



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

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Istanbul, 5 May 2008

THIRTEENTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Holiday Inn Vinogradovo, Moscow – RUSSIAN FEDERATION
Wednesday, 4 June 2008, at 10:00 hrs

ACTIVITY REPORT

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

Since the Twelfth Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly held in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 2 November 2007, 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 2008 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)

a) Work with national associations in order to determine authorities in at least 5 BSEC Member States to sign the BSEC Agreement on Simplification Visa Procedures for Professional Lorry Drivers Nationals of the BSEC Member States in order to enter into force as soon as possible.

BSEC-URTA Member Associations in the eight BSEC countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine, addressed, by a letter campaign and direct visits, their national authorities competent for visa, in order to assure the political decision for becoming signatory to this BSEC Agreement.

The Seventeenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States, on 24 October 2007, in Ankara, envisaged the signing of the Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Professional Drivers Nationals of the BSEC Member States at the next Meeting of the Council to be held in Kyiv on 17 April 2008.

The Eighteenth Meeting of the Council in Kiev on 17 April 2008 took note of the information concerning delays in the process of completing the national internal procedures in the BSEC Member States wishing to sign the Agreement and decided to postpone the issue for its next meeting to be held under the Albanian Chairmanship of the BSEC Organization: 1 May-31 October 2008.

The BSEC-URTA expressed regrets for this unexpected delay after 6 years of meetings related to the visa issue, as well as the hope that in Tirana, during the next Council Meeting, the Agreement will become a legal document giving the professional drivers in the region, an appropriate and deserved political recognition.

b) Coordinate with the IRU lobbying vis-a-vis Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the above mentioned countries for becoming contracting parties to the Agreement.

On the occasion of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Moscow, on 4 June 2008, having the opportunity of the participation of the IRU Secretary General, the meeting could request IRU to start another letter campaign addressing the BSEC Ministers of Foreign Affairs in support for the Visa Agreement

c) Call on the Steering Committee for the Implementation of the MoU on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods to address the contracting parties with the request for signature of the Agreement bearing in mind that facilitation of visas for drivers is part of the MoU and objective of the Timetable for its implementation.

The International Secretariat participated in the BSEC events organized under the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the BSEC Organization:

- Meeting of the Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport, Istanbul, 12.02.2008.
- Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Transport, Istanbul, 14-15 February 2008
- Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Transport, Odessa on 10 April 2008.

BSEC-URTA representatives, in the abovementioned meetings, stressed the existing problems in granting visas for professional drivers and thus the high importance of the Agreement for the road transport industry in the region and asked the representatives of ministries to call upon the related national authorities to accelerate the internal procedures for its signature.

d) Work with BSEC PERMIS in order to have a position of the European Commission regarding the compatibility of the Agreement with the EU Aquis and regarding the possibility that Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania to join the Agreement.

The BSEC Secretary General informed the International Secretariat that he will address the European Commission which has Observer Status to the BSEC Organization with the request to define its position on the compatibility of the Agreement with the EU aquis.

e) Work with the IRU and the BSEC PERMIS for creation of a BSEC data base for professional drivers having as model the Schengen system, to be used by national authorities for speeding up the visa issuance procedures.

The IRU and BSEC-URTA representatives had an informal meeting on road transport issues with the BSEC Secretary General and BSEC Executive Manager for Transport, in Istanbul on 7 February 2008. On that occasion, the IRU informed the PERMIS, on readiness to support the creation of a BSEC database for professional drivers, similar the Schengen system, to be used by national authorities for speeding up the visa issuance procedures. The proposal was welcomed by the BSEC Secretary General, who suggested that this idea should be launched after the Visa Agreement will be signed.

2. INTERNATIONAL VEHICLE WEIGHT CERTIFICATE (IVWC)

a) Follow up the entry into force of the new Annex 8 to the UNECE 1982 International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (20th May 2008).

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting in his capacity as depositary, has issued a Depositary Notification on 25 February 2008, informing that by 20 February 2008 no objections to the new Annex 8 (annex on Road Transport) to the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982, "Harmonization" Convention have been communicated to the Secretary-General. Consequently, the new Annex 8 to the Convention will enter into force on 20 May 2008.

b) Bring the experience and results of CIS countries which implement at this stage a regional INVW to the Steering Committee for the Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC region in order not to duplicate the work and adopt the positive results for the implementation of the IVWC as part of Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention.

On 12 February 2008, the Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport, met in Istanbul. The representative of AITA in the BSEC-URTA delegation, made a comprehensive presentation on the IVWC developed by the CIS Countries. The Steering Committee noted that the implementation of the IVWC as part of Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention should follow the existing experience and positive results gained by the CIS Countries since the two certificates are same in technical point of view.

c) Lobby for organization of a BSEC round table meeting with the participation of the Steering Committee Members, UNECE representative, national authorities in each country responsible with weights and dimensions of trucks' control and the road transport industry, to consider implementation of the IVWC in accordance with new Annex 8 of the UNECE 1982 Harmonization Convention

The Thirteenth Meeting of BSEC General Assembly in Moscow, on 4 June 2008, which brings together high representatives from the UNECE, IRU, BSEC PERMIS and BSEC-URTA, could decide to address the current Albanian Chairmanship of BSEC Organization with the proposal to include in its calendar a BSEC round table to consider the implementation of the new Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention, entered into force on 20 May 2008.

3. SIMPLIFICATION OF CUSTOMS FORMALITIES

a) Lobby for accession and implementation by the BSEC Member States of UNECE conventions and international agreements related to road transport.

During any international or regional meeting in relation with transport or customs matters, the BSEC-URTA representatives systematically emphasize the importance of acceding to and implementing the UNECE Conventions and International Agreements.

Since last meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Sofia on 2 November 2007, the following BSEC Member States joined the corresponding UNECE Conventions and International Agreements:

Moldova	Agreement on International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs (ATP), 1970	19.09.2007
Greece	Protocol to the European Agreement on the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1993	21.11.2007
Moldova	Protocol to the European Agreement on the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), 1993	5.12.2007
Moldova	Periodical Technical Inspections of Vehicles in use, 1997	5.12.2007

With these new accessions, the latest situation in conjunction with the number of conventions acceded by each BSEC country is as follows:

UNECE ROAD TRANSPORT RELATED AGREEMENTS / CONVENTIONS
Status at 8 April 2008

	Nr.	UNECE Convent. / Road Transport	BSEC Member States											
			AL	AR	AZ	BG	GE	GR	MD	RO	RUS	SRB	TR	UA
Infrastr	1	Construction Traffic Arteries 1950				X		X		X		X	X	
	2	E Road Network 1975	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	3	E Comb. Tr. Network, 1991				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Road traffic and road safety	4	Road Traffic, 1949	X			X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
	5	Road Traffic, 1968	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	6	Prot. Road Signs & Signals, 1949				X		X		X	X	X		
	7	Road Signs & Signals, 1968	X			X	X	X		X	X			X
	8	Suppl. 1968 Conv. Road Traffic, 1971	X			X		X	X	X	X	X		X
	9	Suppl. 1968 Road Signs & Signals, 1971	X			X	X	X		X	X	X		X
	10	Weights and Dimens, 1950						X				X		
	11	Suppl. 1949 Conv & Protocol, 1950						X				X		
	12	Road Markings, 1957	X			X				X		X	X	
	13	Protocol Road Markings 1973	X			X	X	X			X	X		X
	14	Issue & Validity of Driving Permits				X						X		
Vehic	15	Vehicle Regulations, 1958			X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
	16	Tech. Inspect. Vehicles, 1997	X			X	X	X	X	X	X			X
	17	Global Vehicles Reg., 1998			X				X	X	X		X	
Other legal instruments	18	Work of Crews Intl. Road Transport(AETR) 1970	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	19	Tax Priv Road Vehic, 1956							X	X		X		
	20	Taxation Road Passengers Vehicles, 1956								X		X		
	21	Tax Road Goods Vehic 1956								X		X		
	22	Contract Road Goods Transport(CMR) 1956	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	23	Protocol to CMR, 1978	X	X			X	X	X	X			X	X
	24	Contract Passengers and Lugg. Road Trans(CVR)1973										X		X
	25	Protocol to CVR, 1978										X		
26	Econ. Reg. Road Trans1954						X							
Border crossing facilitation	27	Touring Facilities, 1954				X		X		X	X	X	X	
	28	Protocol Touring Facilities, 54				X		X		X	X	X	X	
	29	Temp. Imp. Priv. Road Vehicles, 1954	X			X				X	X	X	X	
	30	TIR Convention, 1959	X			X		X		X	X		X	
	31	TIR Convention, 1975	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	32	Temp. Imp. Commercial. Vehicles, 1956			X	X		X		X		X	X	
	33	Customs Cont Conv, 1956				X		X		X		X		
	34	Customs Cont Conv, 1972		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
	35	Customs Treatment Pallets, 1960				X				X		X	X	
	36	Harmonization Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
37	Customs Pool Cont, 1994													
Danger. goods	38	Dang. Goods by Roads(ADR) 1957	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
	39	Protocol to ADR, 1993	X			X		X	X	X	X			
	40	Liab.Dang.Goods-CRTD1989												
	41	Perishab.Foodstuff-ATP,1970	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
BSEC Member State participation to UNECE Road Transport related Conventions			19	8	12	29	14	29	14	32	24	32	19	17

b) Participate in the work of the BSEC Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Customs, present the findings and conclusions of the BSRH Caravan and propose related measures for improvement.

Findings and conclusions of the BSRH Caravan and related measures for improvement have been presented to the Ad Hoc Group of Experts and will be presented to the newly set up BSEC Working Group on Customs.

c) Work with the BSEC PERMIS for organizing a BSEC Conference on Border Crossing Cooperation with the participation of the national relevant authorities: Customs, Border Police, Ministry of Transport and road transport industry.

No action has been taken, yet.

4. HARMONIZATION OF CHARGES

a) Set up proposals for design of a regional data base on road user charges, tolls and other charges and fees applicable to hauliers in the BSEC region and present them to the PERMIS till 15th November 2007 to be distributed to the Members of the Steering Committee for the Implementation of the MoU on Facilitation of Road Transport before their meeting to be held in December 07 January 08.

Proposals were presented to the Turkish Chairmanship of the Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport in Ankara, on 7 February 2008

b) Work with the Steering Committee to unify charges and simplify collecting procedures following existing experience of the EU on this issue.

The 2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee decided on 12 February 2008 to provide the Chairmanship of the Steering Committee with data on the existing charging policies in their countries in accordance with a sample matrix-table. The Steering Committee would consider the combined data and the issue about establishment of an Ad Hoc Group of Experts for elaboration of proposals or recommendations on harmonization of the charging policies at its next Meeting.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECMT QUOTA SYSTEM IN THE BSEC REGION

a) Work with IRU and BSEC PERMIS for financing a study to be realized by the Industry's experts to identify a set of relevant technical and environmental criteria, similar to other practices in Europe, which should be considered as basis for a regional quota system of permits.

The 1st Meeting of the Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport agreed that a technical study by the industry experts is needed in order to answer how could be set up such a quota system. The BSEC Secretary General having the IRU commitment for financial support has commissioned the NEA in Netherlands to prepare such study.

The Hellenic Republic delegation, in the 2nd Meeting of the Steering Committee in Istanbul on 12 February 2008, opposed not only the study but also the idea of a regional quota system.

In Odessa, on 10 April 2008, on the occasion of the Meeting of BSEC Ministers of Transport, the IRU and BSEC-URTA representatives had talks with the Greek delegation, and with the support of BSEC Secretary General, the Greek Delegation agreed to unblock the planned study if, it will contain other aspects of border crossing facilitation.

The Turkish Chairmanship of the Steering Committee agreed to convene a high level public-private round table meeting as soon as, the NEA study is available.

This idea is also supported by the Albanian Chairmanship-in-office of the BSEC Organization.

b) Coordinate efforts of the BSEC-URTA Member Associations in order to ensure that their national authorities adopt a common supportive position regarding the future of the BSEC Quota System and its distribution criteria.

The NEA Study will be disseminated to the members of the Steering Committee and to the BSEC-URTA Member Associations. The International Secretariat will launch a letter campaign addressed to the Ministries of Transport and National Associations in order to ensure a common supportive position.

IRU-BSEC INTERACTION:

a) Contribute to implementation of the MoU between the BSEC Organization and the IRU, which was signed in Sochi, on 27 September 2006.

The IRU-BSEC interaction is developing, gradually and to the full satisfaction of the BSEC-URTA since the last meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly. In this context, the BSEC-URTA President and Secretariat officials, took part in various IRU-BSEC meetings in Geneva and Istanbul, regularly.

b) Coordinate participation of BSEC Secretary General in the IRU Congress in Istanbul on 15-17 May 2008.

The BSEC Secretary General was invited to participate in the IRU Congress. But due to his conflicting other official commitments, the BSEC was represented at the Congress by the BSEC Executive Manager for Transport.

GOOD EXAMPLES:

1. ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

a) Encourage the host Associations to present about their organizational structure, operations, services and activities as well as their best practices on the occasion of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly meetings.

The practice is maintained, systematically, on the occasion of each meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

2. COMPANY PRACTICES

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

Since the 12 BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Sofia on 2 November 2008, no action has been taken in this regard.

b) Encourage the host Associations to allow representatives of their member companies with good examples to present themselves on the occasion of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly meetings.

The practice is maintained, systematically, on the occasion of each meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION:

1. 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 transport and may create benefits for the interested Member Associations or their members, if awarded.

Since the 12 BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Sofia on 2 November 2008, no action has been taken in this regard.

2. BSEC-URTA WEB PORTAL

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

The web portal is being kept updated.

b) Publish an electronic transport and logistics guide, including a directory of transport operators and service providers in the BSEC region, by compiling the information made available by the Member Associations and the information obtained from various other sources.

No new action has been taken under this matter.

3. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STATISTICS

a) Issue two updated versions of the BSEC-URTA Regional Outlook Report according to the information provided by the Member Associations and the information obtained from various other sources.

The practice is continued, systematically, by release of the semi-annual updated versions.

LOBBYING AND PROMOTION:

1. COOPERATION BETWEEN TRANSPORT RELATED BSEC NGOS

a) Implement the MoU signed in Antalya on the 24 November 2006 by the BSEC-URTA and the transport related BSEC NGOs: BINSAs, BRASS and BASPA. Follow up the already established work plan and organize a Presidential meeting with the participation of the BSEC Secretary General, in Istanbul in November/December 2007 on the occasion of the Meeting of the Steering Committee for the MoU on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the Black Sea region.

On the occasion of the Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Transport, in Odessa on 10 April 2008, BSEC-URTA President met representatives of the BSEC NGOs and exchanged views on a possible meeting at Presidential level on the occasion of the Seventh International Conference "Inter-Transport to be held in Odessa on 12 June 2008.

b) Encourage establishment of new BSEC NGOs.

No new action has been taken, yet.

2 COOPERATION WITH BSEC PERMIS AND BSEC BC

a) Organize mutual working visits and debriefings on activities and policy priorities of the BSEC-URTA.

BSEC-URTA International Secretariat visited the BSEC PERMIS on various occasions for coordination and informative purposes since the last meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

COMBINED TRANSPORTATION:

1. IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

a) Together with BASPA, BINSAs and BRASS present a Joint Project Application on bottlenecks of RO-RO services in BSEC region and improvement of their quality from user's perspective to the Meeting of the Steering Committee for Implementation of the BSEC MoU on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the Black Sea region in order to speed up the consideration of the application by the BSEC Working Group on Transport to be held under the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the BSEC Organization.

The Joint Project Application was not realized because the low level of interest of the BSEC NGOs in realization of the Project. However, the BSEC MoU on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea in the Black Sea region tackles issues related to improvement of port facilities and services.

Professional Training:

1. BSEC-URTA SURVEY ON PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

a.) Organize a BSEC-URTA Survey about professional training services and educational infrastructure provided by the BSEC-URTA Member Associations to national industry.

No new action has been taken, yet.

2. MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF CPC CERTIFICATES AND DIPLOMAS

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

BSEC has not held any meeting on this subject in 2007, yet.

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