



**UNION OF ROAD TRANSPORT ASSOCIATIONS IN THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION REGION
(BSEC-URTA)**

DOC/GA04/TRAIN/03

Istanbul, 14 October 2003

FOURTH MEETING OF BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Baku – AZERBAIJAN
Thursday, 30 October 2003, at 10:00 hrs

**COOPERATION AMONG BSEC-URTA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS
IN THE FIELD OF TRAINING**

In compliance with decision (DEC/TRAIN/02) of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly at its second meeting in Tirana on 29 November 2003, *Cooperation Among BSEC-URTA Member Associations in the Field of Training* has become a standard agenda item as an indication of foremost priority that is given by the Member Associations to this fundamental subject at all times.

This approach guided search by and efforts of the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat, which resulted exploration and identification of concrete cooperation, action and opportunities under three main headings at the time of fourth meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly:-

1. Mutual Recognition of Diplomas, Certificates and Other Evidence of Formal Qualification for Road Haulage Operator and Road Passenger Transport Operator in the BSEC Region;
2. Development by AITA-ARTRI-UND of a Distant Professional Learning Software for the International Road Transport Industry;
3. Creation of a Network of Excellence Among Professional Training Centres of BSEC-URTA Member Associations.

**MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF DIPLOMAS, CERTIFICATES AND OTHER EVIDENCE OF FORMAL
QUALIFICATION FOR ROAD HAULAGE OPERATOR AND ROAD PASSENGER TRANSPORT
OPERATOR IN THE BSEC REGION**

At its Third Meeting in Istanbul on 6th June 2003, the BSEC-URTA General Assembly decided to take necessary initiatives with BSEC PERMIS and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) in order to ensure consideration by the competent BSEC organs of the possibility of mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification for road haulage operator and road passenger transport operator.

The BSEC-URTA Member Associations unanimously agreed that this would facilitate for the persons practicing these professions the right to freedom of establishment in national and international transport operations.

Having considered the fact that each and every BSEC-URTA Member Associations is practically involved in professional training through their well established Training Centers in all the BSEC Member States, it is the opinion of road haulage industry in BSEC region that mutual recognition by the official authorities of such diplomas could contribute to strengthening of uniform international standards for vocational training in the BSEC region.



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The standards developed by the IRU Member Associations under the leadership of the IRU Academy are today being used as a baseline by schools and national authorities alike to develop their training and examinations. International authorities are supporting and encouraging these efforts, the World Bank, the ECMT and the EC, etc. are today encouraging the spread of these standards through promotion and even in some cases through their funded projects like the World Bank GFP-DLI.

However, multilateral or bilateral recognition of even IRU Academy Diplomas between related countries is still a major issue, today. Taking note of the fact that IRU Academy accredited CPC Diploma is necessary to enter the profession in most of the BSEC countries, though not all, its multilateral recognition is an important issue if a diploma holder wants to invest in another country. Whereas, establishment of concrete international recognition would strengthen the image of each National Accredited Training Institute – ATI and can motivate graduates and new students, who will have a bigger opportunity of access to foreign employment markets, respect and recognition.

Training is most crucial to provide a qualified workforce for the road transport industry and enhance transport safety, quality and productivity as well as to enhance the image of the industry in the society. In this regard, IRU Academy has an important responsibility to develop and harmonize legislation on training thus creating more equal conditions of competition and serve as a reputable coordination centre of a network of ATIs that pursue quality and excellence on a globally standardized and controlled training for the industry. In this respect, BSEC, being founded with the aims to transform the Black Sea region, through mutual cooperation, into a region of peace, freedom, stability and prosperity, has a key responsibility in facilitating improvement of road transport industry in the region by means of effective and tailor-made training with all the benefits of an international accreditation starting from the BSEC region itself.

BSEC-URTA Member Associations are the main bodies in the BSEC member countries that are authorized by their National Authorities in most of the cases to give sectoral training. Six of eleven BSEC-URTA Member Associations have IRU Academy accreditation so far. It is probable that new ones will be added on this list soon.

NAME OF THE MEMBER ASSOCIATION	TRAINING CENTRE	IRU ACADEMY ACCREDITATION
ABADA – Azerbaijan	Yes	No
AEBTRI – Bulgaria	Yes	Yes
AIRCA – Armenia	Yes	No
AIRCU – Ukraine	Yes	Yes
AITA – Moldova	Yes	Yes
ANALTIR – Albania	Yes	No
ARTRI – Romania	Yes	Yes
ASMAP – Russia	Yes	Yes
GIRCA – Georgia	Yes	No
OFAE – Greece	Yes	No
UND – Turkey	Yes	Yes

Under these circumstances, BSEC region includes a lot of opportunities for all parties to concentrate their efforts, develop strategies and enhance cooperation related with the standardized professional training for the road transport industry.

Therefore, BSEC-URTA General Assembly had decided at its second meeting in Tirana on 29 November 2003:-

- to urge BSEC PERMIS to guide and help concrete action on the level of BSEC competent organs seeking facilitation of conditional regional recognition of IRU Academy accredited diplomas in the region, and



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- to instruct the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat to play an active role in ensuring an efficient cooperation between IRU Academy, BSEC-URTA and BSEC and its Related Bodies as concerns, particularly, the issue of mutual recognition in the BSEC region of IRU Academy accredited diplomas.

As a result of this Decision, BSEC-URTA International Secretariat established continuous contact and cooperation with IRU and BSEC PERMIS. IRU gave its full support to realize the abovementioned goals and helped BSEC-URTA and BSEC PERMIS by elaborating a draft multilateral agreement on this issue.

BSEC PERMIS offered its active guidance and cooperation to BSEC-URTA in placing this item on the agenda of meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Transport, which convened in Baku on 1-2 October 2003.

BSEC-URTA International Secretariat took part in the Meeting and presented detailed information on training for road transport management, and proposed the Working Group to establish an Agreement among BSEC Member States on mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualification for road haulage operator and road passenger transport operator with a view to facilitating for the persons practicing these professions the right to freedom of establishment in national and international operations.

In the meeting, the WG expressed its appreciation to the IRU, for submitting to the BSEC PERMIS the said Draft Agreement as well as for its suggestions and recommendations expressed in IRU Secretary General's letter of 22 September 2003.

Highlighting the importance of setting international standards in professional training and welcoming the readiness of IRU to give its utmost support to the BSEC in order to achieve this goal in the BSEC region the WG agreed that BSEC Member States should communicate to the BSEC PERMIS their opinions and comments on such an Agreement and their recommendations to the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to establish a relevant Ad hoc Group of Experts.

This subject will be discussed and the pertinent action thereof will be decided upon by the competent BSEC organs on the occasion of their meetings in Baku between 29-31 October 2003.

See Annex I for the text of Draft Agreement.

DEVELOPMENT BY AITA-ARTRI-UND OF A DISTANT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SOFTWARE FOR INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT INDUSTRY

BSEC-URTA General Assembly stressed in Tirana that there is a need for a reinforced cooperation in the field of training among the BSEC-URTA Member Associations to learn from good examples of each other, evaluate local training needs and develop regional training programs, build strategies to better benefit from the international training projects.

In parallel to this approach and on the occasion of their bilateral contact; UND President and ARTRI Secretary General signed a bilateral agreement in Bucharest on 27 June 2003 with a view to developing jointly a sophisticated professional competency training software for the international road transportation industry. According to their intention, this software will be based on distant learning, computer aided, operating on the web, measuring the students within a simulated environment, providing for student interaction and communication with the trainers and other students through a training portal including trial exams for the students.



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These two National Associations also agreed to keep this project open to participation at the development stage or use at the post-production stage of any other interested BSEC-URTA Member Associations.

Then, under active coordination of BSEC-URTA International Secretariat, a project team set by UND and ARTRI convened in Istanbul on 1-2 September 2003, where AEBTRI also sent its representative as observer.

At the meeting, representatives of ARTRI and UND re-confirmed their determination to develop this significant distant professional training project by means of their own resources with a view to facilitating professional training of international road transport managers in their respectful countries. Subsequently, they built a common understanding about the contents and main features of their project, which were grouped under five main components: printed materials, audio-visual materials, web portal, simulation game and pilot project implementation. They prepared a Draft Project Matrix Table indicating all the tasks foreseen to realize the project, where each and every task was marked within a time frame. They decided to meet again to make a distribution of tasks and finalize their project budget in Bucharest.

In Istanbul, the Parties also asked BSEC-URTA International Secretariat to play a coordinating role for future steps of the project and to assist promoting their joint project vis-à-vis all concerned and important international bodies and organizations in all aspects.

Later, ARTRI reported that it has arranged participation of AITA in their project whilst AEBTRI decided not to take an active place at the moment.

After an evaluation of existing means and opportunities, BSEC-URTA International Secretariat assisted the subject Member Associations to bring their project to the consideration of BSEC Working Group on Transport for possible financial support under BSEC Project Development Fund, during its meeting in Baku on 1-2 October 2003. In the end, WG agreed to present to consideration of the Committee of Senior Officials the Distant Professional Learning Software Project of AITA, ARTRI and UND for funding.

At the moment, the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat has been continuing to take appropriate action actively and to follow up all developments in this regard.

See Annex II for BSEC Project Development Fund Application Form, which was prepared and submitted to BSEC PERMIS by the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat.

**CREATION OF A NETWORK OF EXCELLENCE AMONG PROFESSIONAL TRAINING CENTRES
OF BSEC-URTA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**

Preliminary research of the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat revealed that there is a possibility to establish a Network of Excellence among professional training centers of BSEC-URTA Member Associations with the financial support of European Union under its well known Sixth Framework Program.

Subject to approval of this matter by the General Assembly, BSEC-URTA International Secretariat remains at disposal of interested BSEC-URTA Member Associations, which would like to form and take part in a network as such.

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