



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

MIN/GA04/03

Baku, 30 October 2003

FOURTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES

Baku – Azerbaijan

Thursday, 30 October 2003, at 10:30 hrs

I. OPENING CEREMONY

Mr. Tofiq Nurullayev, the President of ABADA, the host association of the meeting, came out with an Opening Speech, welcoming all participants on the Azerbaijan's land and wished them a successful work. He marked that BSEC-URTA has been developing and it has already taken its special place among the international organizations, which act in the region. All significant issues, which have been considered by the BSEC-URTA so far, have been very important and he expressed the hope to continue this work in the future. Also, Mr. Nurullayev emphasized that the significance of BSEC-URTA is reflected in that we have this Meeting.

Mr. Cetin Nuhoglu, President of BSEC-URTA, the Chairman of the meeting, thanked the Ministry of Road Transport of Azerbaijan on behalf of the organization for its support, expressing the hope that in the future the Ministry will continue playing an important role in the field of road transport and he inaugurated the Fourth Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

Mr. Musa Panahov, the Deputy Minister of Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, welcomed all participants of the Fourth Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly. He apologized for absence of the Minister of Transport of Azerbaijan, who was attending the official ceremonies on the occasion of election of the new Head of State, H.E. Ilham Aliiev. Mr. Panahov emphasized that the Meeting takes place at such a very important time for Azerbaijan and congratulated the new President on behalf of the participants of the Meeting. He also mentioned that more than 10 years Azerbaijan was a member of BSEC and the positive influence it has upon the region is being felt. Mr. Panahov highlighted importance of the role that BSEC-URTA plays for the road transport and its development in the BSEC region. He mentioned that BSEC-URTA, established in the year 2001 with support of the BSEC, has acquired a special importance and became the most active member of the BSEC family of NGOs. Mr. Panahov stated that Azerbaijan, located at the cross-roads of northwest and east, plays a key role in the transport development. He expressed the wish to broaden their possibility and promote more investments in the road transport area and follow the world practices. He emphasized that the development of road transport is very important for integration of Azerbaijanis, and certain work is being done in this direction. He also emphasized that infrastructure should be well developed as well as border crossing procedures and tariff policy should be harmonized. Mr. Panahov concluded his speech by wishing the participants a fruitful work.

Mr. Costas Masmanidis, BSEC Business Council Secretary General, mentioned about active participation of BSEC-URTA in the recently held Meeting of BSEC Working Group on Transport and its project proposal thereby under the BSEC Project Development Fund. He informed that it would be forwarded to the Committee of Senior Officials of BSEC Member States with the proposal to be financed at its initial preparation stage. He expressed his happiness on behalf of the BSEC Business Council to make cooperation with and give support to BSEC-URTA. He highlighted a great progress made by BSEC-URTA in last two years and thanked to its active members. Mr. Masmanidis concluded his speech wishing the delegates good luck in their deliberations.

Mr. Cetin Nuhoglu, the Chairman, expressed the gladness to see everyone in the 4th Meeting. He thanked the host association ABADA for the excellent work done for organization of the Meeting.



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The Chairman ascertained that BSEC-URTA, which was established to solve common problems of the sector in the region, achieved to become a well-known actor in this regard. He informed that BSEC Working Group on Transport had held its last meeting in the same room on 1-2 October 2003. He noted that the priority for the BSEC-URTA was to bridge the IRU with the work of BSEC organs. Mr. Nuhođlu emphasized that BSEC-URTA is today an important platform for exchange of information and for professional solidarity in the region. He mentioned about the recent developments as regards cooperation between member associations in the field of training, the participation of BSEC-URTA in the meetings of BSEC Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Visa Facilitation for Lorry Drivers and the long going efforts to this end. The Chairman informed the participants about a recent decree of the Council of Ministers of Turkey, which was endorsed by the President of Turkey, whereby the BSEC-URTA obtained its legal personality under a specific law for organizations having international character. For having concluded his term of office at such a point in time, Mr. Nuhoglu expressed a special proud for all these achievements and the work done so far by the BSEC-URTA. He concluded: "We try to improve ourselves on a permanent basis, we established a good lobbying power for our industry, we are learning to interact in a more efficient way and try to use good examples of each other with the spirit of closer friendship and solidarity".

The Chairman announced a coffee break for 15 minutes.

FIRST SESSION

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chairman invited participants to consider the Agenda of the Meeting (DOC/GA04/AG/03).

Mr. Arkady Kurshin, representative of ASMAP, suggested to have a separate specific item to consider the work of BSEC-URTA on the issue of visas for professional drivers.

The Chairman informed that this issue would already be discussed separately and the Assembly would be invited to adopt a Declaration later during the day.

The General Assembly adopted the Agenda, unanimously.

III. ADOPTION OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Order of Business (DOC/GA04/OB/03) was adopted, unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THIRD MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Minutes of the Third BSEC-URTA General Assembly, held in Istanbul on 6 June 2003, was adopted, unanimously (MIN/GA03/03).

V. REPORT OF THE BSEC-URTA MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Chairman reported about the Meeting of BSEC-URTA Management Council held on 29 October 2003 at ABADA Headquarters, where working documents of the General Assembly were considered and work of the BSEC-URTA was discussed. The Management Council adopted the documents and submitted to the consideration of the General Assembly. He informed that the meeting considered the issue of BSEC-URTA elections, organization of new events such as an International Conference on Transport and Logistics.

The Chairman reported that in the Meeting of the Management Council did not reach a consensus on the Item 16 about election of the new BSEC-URTA President for 2004-2005 and Vice-Presidents for



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2004. Therefore, he said that the Management Council submits the matter to the consideration of General Assembly.

VI. BSEC-URTA LEGAL PERSONALITY

BSEC-URTA Secretary General *Mr. Haydar Ozkan* reported about developments in the issue of acquiring a legal personality for the BSEC-URTA (DOC/GA04/LEGAL/03). He informed that the long going process was completed, successfully, with the adoption by the Council of Ministers and endorsement by the President of Turkey, of a specific Decree on establishment of BSEC-URTA. He reported that the new legal personality required preparation and signing of certain documentation by all the Member Associations for election of BSEC-URTA President and Vice-Presidents as well as appointment of the BSEC-URTA Secretary General with certain powers. Ozkan marked that such documentation would be delivered to the competent Turkish authorities according to the local laws. For convenience of all members present, the original texts were prepared in Turkish and English with Russian translation.

The Chairman suggested to discuss Item 16 after consideration of Item 9 and passed to the next item of agenda.

VII. BSEC-URTA ACTIVITY REPORT

Secretary General *Mr. Haydar Ozkan* presented his report about BSEC-URTA activities since the Third Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly on 6 June 2004 (DOC/GA04/ACTIV/03).

Mr. Arkady Kurshin expressed certain remarks about format of the printed report with the wish to have the followings: outcome of participated meetings and conferences, percentages of improvement in border waiting times or driver risks at operation, etc. as a result of the work of BSEC-URTA. He added that this would increase the visibility and understanding of importance of the organization by the industry. He also stressed that a lot of work were done on issues of training, driver visa and combined transportation.

Mr. Cahit Soysal, the Chairman of UND Executive Committee, said that the report was reflecting all the necessary things. He added that he agrees with what was said by Mr. Kurshin, generally. Mr. Soysal stressed that objective of BSEC-URTA is to facilitate and simplify road transportation, simplify cargo shipping and visa regimes.

The Chairman agreed with both speakers. He told that it was essential for each and every Member Association to try to achieve improvements and to solve the issues by taking persisting and coordinated action and work in our own countries. He stressed that we would reach our goals by our work in our own countries first.

Mr. Kurshin mentioned that it would be desirable to reflect the cooperation on bilateral level, too. He emphasized that positive outcomes in the area of eliminating physical barriers and obstacles should also be reflected in the report.

Mr. Leonid Dokel, Vice-President of AIRCU, suggested to reflect the regular RO-LA shipments from the Black Sea region to Baltic region, which were activated after the conference in Teheran.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan expressed the gladness to see delegates trying to contribute to the work of BSEC-URTA and expressed the readiness to work with them, accordingly.

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

Mr. Adrian Albu, Executive Manager of BSEC-URTA International Secretariat, reported about cooperation among BSEC-URTA Member Associations in the Field of Training (DOC/GA04/TRAIN/03).



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Mr. Haydar Ozkan pointed on the Issue of Mutual Recognition of Diplomas (CPC) for road transport operators between BSEC Member States and explained that BSEC PERMIS asked officially the Transport Ministries of the member countries about their opinion on this issue but no reply was received, yet. *Mr. Ozkan* suggested Member Associations to meet with the related officials in their Ministry and to present a copy of the Draft Agreement prepared by IRU asking them to elaborate a letter of support. He informed that this issue would be discussed in the next meeting of BSEC Working Group on Transport to be held in February 2004.

Mr. Domenico Petre (ARTRI) said that under the coordination of BSEC-URTA International Secretariat, a common project on distant professional training had been launched, recently. He informed that a project team was already established in Istanbul on 1-2 September. A common understanding was made about main features of the project, which were grouped under 5 main components: printed materials, audio materials, web portal, simulation game and pilot project implementation. *Mr. Petre* said that it has been decided to meet again to make a distribution of tasks and finalize the project budget in Bucharest soon. He highlighted that this project is open for support or and participation of all interested Member Associations. *Mr. Petre* added [that](#) the mentioned [project](#) would also support the goal of mutual recognition in a BSEC region and could be the first step in order to assure the basis for the creation of a network of excellence among professional training centers of BSEC-URTA Members Associations.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan reminded the open character of the project for all Member Associations.

The Chairman thanked the speakers.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin made some remarks within the frame of professional training by referring to the requested letter of support from countries for mutual recognition of certificates and diplomas of professional competency issued in the countries under the umbrella of IRU Academy. He said that, in principle, ASMAPP supports such an initiative, but the national legislation do not allow it, now.

Mr. Domenico Petre urged all BSEC-URTA members, still, to convince their authorities to recognize the diplomas, mutually. With a common course content and training methods, he expressed his confidence that a good level of support could be achieved in this field.

The Chairman thanked the speakers. He emphasized the necessity for the Member Associations to share their expertise and knowledge with each other, to be open for exchange of information and experiences.

The Chairman passed to the next item.

IX. NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN TRANSPORT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATION

Mr. Rovshan Aghayev, Executive Manager of BSEC-URTA International Secretariat, presented a report on New Technologies in Transport and Opportunities for Cooperation (DOC/GA04/ICT/03).

Mr. Haydar Ozkan overlooked the summary, highlighted the importance of having an own BSEC-URTA Web Portal, and mentioned the suggestion of Siemens Company on cooperation.

Mr. Ramiz Akhundov, Deputy of the Head of Management of Goods Transport, "Avtonaglyiyatservis", brought up a wish to BSEC-URTA to issue a periodical magazine to be circulated to fleet operators, Member Associations and Ministries of Transport, which could become a forum for transport operators but also help better involvement of the Ministries of Transport in the professional issues.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin commented that BSEC-URTA had electronic newsletters for information purposes but publishing such a magazine could be very costly under the existing tiny budget.



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First session of the General Assembly was closed and a lunch break have been announced.

SECOND SESSION

Chairman inaugurated the session with the consideration of Item 16 according to the previous agreement of the Assembly.

**XVI. ELECTION OF BSEC-URTA PRESIDENT FOR 2004-2005
AND VICE-PRESIDENTS FOR 2004**

The Chairman invited the Secretary General to explain about the procedure.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan explained the procedure of election laid down in the BSEC-URTA Statutes. He reminded that Member Associations had elected at the founding meeting the followings: Mr. Cetin Nuhoglu as te BSEC-URTA Founding President for 2 years, Mr. Plamen Tzalkov and Mr. Alexander Chkheidze as the first two BSEC-URTA Vice-Presidents for 1 year. According to the Statutes, presidency would rotate in English alphabetical order of country names of the Member Associations with a term of office of two years whilst two Vice-Presidents would be elected from the Member Associations by rotation again, in English alphabetical order of the country names of Member Associations, one from A to Z, other is from Z to A, for 1 year. Secretary General explained that the next President should come from ANALTIR (Albania) and the next Vice-Presidents from AIRCA (Armenia) and ASMAP (Russian Federation).

Mr. Ilir Mataj, President of ANALTIR, proposed Mr. Nuhoglu to continue his work as President for one more year until BSEC-URTA will become stronger respecting the experience of Mr. Nuhoglu and his good relations with BSEC, which were his two reasons for such a proposal.

Mr. Leonid Dokel supported Mr. Mataj on behalf of Ukrainian delegation, emphasizing that Mr. Nuhoglu as a president indeed invested a lot of efforts to make the organization sustainable. Taking into account the fact that the organization acquired its legal status very recently, Mr. Dokel proposed to prolong the presidential office of current president for another year.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin supported the proposal of Albanian and Ukrainian delegates.

The Chairman presented his point of view by saying that a successful work must be according to rules, which should not be changed for persons. He said that the presidency should rotate according to the Statutes. He expressed his belief that the rules shouldn't be changed. And he proposed to have the system continue functioning as it was foreseen initially.

Mr. Ilir Mataj, stressing the fact that his proposal was to make the association stronger, suggested to call a vote and change the pertinent rules of association, if necessary.

Mr. Leonid Dokel also emphasized that proposal was made to make the organization stronger.

After lengthy discussions on this matter, *the Chairman* agreed to open a vote for prolongation of the term of office of BSEC-URTA President until 31 December 2004 and invited Member Associations to express their position one by one, and asked the Secretary General to take action, accordingly.

The proposal was unanimously voted and adopted.

The Chairman passed to the issue of election of BSEC-URTA Vice-Presidents.



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Mr. Haydar Ozkan informed that the rotation order has come to the Member Associations from Armenia and the Russian Federation for these two positions. He reported that the AIRCA delegation could not attend this General Assembly to to some internal problems but they they nominated Mr. Herbert Hambarzumyan for the position of Vice-President for the year 2004.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin, on behalf of ASMAP, informed about the nomination of Mr. Yury Sukhin, President of ASMAP, for the other position of BSEC-URTA Vice-President for 2004.

Mr. Leonid Dokel on behalf of Ukrainian delegation supported the candidate from Russia.

General Assembly elected the nominated candidates unanimously.

X. BSEC-URTA PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Adrian Albu presented the BSEC-URTA Project Progress Report (DOC/GA04/PROGR/03).

Mr. Haydar Ozkan called the General Assembly to adopt a specific Declaration on professional driver visa in order to urge the BSEC governments to accelerate their work on making a BSEC agreement to facilitate visa for professional drivers, and briefly explained the content of a Draft Declaration, which is submitted to the approval of the General Assembly.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin expressed the belief that this is a critical issue, and he proposed certain changes in the draft text.

The Chairman asked the Secretary General to incorporate Mr. Kurshin's proposals in the text and invited Mr. Kurshin to attend the Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of BSEC Member States in the next day on behalf of BSEC-URTA, emphasizing the high importance of this issue.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin said that he cannot attend the meeting due to his flight program but expressed his readiness to formulate the text of draft declaration together with Mr. Ozkan.

Ms. Irina Kuznetsova, Visa Specialist of ASMAP, reported about ASMAP's great experience in visa issues. At home, they succeeded to simplify the visa procedures for Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland to a great extent, and they were only exchanging letters ensuring the authenticity of documents and transportation process. This allowed for minimum paper work – driver can obtain only with a guarantee letter of the association. Ms. Kuznetsova suggested to insert this experience into the Declaration to be conveyed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Chairman requested Mr. Kurshin to support BSEC-URTA efforts for visa facilitation, actively. He expressed the hope that struggle which was started in 2002 will be awarded with the Draft Agreement on Facilitation of Visa Procedures for Lorry Drivers concluded in the next Meeting of BSEC Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Visa Facilitation to be held in Istanbul on January 2004. The Chairman suggested that Mr. Kurshin to be part in the BSEC-URTA delegation in that meeting.

Mr. Arkady Kurshin proposed to bring this issue to Geneva to be reflected by IRU also, saying that it could be a framework to help our entire Europe to solve this issue.

Mr. Adrian Albu he continued with his report.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan informed about intention of the Secretariat to make a regional survey in 2004 about combined transportation. He explained that the drivers would be asked several questions at the site of Ro-Ro terminals during their routine work to collect realistic and updated specific data so that areas of required improvement could be identified as regards terminal facilities, parking areas, vessel conditions, tariffs, etc.



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As far as publishing of a BSEC-URTA magazine was concerned, *Mr. Plamen Tzalkov*, Secretary General of AEBTRI, suggested the International Secretariat to prepare a bulletin of 1-2 pages periodically to be inserted and published within periodicals of every association, which was already being circulated amongst the professional drivers and professional fleet operators.

This proposal was welcomed by all Member Associations and adopted unanimously. *Mr. Haydar Ozkan* expressed the pleasure to provide the information to the journals of the associations.

Secretary General informed about the issue of publishing a Black Sea Transport and Logistics Catalogue and asked for the support of General Assembly.

The Chairman asked for a vote on the matter and publishing of such a catalogue was adopted, unanimously.

XI. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER INITIATIVES

Mr. Haydar Ozkan reported about the current level of cooperation with BSEC and BSEC Related Bodies (DOC/GA04/BSEC/03) and with International Road Transport Union (IRU) (DOC/GA04/IRU/03), briefly.

The Chairman subsequently passed to Item 12.

XII. BSEC-URTA WORKING PROGRAMME FOR 2004

Mr. Adrian Albu presented his report on BSEC-URTA working program, mentioning main activities of BSEC-URTA in 2004 (DOC/GA04/WP/03), which was adopted by the General Assembly, unanimously.

The Chairman thanked the reporter and passed to the Item 13.

XIII. BSEC-URTA CALENDAR FOR 2004 – First Half

Ms. Ekaterina Peser presented a calendar for 2004 (DOC/GA04/CAL/03).

Mr. Arkady Kurshin asked for clarification on financial aspects of organizing a suggested transport exhibition in parallel to the forthcoming meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly, highlighting that such an organization should ensure certain revenues for the BSEC-URTA.

The Chairman replied that this aspect would be better discussed under item 14 about BSEC-URTA Budget of 2004.

The Chairman suggested to discuss Item 15 before the coffee break.

XV. NEXT MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Romanian delegation welcomed everyone to the Fifth Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly to be held in Romania in June, 2004.

This proposal was voted and adopted, unanimously.

A Coffee break was announced for 15 minutes.



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THIRD SESSION

(in camera)

XIV. BSEC-URTA BUDGET FOR 2004

Mr. Haydar Ozkan informed about the details and methodology of Budget 2004 (DOC/GA04/BUDG/03).

Mr. Arkady Kurshin expressed support to approve the budget but wanted to make some proposals, too. First, he asked the International Secretariat to send a reminder invoice to all Member Associations in time, where their fee and the deadline for payments should be expressed clearly. Second, he suggested to change the form of the Budget, where there were fixed fees for a certain group of Member Associations with limited financial strength. He added that, if some associations can not pay their standart fee due to some internal problems, they should appeal to the General Assembly requesting to diminish its fees. In this case it would be judicially correct according to Statutes where it is stated that the Budget should be paid equally by all members. Third, concerning the overall budget, *Mr. Kurshin* proposed collecting money from participants of meetings and exhibitions of BSEC-URTA to be added on to the Budget.

Mr. Cahit Soysal agreed with *Mr. Kurshin* that sponsorship and other revenues could be obtained from organization of exhibitions etc. He highlighted about the payment before a set deadline of the fees. He emphasized that if the payments are not made in time, the work of BSEC-URTA could be affected inevitably.

The BSEC-URTA Budget for 2004 was voted and adopted, unanimously.

XVII. MISCELLANEOUS

General Assembly exchanged views about the next IRU General Assembly meeting to be held in Geneva in November 2003, where elections would be held, too. Member Associations agreed to give support to the candidates from the BSEC-URTA Member Associations, who could duly represent the BSEC region and contribute to a closer cooperation between IRU and BSEC-URTA.

Mr. Cahit Soysal reminded that the European Council wanted to institute an European free zone and mentioned about the agreement concerning general transit. *Mr. Soysal* called BSEC-URTA Member Associations to be involved more actively with such issues aimed at solving the transportation problems in the region within the framework of IRU.

XVIII. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman expressed his satisfaction and pleasure that so many issues were discussed with active participation of the delegates. He marked the date 1 January, 2004 as a new milestone in the history of BSEC-URTA, which was only funded by UND before. The Chairman thanked all delegates for their active participation, and the International Secretariat for a good work.

On behalf of BSEC-URTA and to mark the excellent organization of meeting, *the Chairman* presented a special token to the President of ABADA.

Upon announcement of the Secretary General, *Mr. Ilir Mataj*, as the next BSEC-URTA President in alphabetical order, presented a plaque of gratitude to *the Chairman* on behalf of all BSEC-URTA Member Associations.

The Chairman thanked everyone and officially closed the Fourth Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

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