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Istanbul, 13 May 2016

MUTUAL GRANTING OF OBSERVER STATUS OF BETWEEN BSEC-URTA AND THE ARAB UNION FOR OF LAND TRANSPORT (AULT)

At its 38th Meeting, held in Istanbul on 4 February 2016, the BSEC-URTA Management Council, in consideration of the proposal by the Arab Union of Land Transport (AULT), agreed to recommend to the BSEC-URTA General Assembly granting to AULT observer status without financial contribution on reciprocity basis and requested the International Secretariat to circulate the draft MoU between AULT and BSEC-URTA among the Members of the Management Council for their perusal and remarks before 15 February 2016.

According to article 5 of BSEC URTA Statutes, upon proposal of the BSEC-URTA Management Council, the BSEC-URTA *General Assembly can grant*, by two-thirds of the BSEC-URTA Members, the Observer status to national and international non-profit-making organizations, participating directly or indirectly in road transport activities in the BSEC region. In its decision to grant an Observer status, the BSEC-URTA *General Assembly shall define the terms and conditions of the granted status including the period of such status and related observer's fee applicable*. Observers shall not have the right to vote or to be elected but enjoy several privileges and duties indicated in the said article of the Statutes, including, to take part in the BSEC-URTA General Assembly meetings.

In parallel with the MC decision, draft MoU had been circulated by February 15, 2016 among BSEC URTA MC members and had been signed on the occasion of a special signing ceremony of MoU between AULT and BSEC-URTA under the aegis of IRU as well as the Roundtable with the subject "Regional cooperation between the BSEC-URTA and AULT as part of the IRU regional policy in the countries of the BSEC and the Arab League region" held in Chisinau (Moldova) on 18 March 2016 (Annex 1).

The MoU, which could offer a common framework for enhancing future mutual collaboration across the Arab countries and BSEC region, includes provisions on mutual cooperation, consultation and exchange of information.

Besides, article 4 of the MoU foresees that, *"...subject to the approval of their respectful competent organs and bodies, the Parties will consider granting each other "Observer" status on reciprocity basis. Parties will hold the rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities of an observer prescribed thereof, with the exception of any fiscal responsibilities/duties including membership or observer's fees. This status as Observers will not be time limited, if possible, or renewable, regularly..."*

AULT, by its letter dated 12 April 2016, has confirmed their acceptance of BSEC URTA as an observer member to AULT (Annex 2).

In addition to that, Secretary Generals of both associations, gathering in Istanbul on May 8th, developed a Plan of Action for 2016-2017 on AULT/BSEC-URTA Bilateral Cooperation in parallel with article 2 of the MoU (Annex 3).

BSEC URTA General Assembly is expected to decide on granting observer status to AULT and to define its terms, conditions and fee status, taking into consideration above mentioned developments.

Annexes:

- AULT/BSEC URTA MoU
- AULT letter dated 12 April 2016
- Plan of Action

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