



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

DOC/GA08/ACTIV/05

Istanbul, 10 October 2005

## **EIGHTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Jolly Alon Hotel, Chisinau-Moldova  
Monday, 24 October 2005, at 10:00 hrs

### **ACTIVITY REPORT**

(Information Paper Prepared by the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat)

Since the Seventh Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly held in Athens, Greece, on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2005, the International Secretariat participated in events of importance for the industry, contributed to international gatherings and worked for promotion of the BSEC-URTA and its objectives.

A summary of these activities developed under the strategic objectives and 2005 working program of the BSEC-URTA is given below by priorities set out by the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

#### **FACILITATION:**

##### **1. BSEC VISA FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS (BVPD)**

Under the Moldovan Chairmanship of the BSEC Organization between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2005, no related meetings were held. The issue will be postponed to the term of the next Chairmanship-in-office, which Romania will take over from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2005.

##### **2. INTERNATIONAL VEHICLE WEIGHT CERTIFICATE (IVWC)**

###### **(a) Follow the related work of UNECE on this issue closely.**

UNECE Working Party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport (WP.30) held a meeting in Geneva between 14 and 17 June 2005. At the meeting, WP.30 considered the status of the 1982 Harmonization Convention as well as its newly revised Annex 8 on the facilitation of border crossing procedures for international road transport, which stipulates introduction of an International Vehicle Weight Certificate, too. The meeting addressed the Administrative Committee of the Convention to adopt the new annex 8.

On 28 September 2005, the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat participated as guest in the SECIPRO Meetings held in Chisinau (Moldova), where the last developments regarding the IVWC under the UNECE umbrella were assessed. It was jointly agreed that the endorsement of the Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention by the Administrative Committee of the Convention will be the first step for international implementation of the IVWC. However, the private sector will be required to carry out concentrated lobby activities vis-à-vis national authorities in order to obtain their support and willingness for implementation of the IVWC.

Eventually, the Administrative Committee met in Geneva on 6-7 October 2005 and representatives of all the Contracting Parties to the 1982 Harmonization Convention endorsed the new Annex 8. According to the UN procedures, the entry into force of new Annex 8 will be three months after the expiry of a period of 12 months following the date of a related



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communication by the UN Secretary General to all of the participating member states, if no contracting party submitted an objection to the UN within the period of 12 months.

**1. MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF CPC CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS**

- (a) Take part in the meetings and follow-up results of the related BSEC competent organs and related bodies.

BSEC Ad Hoc Expert Group on Mutual Recognition of Diplomas, CPC and Other Forms of Qualification for Road Transport Operators by BSEC Member States, held its last meeting in Istanbul on 6-7 July 2005.

Bulgaria and Serbia and Montenegro were not represented at the meeting whilst Greece and Romania stated that they can not negotiate on such a BSEC agreement due to their commitments under the EU framework.

As a result, the meeting proposed to the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials to ask the BSEC Chairmanship to enter into consultations with the EC in order to reach compatibility of the Agreement with the EU legislation.

The BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, at its meeting on 14-15 September 2005, prepared the following draft Decision for approval by the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which will hold its next session in Chisinau (Moldova) on 28 October 2005: *"The Council took note of the Report of the 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 (Istanbul, 6-7 July 2005) and mandated the BSEC Chairman in Office, with the assistance of BSEC PERMIS, to hold consultations with respect to the said Draft Agreement"*.

The next BSEC Chairman-in-office will be Romania starting with 1 November 2005.

- (b) Work together with the IRU Academy and coordinate Member Associations in order to have the relevant Draft BSEC Agreement be concluded and opened to signature of the Member States.

BSEC-URTA International Secretariat exchanged views with and provided information to the IRU Academy as well as the IRU Permanent Delegation to the EU on the above developments, regularly. It is noted that the IRU Permanent Delegation to the EU could offer its assistance, if requested, to facilitate or assist in any consultations between the BSEC Organization and the European Commission.

**2. SIMPLIFICATION OF CUSTOMS FORMALITIES**

- (a) Lobby for joining of all BSEC Member States to the UNECE 1982 Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods.

In partnership with the SECI PRO, the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat drew attention and asked cooperation of SECI PRO Committees from Albania, Moldova and Turkey to request their authorities to start or finalize the necessary procedures for these 3 BSEC countries also to join the 1982 Harmonization Convention.

- (b) Obtain information about the good examples or projects related with border crossings on the international transport corridors such as TRACECA's single window project, and bring them to the consideration of competent BSEC organs and Member Associations.



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In cooperation with the ARTRI, the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat provided detailed information to all BSEC-URTA Member Associations as well as the competent BSEC organs about the "Green Lane" practice, which was introduced by the Romanian Customs Administration for the trucks under the cover of a TIR carnet. BSEC-URTA asked the initiatives of its Member Associations on bringing such provided data to the attention of their authorities with the intention of implementing this best practice at home, too. The subject will be brought to the consideration of the BSEC Working Group on Transport at its next meeting on 8-9 November 2005.

The practice of the "Single Window", as applied by the Romanian authorities, was promoted by the WP.3 during its mission to Serbia and Montenegro on 6-7 October 2005.

(c) *Search for possibility of having the BSEC to organize a meeting of customs authorities about border crossing cooperation.*

BSEC-URTA followed up the decision of BSEC Council of Ministers to organize a regional meeting between the Customs Administration and requested competent BSEC organs to realize such a meeting as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the BSEC-URTA was represented in the meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Trade and Economic Development in Istanbul on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2005, where it called for organization of a joint meeting between representatives of the road transport industry, traders and customs administrations from the Black Sea region to exchange views, discuss and work on how to strengthen the cooperation between public and private sector to facilitate customs procedures and expand best practices. The Working Group decided as a first step, to call the BSEC organs to convene a meeting of Ad hoc Expert Group on Customs Matters as soon as possible.

### **3. HARMONIZATION OF CHARGES**

(a) *In order to keep this matter on the agenda and lobby for harmonization of charges in the BSEC region, take part in the meetings and follow-up results of the related BSEC competent organs and related bodies.*

No specific action taken. Romanian Ministry of Transport in its capacity as the BSEC Country Coordinator for Transport will be requested to keep this issue on its working program.

## **IRU-BSEC INTERACTION:**

### **1. IRU-BSEC COOPERATION AGREEMENT**

(a) *Prepare a draft text for consideration and consent of Secretaries General of the BSEC PERMIS and the IRU.*

The draft MoU to be signed between the BSEC Permanent International Secretariat and the IRU General Secretariat was distributed to the information and consideration of 12 BSEC member states.

The text is expected to be endorsed and sent to the approval of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials, by the BSEC Working Group on Transport at its next meeting in Istanbul on 8-9 November 2005.



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**GOOD EXAMPLES:**

**1. ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT**

- (a) Encourage the host Associations to present themselves and their good examples on the occasion of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly meetings.

The practice was started with the OFAE presentation in Athens under 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly and is continued with the AITA presentation, the host association of the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Chisinau on 24 October 2005.

**2. COMPANY PRACTICES**

- (a) Support the IRU's Best Industry Practices report and stimulate regional interest for it.

Upon recommendation of the AITA, "Balcan TIR", as a successful road transport company in Moldova, was invited to make a presentation during the 8th General Assembly meeting in Chisinau. The presentation is planned to focus on opportunities and challenges in the Moldova market and the company's activities and success stories.

En electronic copy of two issues of the IRU Best Industry Practices Report were provided with the company in order to encourage it to consider filing an application with the IRU to take part in their next issue.

- (b) Encourage the host Associations to allow representatives of its member companies having good examples to present them on the occasion of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly meetings.

The practice was started with the presentations by two Greek hauliers in Athens under 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly and is continued with the presentation of an AITA member in Chisinau on 24 October 2005.

**PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION:**

**1. AITA-ARTRI-UND JOINT PROFESSIONAL DISTANT LEARNING PROJECT**

- (a) Coordinate the start and implementation phases of the project by the related Associations.

The project coordination was continued and its implementation phases were supervised to make sure that related project deliverables are ready for AITA-ARTRI-UND to submit to the BSEC organs, marking the completion of the project as supported by the BSEC Organization. As a result, now, a comprehensive web portal for distant CPC learning was developed for utilisation of the IRU Academy ATIs operated by AITA, ARTRI and UND in their respectful countries.

- (b) Work together with the IRU Academy for its further promotion and support on every level as well as identify perspectives of its accreditation after project completion.

A common agreement was attained with the IRU Academy to support the project, which is mentioned on the project deliverable, too.

- (c) Cooperate with the SECI to search international funding possibilities for the project.



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No specific action was taken after the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly. Since the project deliverable is ready, now, there is the possibility of cooperation in approaching the SECI contacts at the World Bank for the latter's possible future support in relation with real implementation of the project in the BSEC region.

**(d) Manage the project progress reporting to the BSEC competent organs.**

A second interim progress report, as provided by the UND on behalf of all three associations, was submitted to the competent BSEC organs. Pursuant to completion of the project implementation phase, a formal letter together with the project deliverables and required financial documentation was prepared by the BSEC-URTA, to be signed by the Presidents of involving Associations and will be conveyed to the BSEC PERMIS in Chisinau on the occasion of the official BSEC meetings to be held in Moldova between 26-28 October 2005.

**2. SYSTEMATIC PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

**(a) Search for available calls for proposals and calls for expression of interest under the European and international programs and funds, which relate to the road goods transport and may create benefits for the interested Member Associations, if awarded.**

BSEC-URTA International Secretariat systematically searches for the available calls for proposals or expression of interest as announced by the European Commission and in relation with the road transport and logistics. Since the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly held in Athens on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2005, no new call for proposals, which might be of interest for the BSEC-URTA Member Associations, was identified, yet.

**3. BSEC-URTA WEB PORTAL**

**(a) Publish the BSEC-URTA official documents on the portal and keep it updated with professional news and regional developments.**

BSEC-URTA official documents as well as official documents of other meetings, where the BSEC-URTA was represented, are regularly published on the BSEC-URTA web portal: [www.bsec-urta.org](http://www.bsec-urta.org).

Furthermore, the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat having the instruction of the 8<sup>th</sup> Management Council, added a new module to the BSEC-URTA web portal for publishing in electronic format on the Web Portal of the list of transport and logistics companies in the BSEC region, as provided by the Member Associations and as available to the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat.

**(b) Cooperate with the BSEC Business Council to promote the web portal of each other and exchange data mutually.**

The web sites of the BSEC Business Council ([www.bsec-business.org](http://www.bsec-business.org)) and the BSEC-URTA ([www.bsec-urta.org](http://www.bsec-urta.org)) are interlinked at each other.

**4. BSEC-URTA PUBLICATIONS**

**(c) Implement instructions of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly whether to publish a regional transport and logistics guide.**



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The BSEC-URTA International Secretariat transposed the project of publishing a regional transport and logistics guide in paper into an electronic version on the BSEC-URTA web portal (see 3b above).

**5. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STATISTICS**

- (a) Make a research about the regional road goods transport statistics on a systematic way and inform the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in a regular manner.

The practice was started in Athens under 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly by elaboration and presentation of the first BSEC-URTA regional outlook report, which is continued by preparation of updated versions on the occasion of each and every BSEC-URTA General Assembly meeting. The outlook report compiles data and analyses the results over a time series on the following main aspects:

1. Border crossing waiting times at internal and external BSEC borders,
2. Road goods transport statistics inside and outside the BSEC region,
3. BSEC foreign trade statistics.

**LOBBYING AND PROMOTION:**

**1. ISTANBUL 2004 CONFERENCE**

- (a) Follow-up the Conference Final Declaration in cooperation with the IRU.

UND, which was the host association of the ISTANBUL 2004 Conference, published a special booklet "Highlights of ISTANBUL 2004 Conference", which was disseminated by the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat to various international bodies and organizations, as appropriate.

- (b) Implement instructions of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly whether to organize follow-up workshops and similar conferences in the future.

The BSEC-URTA International Secretariat is ready to give every necessary support to the organization of future similar conferences as soon as the BSEC-URTA General Assembly will acknowledge the time and venue of the next conference. The support of the BSEC-URTA in this regard is defined in detail under the report of ad hoc BSEC-URTA Working Party on Systematic Follow-up of ISTANBUL 2004 Conference Conclusions (WP.1/06), which was adopted by the BSEC-URTA General Assembly at its 7<sup>th</sup> meeting held in Athens on 7 June 2005 (REP/WP1/GA07/05).

**PROFESSIONAL REGIONAL COOPERATION:**

- (a) Work together with the IRU in search of channels and to exploit opportunities to build inter-regional professional cooperation with a view to bringing common solutions faster for common problems of the road goods transport in the BSEC region and beyond.

No specific action was taken on this issue, yet.

**COMBINED TRANSPORTATION:**



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**1. REGIONAL SURVEY**

- (a) Establish or re-new contacts with the combined transport service suppliers in the BSEC region.

Direct contacts were made with 7 Ro-La and 20 Ro-Ro companies in the BSEC region with a view to conducting the BSEC-URTA regional survey.

In compliance with the instruction of 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly, contacts were resumed with the Superfast Ferries company in Greece, which is one of the biggest operators of passenger and cargo ferries in the Adriatic Sea. The company is interested to cooperate with the BSEC-URTA and its member associations to increase efficiency of services at the Igoumenithsa Port in Greece, which is used by the international road transport industry heavily, as well as to analyse the traffic and identify needs for new combined transport services in the Black Sea region, particularly between Bulgaria and the Russian Federation.

- (b) Complete the regional survey on combined transportation.

The survey was completed and its results were disseminated to related organizations and published on the BSEC-URTA web portal.

- (c) Identify areas of improvements and bottlenecks and analyze the efficiency of combined transport services in the BSEC region.

Efficiency of the Ro-Ro and Ro-La services was measured as a result of the BSEC-URTA Regional Combined Transport Survey (for details, please see REP/COMB/GA07/05).

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