

G6135

Istanbul, 23 September 2019

36TH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Hotel Continental
Skopje-North Macedonia
Friday, 18 October at 10:00 hrs

MINUTES OF THE 35TH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION

I. CHAIRMEN'S OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Asli Gozutok, President of BSEC-URTA, welcomed all participants and thanked for participation in the meeting to the high-level representatives of international organizations notably the Secretary General of BSEC Organization, H.E. Ambassador Michael B. Christides, the Deputy Secretary General of BSEC Organization, H.E. Ambassador Traian Chebeleu, the Deputy Secretary General of PABSEC, Mr. Fuat Küçükaydın, IRU Secretary General, Mr. Umberto de Pretto and IRU General Delegate Mr. Matthias Maedge.

H.E. Michael B. Christides, Secretary General of the BSEC Organization, welcomed the hosting organisations UND and TOBB as well as the other participants and thanked for being invited to this event. He underlined that transport is the major area for BSEC activities. BSEC attaches great importance to cooperation with BSEC-URTA and IRU in joint efforts to promote faster, safer and more competitive transport in BSEC region. Currently much attention is paid to digitalization of procedures of transport, in particular the promotion of single window and joint control procedures reducing waiting time for vehicles at national border crossing points and facilitating customs checks; advancement of the existing TIR tools, TIR Carnet, eTIR and TIR EPD. Adoption of the Annex 11 to the TIR Convention as legal basis for digitalization of TIR procedures for further facilitation of international trade is foundation stone either. BSEC also supports the efforts of digitalizing the BSEC Permit System and extending it for multiple trip usage.

Mr. Umberto de Pretto, Secretary General of IRU, welcomed the high level guests and representatives of member associations participating in the General Assembly, congratulated TOBB and UND for hosting it and highlighted his pleasure to be in Istanbul. He stated that the joint visit of participants from National Customs Administrations of BSEC and BSEC-URTA Member Associations together with representatives from UNECE and IRU done the day before at the Kapikule-Kaptan Andreevo Border Crossing Point between Turkey and Bulgaria and the assessment of the real situation on field in regard the high waiting times for crossing is a great experience and achievement for everyone. The conclusions of the visit and proposed measures for improvement by today's meeting of participants to the field visit should be disseminated as soon as possible to all concerned authorities of BSEC Member States to the European Commission and UNECE. He also told that the experience of BSEC on Brexit issue will be very important. The biggest problem will be permits. He encouraged BSEC-URTA to keep up the good work done so far and to continue the good cooperation with the BSEC Organization.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda (G6090/corr. 1) was adopted, unanimously.

1. Adopted its Agenda (G6090/corr1) and approved the Minutes of its 34th Meeting (G6091).

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

Minutes of the 34th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly (G6091) were adopted, unanimously.

IV. UND and TOBB PRESENTATIONS ON ROAD TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN TURKEY AND ON OWN ACTIVITIES (Oral Presentations)

Mr. Alper Ozel, Chairman of Executive Board of UND made an extended presentation on Road Transport system in Turkey and on UND activities.

Mrs. Selcan Balantekin and **Mrs. Ozgur Yilmaz** made comprehensive presentations on activities carried out by TOBB for the development of the road transport sector in Turkey.

V. REPORT OF THE BSEC-URTA MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (Oral Presentation)

Ms Asli Gozutok, President of BSEC-URTA and Chairperson of the meeting reported that the BSEC-URTA Management Council held its meeting prior to the General Assembly meeting and considered the documents of the General Assembly mainly:

- Activity Report on BSEC-URTA Priorities for 2019 (G6093).
- BSEC Permit system 2019
- ITF Annual Summit, Leipzig, 22-23 May 2019
- Site visit and assessment of conditions at Kapikule-Kapitan Andreevo border crossing points between Turkey and Bulgaria on 27 May 2019
- Draft BSEC-URTA Resolution on Implementation of Facilitation Measures Designed to Optimize Border Crossing at Main Land Borders of the BSEC Region along the Road Transport Corridors Connecting Europe to Middle East and Central Asia
- The BSEC-URTA Management Council unanimously endorsed all the above mentioned documents and agreed to be presented to the General Assembly today for consideration and decision.

VI. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH BSEC:

- ITF ANNUAL SUMMIT-LEIPZIG, 21-24 MAY 2019

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA informed the General Assembly on his participation in the ITF meetings in Leipzig during 21-24 May 2019 and on main items considered by participants such as "Autonomous Vehicles", "Driver Shortage", "Decarbonisation of Road Transport target – 2025", "ECMT Quota System". He also informed on his participation in the informal meeting of BSEC Ministers of Transport organized during the ITF Annual Summit and about his intervention on developments of main BSEC Projects such as BSEC Permit System, International Vehicle Weight Certificate, Facilitation of Visa Procedures for Professional Drivers Nationals of BSEC Member States

- SITE VISIT AND ASSESMENT OF CROSSING CONDITIONS AT KAPIKULE-KAPTAN ANDREEVO BORDER CROSSING POINTS BETWEEN TURKEY AND BULGARIA, 27 MAY 2019

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA informed the General Assembly on the successful accomplishment on 27 May 2019 of the planned site visit of the Kapikule-Kaptan Andreevo Border Crossing Point between Turkey and Bulgaria by a joint delegation of representatives of BSEC Customs Administrations, BSEC-URTA Members, and UNECE, IRU, BSEC and BSEC-URTA Secretariats. Following the visit, a round table meeting was organized jointly by BSEC and BSEC-URTA with participants to the visit and conclusions and recommendations on reduction of the high waiting times for border crossing were made to the BSEC Member States, BSEC Organization, UNECE and European Commission

- BSEC PERMIT SYSTEM 2019

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA informed the General Assembly that 7 BSEC Member States, namely Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, agreed to distribute 1000 permits in 2019 doubling the figure of the 2018. Armenia continues with 500 permits with the possibility to reconsider its position. 5 Member States (Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine) agreed to enlarge the usage of the permit on a voluntary basis to 3rd country transport operations. ICCIMA (Iran) and AMERIT (North Macedonia) show interest in participation of Iran and North Macedonia in the BSEC Permit system subject to decision of their competent authorities and acceptance of BSEC Organization. Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Turkey and TOBB took an initiative to start an e-PERMIT pilot project. At an initial stage Turkey will work with Moldova to digitalize the exchange of road transport permits between the two countries including the BSEC Permit, too. After completion of this initial stage the Pilot Project will be extended to all BSEC Member States on a voluntary bases.

VII. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH IRU

- FACILITATION OF TRADE BETWEEN BSEC REGION AND ITS TRADE PARTNERS WITH THE USE OF THE TIR SYSTEM

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA informed the General Assembly on the developments on three main transport corridors connecting BSEC with the neighbouring regions:

BSEC and Batumi Corridor (Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan-Georgia-Ukraine)

- Customs authorities from concerned countries and Member Associations signed protocols in order to start implementation of an eTIR Pilot Project.
- Georgia informed that the implementation of the eTIR messages is at a final stage, and that they wish to activate eTIR transports soonest with Azerbaijan.
- Kazakhstan has implemented the eTIR messages. Negotiations will take place in Q3/19 to start eTIR transports with Azerbaijan.
- Azerbaijan has implemented the eTIR messages. Negotiations will take place in Q3/19 to start eTIR transports with Georgia.
- Ukrainian Customs will start the IT implementation by Q2 2019

BSEC and International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) countries –

- Iranian Customs Authority and private sector already confirmed their interest to join Batumi corridor under digital TIR.
- Persistent interest from Iranian TIR carnet holders to do transports to BSEC countries and further explore Caspian Sea Route.

BSEC and Lapis Lazuli corridor (Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey). A

- According to the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) the Lapis Lazuli Corridor is the nearest and cheapest way to transit Afghanistan's and Asian countries' goods to Europe. Using the corridor, Afghanistan goods will travel through Turkmenistan, across the Caspian Sea to Azerbaijan, then Georgia, across the Black Sea and through Turkey to the Mediterranean and Europe.

- DECARBONISATION OF THE ROAD TRANSPORT UP TO 2050

Mr. Matthias Maedge, General Delegate of IRU stated that the road transport sector will likely look very different in 2050. The sector is prepared to do what is necessary to make progress towards decarbonising operations. Decarbonisation of road transport will rely on five key pillars: improvements to fuel efficiency through new vehicle technologies, wider uptake of alternative fuels, measures to improve logistics operations, eco-driver training, shift from private car use to collective transport. The future decarbonisation of the road transport sector calls for a holistic approach with implementation of these five pillars essential to making significant progress.

- DRIVER SHORTAGE RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE ACTIONS

Mr. Matthias Maedge, General Delegate of IRU informed the meeting that on 6 November 2018, IRU's General Assembly unanimously adopted the IRU Driver Shortage Road Map, with the aim of addressing one of the most acute problems currently facing the global road transport industry – driver shortage.

The IRU Driver Shortage Road Map contains:

- A vision, recognising the severity of the problem, emphasising the key role of professional drivers, and committing to work together to make the road transport industry a great place to work for all;
- A list of short-, medium-, and long-term actions;
- A set of proposals on how to implement, monitor and coordinate the actions and progress

Next to implementing these short-term actions from the IRU's Driver Shortage Road Map, IRU is also building partnerships with relevant regional and global industry stakeholders, including fostering closer relations with trade unions. On a global level, the IRU reached an agreement with the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

On EU level, the IRU and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) reached an agreement to seek European Commission funding for a joint project designed to collect reliable statistics on driver shortage in Europe and to identify the quality of jobs in the road transport and other relevant industry sectors. IRU is also organising initial meetings with other industry partners, such as vehicle manufacturers, and has recently launched a social media campaign on driver shortage. The campaign started with the publication of the IRU report on "Tackling Driver Shortage in Europe" and will continue with monthly publications focusing on specific themes related to driver shortage.

VIII. INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENT OF BSEC-URTA AND ISTANBUL ARBITRATION CENTER (ISTAC) COOPERATION

Mr. Yasin Ekmen, Secretary General of ISTAC, informed the General Assembly that "The Road Transportation and Arbitration Brochure" in 3 languages (English, Russian, Turkish) was jointly elaborated and published by ISTAC and BSEC-URTA in order to satisfy the request of the sector for information concerning arbitration. It was disseminated by post and electronically. PDF version is available on www.bsec-urta.org. At the same time the Conference "Ways of Disputes Resolution in Logistics and Transportation Sector & Proposals of Alternative Methods of Disputes Resolution" was held in Istanbul Bar on 4 January 2019. It was jointly organized by Istanbul Arbitration Centre (ISTAC), BSEC-URTA and Association of International Hauliers of Turkey (UND). As regards to the next steps of operation Mr. Yasin Ekmen mentioned:

- appointment by Member and Observer Associations of persons to be trained by ISTAC on alternative dispute resolution and application their skills at logistics services to serve as a Contact Point;
- nomination of Arbitrators and Technic Experts from BSECURTA Members and Observers' countries;
- hosting of seminars on Ways of disputes resolution in Logistics and Transportation Sector in BSEC-URTA Members and Observers' countries.

IX. INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS OF THE BSEC-URTA CMR INSURANCE PROJECT

Ms. Natalia Polunina, Chairperson of BSEC-URTA Working Party on Insurance held a presentation of the Single Insurance Product CMR+, modified taking into account the proposals received from carriers and insurance companies in the course of the previously conducted survey. The insurance product was presented in three variants: CMR-Economy, CMR-Standard and CMR-Premium. In the second part of the presentation Ms. Natalia Polunina, demonstrated the participants the work of electronic calculator, which enables the carriers (members of Associations) to select the insurance options on the website and calculate the insurance premium. The meeting agreed that in order to encourage the creation and

presentation of the regional Product CMR+, the following steps should be taken. Next steps and further actions:

- to work on concluding a Memorandum of Cooperation between BSEC-URTA and the law company "URVEST" in order to create a network of correspondents in Europe and Asia in cooperation with BSECURTA.
- to work out with Swiss Re on CMR insurance and reinsurance issues with Turkish insurance company AK Sigorta.
- to finalize the electronic calculator for the Product CMR+ taking into account the comments and wishes expressed during the meeting.

X. ACTIVITY REPORT ON BSEC-URTA PRIORITIES IN 2019

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA made a progress report regarding the BSEC-URTA Priority Activities in 2019 (G6093). In this connection, the General Assembly evaluated the Activity Report on the BSEC-URTA Priorities in 2019 as follows (G6093):

Increase and diversify BSEC-URTA revenues:

The legal registration of the economical branch of BSEC-URTA is over. BSEC-URTA established an economic entity in the form of commercial enterprise within BSEC-URTA under the name "BSECURTA Karadeniz Ekonomik İşbirliği Karayolu Taşıma Dernekleri Birliği İktisadi İşletme" (Union of Road Transport Associations in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Region Economical Enterprise. BSECURTA). In this framework the International Secretariat continued consultations with VIATRANS and TOBB-UND Company in order to develop a business model for promoting their services on regional level.

Develop further and expand BSEC Permit to Eurasia

7 BSEC Member States, namely Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, agreed to distribute 1000 permits in 2019 doubling the figure of the 2018. Armenia continues with 500 permits with the possibility to reconsider its position. 5 Member States (Albania, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, and Ukraine) agreed to enlarge the usage of the permit on a voluntary basis to 3rd country transport operations. ICCIMA (Iran) and AMERIT (North Macedonia) are supporting participation of Iran and North Macedonia in the BSEC Permit system subject to decision of their competent authorities and acceptance of BSEC Organization. Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure of Turkey and TOBB took an initiative to start an e-PERMIT pilot project. At an initial stage Turkey will work with Moldova to digitalize the exchange of road transport permits between the two countries including the BSEC Permit, too. After completion of this initial stage the Pilot Project will be extended to all BSEC Member States on a voluntary bases.

Support Working Party on Border Crossing Problems in BSEC Region

During the Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Customs Matters on 6 December 2018 in Istanbul it was decided to make site visits to border crossing points with obligatory participation of BSEC-URTA as well as to share experience of effective cross-border procedures on the spot. On 27 May 2019 took place a Study Visit of representatives of Customs Authorities of the BSEC Member States, BSEC-URTA Member Associations, high representatives of UNECE, IRU and BSEC to the border crossing point (BCP) Kapikule – Kapitan Andreevo on the Turkish-Bulgarian border followed on 28 May 2019 by a round table to assess the results of the site visit. A Resolution was drafted by the International Secretariat which was considered and adopted by the General Assembly.

Follow eTIR Pilot Projects

e-TIR Pilot Project between Turkey and Iran

After implementation with success of the 2nd stage of the Project, the Customs authorities of Iran and Turkey drafted and agreed on a cooperation agreement on fully coverage of road transport operations between the two countries by eTIR guaranties.

e-TIR Pilot Project between Moldova and Ukraine

With the help of US Aid, AITA and IRU the TIR EPD application is fully operational for Moldova and thus creating the necessary framework for an e-TIR Pilot Project between Moldova and Ukraine; AITA, Moldovan Customs Authority, ASMAP Ukraine, Ukrainian Customs Authority and IRU held meetings on technical and organizational matters related to implementation of such a Pilot Project.

e-TIR connecting Ukraine with Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

Customs authorities from concerned countries and member associations signed protocols in order to start implementation of the Pilot Project.

- Georgia informed that the implementation of the eTIR messages is at a final stage, and that they wish to activate eTIR transports soonest with Azerbaijan.
- Kazakhstan has implemented the eTIR messages. Negotiations will take place in Q3/19 to start eTIR transports with Azerbaijan.
- Azerbaijan has implemented the eTIR messages. Negotiations will take place in Q3/19 to start eTIR transports with Georgia.
- Ukrainian Customs will start the IT implementation by Q2 2019

e-TIR Pilot Project between Turkey and Ukraine

Custom Authorities from Turkey and Ukraine are still evaluating results of the meeting held during 9-10 May 2018 in Istanbul and Izmir, Turkey in order to set up an action plan for beginning of the Pilot Project. No any development yet.

Promote eVisa for professional drivers

The International Secretariat presented the good examples in the region and beyond in granting eVisas (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Oman, USA) during the transport related meetings of BSEC (Meeting of the BSEC WG on Transport, Baku, Azerbaijan, 24 October 2018, Meeting of the Ministers in charge of Transport of the BSEC Member States Baku, Azerbaijan, 25 October 2018, Meeting of the BSEC WG on Customs Matters and joint Meeting of BSEC WGs on Trade & Economic Development and on Customs Matters 6 December 2018. Following actions of BSEC-URTA the BSEC Secretary General will take the necessary measures to activate the Group of Experts on Visa Agreement to examine the possibility of granting professional drivers electronic visas.

XI. FINANCIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ELECTION OF BSEC-URTA AUDITORS FOR THE BUDGET 2018 AND BUDGET 2019

The Chairman gave the floor to **Mr. Adrian Albu**, BSEC-URTA Secretary General who showed that some associations have proposals for BSEC-URTA Auditors such as AEBTRI, AITA and UNTRR.

The General Assembly elected unanimously the following Auditors:

- Ms. Viliana Ivanova-AEBTRI
- Ms. Otilia Constantin-UNTRR
- Mr. Dumitru Albullesa-AITA.

The BSEC-URTA Budget for 2019 (G5083) was adopted, unanimously.

REPORT ON CREATION OF THE COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE OF BSEC-URTA

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA provided information on completion of legal formalities and registration of the economic entity of BSEC-URTA as well as on actions taken by the International Secretariat for starting commercial activities such as insurance, training, permits and transit documents in cooperation with its Member Associations, Observers, IRU, BSEC and other institutions and commercial entities.

CONTRIBUTION FEES 2019

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA provided information on the contribution fees received to the BSEC-URTA Budget for 2019. The General Assembly instructed the International Secretariat to recall on those Members and Observers which didn't fulfil this statutory obligation to do as soon as possible.

XII. NEXT MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairperson, Ms. Asli Gozutok informed the meeting that the International Secretariat received from AMERIT invitation for hosting the 2019 Autumn Session of BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Skopje, Republic of North-Macedonia. The meeting welcomed and approved the invitation of AMERIT to hold the next meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly and on its eve the meeting of the Management Council in Skopje in October 2019.

XIII. MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Adrian Albu, Secretary General of BSEC-URTA informed THE General Assembly that the International Secretariat received a request of Medjunarodni Transport, having Observer Status to BSEC-URTA, to be granted by the General Assembly full membership status to BSEC-URTA in accordance with Article 4 of BSEC-URTA Statutes «Membership». The General Assembly decided to grant Medjunarodni Transport Membership status starting with 1 January 2020. The related contribution fee will be established at the proposal of 49 BSEC-URTA Management Council and of 36 BSEC-URTA General Assembly in October(TBD) in Skopje.

XIV. DECISIONS (G5085) OF THE 35th MEETING OF BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairperson 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 following the meeting.

XV. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

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

The 35th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly was closed, officially.

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