

G4521

Istanbul, 28 April 2016

28th MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Elite World Hotel
Istanbul-Turkey
Friday, 3 December 2015, at 11:00 hrs

MINUTES

FIRST SESSION

I. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Vladimir Florea, as Chairman, welcomed the participants and guests of the 28th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Istanbul and thanked high-level representatives of the associations, the Secretary General of the BSEC Organization, H.E. Ambassador H.E. Ambassador Michael B. Christidis, the Deputy Secretary General of IRU, Mr. Marek Retelski, the Deputy Secretary General of PABSEC, Mr. Daniel Dulca and AULT Secretary General Dr. Mahmoud Abdallatt for their high-level participation and invaluable contributions in the General Assembly.

H.E. Ambassador Michael B. Christidis, Secretary General of the BSEC Organization welcomed the participants and highlighted the good cooperation and coordination with BSEC-URTA under several BSEC Projects. Ambassador Christidis underlined that transport cooperation in the BSEC is very dynamic due to the sectoral dialogue partners, in particular BSEC-URTA, and thanked for being invited to this event and wished everybody a successful meeting.

Mr. Daniel Dulca, Deputy Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC (PABSEC) expressed his pleasure to attend the BSEC-URTA General Assembly, mentioned the good cooperation with BSEC-URTA and extended his greetings to guests and participants of the meeting. At the same time he wished a fruitful meeting with satisfactory results and decisions.

Dr. Mahmoud Abdallatt, Secretary General of the Arab Union of Land Transport (AULT) thanked the BSEC-URTA President for the invitation to attend the 28th BSEC-URTA General Assembly as guest, extended his greetings to all the participants and expressed his pleasure to attend the meeting as well as the AULT's interest in developing bilateral cooperation with BSEC-URTA.

Mr. Marek Retelski, Deputy Secretary General of IRU welcomed the participants, expressed his high appreciation for the activities done by the BSEC-URTA for promotion and facilitation of the road transport of goods in the BSEC region and emphasized the IRU support to all activities of BSEC-URTA.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda of the Meeting (G4316/Corr2) was adopted, unanimously.

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

Minutes of the 27th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly (G4317) were adopted, unanimously.

IV. UND PRESENTATION ON TURKEY-EU ROAD TRANSPORT RELATIONS AND WTO BALI AGREEMENT

Mr. Alper Ozel, Vice Chairman of the UND Executive Committee, welcomed all participants and made a comprehensive presentation on Road Transport System in Turkey and the transport relations between Turkey and European Union. He briefly described the activities of UND and highlighted that UND is a leading professional association in Turkey, established in 1974 by representatives from Turkish road freight transport sector with an aim to solve problems experienced by the sector on national and international levels with a qualified staff of 39 employees with ranging expertise. Today UND represents almost all modes of international transportation and logistics, through their Membership of 1194 transport and logistics companies based in Turkey. He mentioned about the shortage of transit permits due to protectionist measures imposed by several EU Member States and informed about specific actions taken by UND and Turkish MoT in order to improve trade and transport with western EU Member States. In the end of his presentation **Mr. Alper Ozel** called on BSEC-URTA Member Associations to adopt a BSEC-URTA Resolution on implementation of the WTO Bali Agreement in the BSEC region, as proposed by UND.

The General Assembly adopted the BSEC-URTA Resolution on implementation of the WTO Bali Agreement in the BSEC region (G4322).

V. REPORT OF THE BSEC-URTA MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Chairman reported that the BSEC-URTA Management Council held its meeting prior to the General Assembly meeting, which reviewed the progress made on the BSEC-URTA Priorities for 2015: (a) Membership expansion, (b) BSEC Permit Project, (c) International Vehicle Weight Certificate under Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention, (d) Implementation of TIR-EPD and its related Green Lanes Concept, (e) Pilot Project on movement of a container under the coverage of the TIR system, and (f) Mutual recognition of CPCs and Diplomas of Transport Managers and Professional Drivers by BSEC Member States.

Management Council also studied applications for Observer status by AMERIT (FYROM) and SMP (Bulgaria), and recommended to the General Assembly to grant such status with an annual contribution fee of €1.000 for a period of 5 years (1 January 2016 – 31 December 2020).

VI. BSEC-URTA REGIONAL OUTLOOK REPORT

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Adrian Albu**, BSEC-URTA Deputy Secretary General, to present the BSEC-URTA Regional Outlook Report for 2015-I (G4318).

Mr. Albu reported that according to the data received from Member Associations, the total number of trips in 2015-I has decreased by 20.5% compared with 2014-I. The journeys dropped by 34.6% within the BSEC, 12.7% to the EU25 countries and 21.5% to the rest of the world. As for regional trade performance, it is observed that the intra-BSEC trade shrank by 20.4% while the total BSEC foreign trade dropped by 27% over the same period.

The General Assembly noted with concern the BSEC-URTA Regional Outlook Report for 2015-I (G4318). Discussions revealed that political reasons troubled intra-regional trade very much as well as the regional trade with EU and other neighboring regions. The situation penalised international road transport of goods across the BSEC region, inevitably. Member Associations are concerned that the situation will not improve for a few more years and stressed that the fleet operators must search for alternative markets in order to remain in the market.

VII. ACTIVITY REPORT ON THE BSEC-URTA PRIORITIES IN 2015 (G4319)

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan**, BSEC-URTA Secretary General, to make a progress report regarding the BSEC-URTA priorities in 2015 (G4319).

In this connection, **the General Assembly**:

a) *Membership Expansion:*

Welcomed the new requests for Observer status by SMP, Bulgaria, and AMERIT, FYROM. Took note that ICCIMA, Iran, and THADA, Turkmenistan, consider their affiliation with BSEC-URTA, currently.

b) *BSEC Permit Expansion and Development:*

Expressed disappointment that participating Member States maintained the BSEC Permit issuance 350 in 2016 due to conservative position of Turkey. Underlined that support of Turkey is indispensable to increase future issuance and convert the BSEC Permit to a multiple use document also good for 3rd country journeys in the future. Decided to continue efforts to promote the BSEC Permit to new potential countries in 2016.

c) *Continuation of UNECE International Vehicle Weight Certificate:*

Expressed concern that implementation of IVWC in new Contracting Parties was not possible in 2015 due to lacking interest or priority by governments on this matter.

d) *Implementation of TIR-EPD Green Lanes at BSEC Borders:*

Regretted that planned BSEC/BSEC-URTA joint meetings with authorities in Serbia, Ukraine and Romania are still pending due to reasons related to the concerned national authorities. Supported promotion of TIR-EPD Green Lanes in connection with implementation of transport related BSEC Memoranda of Understanding, notably on Black Sea Ring Highway.

VIII. PILOT PROJECT ON INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION (G4320)

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Adrian Albu**, BSEC-URTA Deputy Secretary General, to present the Pilot Project on moving a container under the coverage of a TIR Carnet during 17-20 October 2015. The subject container loaded with mineral water travelled from Borjomi-Georgia to the Batumi Port, shipped onto a Ferryboat vessel with destination Port Illichevsk-Ukraine, wherefrom it was filled by a truck to its final destination in Odessa.

The General Assembly welcomed this very first transport operation of a container under the coverage of a TIR carnet between Georgia and Ukraine, which was realized by IRU in coordination with BSEC-URTA, and thanked GIRCA, AsMAP-UA and AITA for their joint efforts.

IX. MUTUAL RECOGNITION BY BSEC MEMBER STATES OF DIPLOMAS, CERTIFICATES OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND OTHER EVIDENCES OF FORMAL QUALIFICATION OF PROFESSIONALS ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT

The Chairman recalled that this issue was on the agenda of the third Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Istanbul on 6th June 2003, which decided to take necessary initiatives with BSEC PERMIS and the IRU in order to ensure consideration of this matter by the competent BSEC organs with a view to achieving mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification for road haulage operators and road passenger transport operators on regional level.

Upon BSEC-URTA initiatives, the BSEC created at that time an Ad Hoc Expert Group which met in Istanbul on 6 July 2005 and drafted an Agreement in this regard. Unfortunately this Agreement was not opened for signature due to the lack of interest and action by majority of the BSEC Member States.

During 27th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Bucharest on 9 May 2015, Member Associations considered that the recent approval of the ECMT Quality Charter might provide with a fresh momentum for reopening this file.

Upon BSEC-URTA initiatives, the BSEC Working Group on Transport, which convened in Istanbul on 5-6 October 2015, agreed to revive efforts for professional training and decided to convene a new meeting of the BSEC Ad Hoc Expert Group on the Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Diplomas/Certificates and Other Evidence of Formal Qualification for Road Haulage Operator and Road Passenger Transport Operator in the first half of 2016.

X. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ABOUT TIR CARNET TYPES AND PRICES

The Chairman gave the floor to **Ms. Asli Gozutok**, Head TIR and ATA Carnets-TOBB, Turkey, to make a presentation in this regard.

Ms. Asli Gozutok recalled the last IRU General Assembly in Geneva in November 2015, which discussed intensively about the recent developments regarding TIR Carnet types and prices, and highlighted that BSEC-URTA Members and Observers represent 55% of all TIR carnets issued by IRU, annually. She stressed that, in such a case, the actual needs of BSEC TIR Carnet users should duly be considered by the IRU at the time of any important decisions as such changing the existing carnets types or prices.

The General Assembly agreed to contribute more actively to the work of the IRU Commission on Customs Matters, which aims at making TIR system more competitive before the T-System and completely computerised offering more flexibility to the Associations and transport operators.

LUNCH BREAK

XI. STRUCTURAL REFORMATION OF BSEC-URTA

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan**, BSEC-URTA Secretary General, to give a summary of the Management Council considerations and views on possible structural reformation of BSEC-URTA.

The General Assembly took note of the summary report and agreed that:

- It is necessary to review and update the organisational structure and scope of activities for a stronger Union and in this regard the Management Council should recommend adequate modifications to the BSEC-URTA Statutes;
- Since the available Statutes do not contain any restrictions, road passenger transport section could be operated within the BSEC-URTA from 2016;
- A Working Party on Insurance should be setup to serve as a platform for insurance companies and Members and Observers to exchange information on existing or possible transport insurance products which benefit to the BSEC road transport industry;
- Management Council should develop and maintain contacts with potential new Members and Observers across the BSEC and ECO regions and the countries enjoying special status with BSEC and ECO organisations.

XII. BSEC-URTA WORKING PROGRAMME FOR 2016 (G4323/Corr)

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan**, BSEC-URTA Secretary General, to present BSEC-URTA working programme and planned activities in 2016 (G4323/Corr).

The Meeting reviewed the vision, mission and strategic objectives strategic objectives of the BSEC-URTA.

The BSEC-URTA Working Programme for 2016 (G4115) was adopted, unanimously.

XIII. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

- APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF BSEC-URTA OBSERVER STATUS

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Haydar Ozkan**, BSEC-URTA Secretary General, to inform the General Assembly on the subject matter.

Mr. Ozkan, mentioned that application letters for Observes Status were received from AMERIT (FYROM) and SMP (Bulgaria), both of which were supported by TOBB and UND, and informed about the Management Council recommendation to the General Assembly to consider granting Observer Status to these two applicants under Article 5 of the BSEC-URTA Statutes.

General Assembly decided to grant Observer status to SMP and AMERIT for 5 years (1 January 2016 – 31 December 2020) with an annual contribution fee of € 1,000 per Association.

- FINANCIAL MATTERS

Mr. Adrian Albu, BSEC-URTA Deputy Secretary General presented the draft BSEC-URTA Budget for 2016 (G4324).

The BSEC-URTA Budget for 2016 (G4324) was adopted, unanimously.

XIV. APPOINTMENT OF THE BSEC-URTA VICE PRESIDENTS FOR 2016

General Assembly endorsed the nominations for the positions of two BSEC-URTA Vice-Presidents for 2016 made by AITA (Mr. Grigore Bernavski) and AIRCU (Mr. Herbert Hambardzumyan).

XV. NEXT MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Upon kind invitation of UNTRR, the **General Assembly** decided to hold its next meeting in Bucharest on 26 May 2015 back-to-back with the 4th Transport Festival and a special International Conference on Competition in Road Transport, which will be organized by UNTRR in Bucharest on 27 May 2016.

XVI. MISCELLANEOUS

General Assembly welcomed AULT's interest in developing bilateral cooperation with BSEC-URTA and agreed to work together for elaboration of a bilateral MoU as basis for future.

XVII. DECISIONS OF THE 28th MEETING OF BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairman informed the General Assembly that the Secretariat will prepare summary of decisions of the meeting, which will be opened to the signature of the participating Members and Observers after the meeting.

XVIII. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman in his closing remarks, thanked the International Secretariat for the excellent organization of the meeting and the TOBB and UND for the hospitality extended to all the participants. Also thanked all the participants and Guests of Honor for their participation and active contributions to the work of the General Assembly.

The 28th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly was closed, officially.

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