States in 2010. Unfortunately, the waiting times did not improve at internal or external BSEC borders according to the IRU data. The General Assembly requested all Member Associations to assist IRU and BSEC-URTA in monitoring their border waiting times more efficiently and inform the International Secretariat about any major impediments or bottlenecks that could be avoided at their borders by reinforced cooperation between the competent authorities and the road transport industry.

The Chairman requested all Member Associations once again to bring this very important issue of the waiting times to the attention of their competent authorities.

The Chairman thanked the participants for their active participation and contributions and passed to the next item of the Agenda.

VI. SURVEY ON FREE AND FAIR COMPETITION IN THE BSEC ROAD TRANSPORT MARKET (G2837)

The Chairman gave the floor to Mr. Bogdan Badea, Director, Department for European Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, who made a presentation on the Liberalization of the Road Transport Market and Free and Fair Competition between hauliers in Europe.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Badea for his valuable contribution to the work of the General Assembly and gave the floor to Mr. Adrian Albu who made a presentation on the BSEC-URTA Survey on Free and Fair Competition in the BSEC Road Transport Market (2837)

The General Assembly evaluated the Survey and concluded that :

- The international road transport of goods market in the BSEC region is mainly regulated by the Bilateral System of Permits.
- The BSEC Permit is the right tool, which could lead to a gradual liberalisation in the region.
- Conditions for access to profession need to be aligned in the BSEC region.
- AETR Agreement is applied in 11 out of 12 BSEC Member States, except Georgia, which should also join this important Agreement as soon as possible.
- The main cost element influencing the price of transport is the cost of diesel which varies from € 0.70 to € 1.67 due to different levels of taxation and fiscal charges imposed by each national government.
- Another important cost element is the driver's salary, which varies from € 800 to above € 3,300.
- Since mainly the same rules apply to access to the profession and the BSEC Member States are contracting parties to same major UNECE international conventions and agreements related to road transport, national authorities should do more for enforcement of these national laws and international commitments so that the "rules of the game" are applied to all actors fairly and across the BSEC region.
- National authorities should protect the national fleet operators by applying minimum or no taxation for the professional fuel and providing incentives for investment in new vehicles with low emissions and noise level.

The Chairman recalled the recommendation of the Management Council for adoption of a Resolution on Free and Fair Competition in the BSEC International Road Transport Market, which stress that free and fair competition in the BSEC Road Transport Market is main objective of the BSEC-URTA and invite the Governments to develop and provide special incentives and benefits to the industry without any discrimination between national and foreign fleet operators, notably such as lower corporate tax, reduced VAT, lower or no taxation on professional diesel and incentives for new investment in the fleet. The General Assembly adopted the tabled Resolution, unanimously.(G2864).

VII. ACTIVITY REPORT ON THE BSEC-URTA PRIORITIES IN 2011 (G2838)

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan, BSEC-URTA Secretary General**, to make a presentation on the progress achieved regarding the main BSEC-URTA priorities in 2011 (G2838).

The Report highlighted that:

- Participating Member States to the BSEC Permit Pilot Project agreed to extend the usage of the BSEC Permit to include transit and bilateral road transport of goods in 2011.
- BSEC Working Group on Transport noted the BSEC-URTA proposal to co-organise with the BSEC PERMIS a BSEC Transport Forum in October or November 2011, according to approval of the BSEC, and on the occasion of the BSEC-URTA 10th Anniversary.
- New Ro-Ro lines were announced in the Black Sea Region between Tekirdag (TR) - Ilichevsk (UA) and Pendik (TR) - Constanta (RO).
- BSEC Working Group on Customs took with interest the issue of x-ray controls of commercial vehicles at the borders and decided to further study the matter in parallel with the related IRU Resolution in 2010.

The General Assembly noted the Activity Report on the BSEC-URTA Priorities in 2011 (G2838) with appreciation. The Chairman thanked Mr. Ozkan for the presentation of the report and passed to the next agenda item.

VIII. SPECIAL MEETING OF PRESIDENTS/GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE BSEC-URTA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS ON THE OCCASSION OF 10TH ANNIVERSARY

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan, the BSEC-URTA Secretary General**, who presented details about the proposed Search Conference, which was briefly mentioned by the President at the outset of the meeting. The BSEC-URTA Search Conference would follow a participatory meeting methodology, which brings together roughly 30-40 relevant stakeholders to be part of a decision-making process. One of the direct benefits of such a "public-private" activity would be reinforced dialogue among all internal and external BSEC-URTA stakeholders as well as a refreshed commitment to work together and increased solidarity between the key decision makers from the BSEC-URTA Members, Observers, BSEC Organization, its Related Bodies as well as national competent authorities.

The General Assembly mandated the International Secretariat to organize the Search Conference at Cornelia Diamond Hotel in Antalya, Turkey on 7-10 September 2011.

IX. AUDIT REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF BSEC-URTA BUDGET IN 2010

The Chairman invited the elected BSEC-URTA Auditors Ms. Viliانا Ivanova (AEBTRI) and Mr. Alper Ozel (UND) to present their Report on the Implementation of the BSEC-URTA Budget in 2010 (REP/AUDIT/GA19/11). The General Assembly endorsed the Audit Report.

X. PRESENTATION OF ROSGOSSTRAKH INSURANCE COMPANY IN RUSSIA

The Chairman invited Mrs. Natalia Polunina to make a presentation of the Rosgosstrakh Insurance Company (Russia). Rosgosstrakh Insurance Company is one of the BSEC-URTA Observers, which provides continuous strong support to the BSEC-URTA Activities, particularly on the occasion of its 10th Anniversary.

Mr. Florea thanked the representative of Rosgosstrakh, Mrs. Natalia Polunina for the detailed presentation on the company's main activities and business opportunities and thanked her for the continuous support rendered to BSEC-URTA.

XI. NEXT MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan, the Secretary General of BSEC-URTA** who recalled the forthcoming 10th Anniversary of BSEC-URTA in autumn 2011 and proposed that the next meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly is held back-to-back with the BSEC Transport Forum, to be organized in partnership with the IRU and under the auspices of the BSEC Secretary General, in Istanbul in November 2011 at a venue and date to be decided upon with these partners, separately. The General Assembly endorsed the proposal of the Secretary General.

XII. DECISIONS OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING OF BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairman informed that the Secretariat will prepare summary of decisions of the meeting, which will be submitted to signature of the participants after the meeting.

XIII. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman, in his closing remarks, thanked all the participants and Guests of Honour for their participation and active contributions to the work of the General Assembly and thanked ARTRI for kindly providing the meeting room and necessary facilities for the 19th meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

The 19th meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly was closed, officially.

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