

SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Hotel Radisson BLU Iveria, Tbilisi – GEORGIA
Tuesday, 22 June 2010, at 10:00 hrs

ACTIVITY REPORT

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

Since the Sixteenth Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 04 November 2009, 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 for 2010 and its working program is given below by priorities set out by the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

The BSEC-URTA Management Council identified the followings as short term priorities for 2010:-

- Gradual liberalisation of bilateral and transit road transport,
- Simplification of visa procedures for professional drivers,
- Creation of the international vehicle weight certificate.

In compliance with this decision, the BSEC-URTA activities on these short term priorities are presented in separate documents as mentioned below.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Facilitation

1. GRADUAL LIBERALIZATION OF BILATERAL AND TRANSIT ROAD TRANSPORT

[SHORT TERM PRIORITY]

- a. *Support the pilot implementation of the BSEC Permit in 2010 in cooperation with the BSEC-URTA Member Associations, the Permanent International Secretariat of the BSEC Organization (BSEC PERMIS), and the Chairmanship of the Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods (SC.F) as well as the IRU.*
- b. *Take note of any bottlenecks in usage of the BSEC Permit in 2010 and assist the BSEC PERMIS to make a detailed statistical analysis for consideration of the SC.F, which will make a final decision in the end of 2010 to continue or discontinue the BSEC Permit in the future.*
- c. *Participate and contribute to the work of the newly created Ad Hoc Project Group on creation of a regional license system similar in nature with the ECMT License, which is composed of representatives of Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Serbia and Turkey.*

[For items (a) and (b), read Document no.: REP/GA17/PERMIT/10 and for item (c), read Document no.: REP/GA17/LICENSE/10].

2. SIMPLIFICATION OF VISA PROCEDURES FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS

[SHORT TERM PRIORITY]

- a. *Cooperate with the BSEC-URTA Member Associations in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Serbia and Ukraine as a priority in order to have their respectful countries join the BSEC Agreement on Simplification of Visa Procedures for Professional Lorry Drivers Nationals of the BSEC Member States, which was signed by Albania, Armenia, Moldova and Turkey in Tirana, on 23 October 2008.*
- b. *Work together with the BSEC-URTA Member Associations in Albania, Armenia and Moldova, which are current signatories to the abovementioned Agreement, in order to make sure that the internal ratification procedures in these countries of the said agreement are completed as soon as possible.*

[For items (a) and (b), read Document no.: REP/GA17/BVPD/10].

- c. *Subject to successful results under aforementioned items, work together with the BSEC PERMIS and the IRU in order to plan and prepare as appropriate, the possible implementation phase of this Agreement upon its entry into force.*

No action was taken, yet, due to lack of progress on preceding items (a) and (b).

- d. *Search for a common strategy with the BSEC PERMIS and the IRU in order to obtain support of the European Commission for joining of the BSEC Member States, which are also the EU Members, in this Agreement.*

No action will be taken under this item until entry into force of this Agreement with the joining of majority of the non-EU BSEC Member States.

3. INTERNATIONAL VEHICLE WEIGHT CERTIFICATE (IVWC)

[SHORT TERM PRIORITY]

- a. *Encourage and support the BSEC, the IRU and the UNECE activities, which aim implementation of the new Annex 8 to the International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 in the BSEC region.*
- b. *Emphasize the importance of quick implementation of this important facilitation tool during the meetings of the competent BSEC Organs: Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods (SC.F), Working Group on Transport (WG.T), Working Group on Customs (WG.C) and Meeting of the Ministers of Transport.*

- c. *Work with the BSEC PERMIS and the SC.F Chairmanship in order to identify a short term Plan of Action to ensure progress in this connection.*

[For items (a), (b) and (c), read Document no.: REP/GA17/IVWC/10].

4. SIMPLIFICATION OF CUSTOMS FORMALITIES

- a. *Participate in the work of the WG.C.*

The BSEC Working Group on Customs held its last meeting in Istanbul on 6-7 April 2010.

The Working Group discussed the following issues:

- Establishing a mechanism of exchange of preliminary information among the Customs Administrations of the interested BSEC Member States,
- Proposal of the Republic of Turkey to establish a project team consisting of experts from the interested Customs Administrations for determining the bottlenecks in border crossings along the BSEC region by using the existing WCO and UN methods including border waiting times analysis,
- Interest of the European Commission to participate in the activities of this Working Group.

The Working Group will continue its considerations on the following subjects at its next meeting to be announced by the Hellenic Chairmanship-in-office of the BSEC Organization from 1 June to 31 December 2010.

The BSEC-URTA International Secretariat was unable to attend in this meeting due to conflicting dates with other engagements.

- b. *Promote during the meetings of the competent BSEC bodies, the UNECE conventions on road transport and the WCO international agreements on development of standards and technical support for the harmonization of procedures governing the movement of people and goods.*

The BSEC-URTA representatives emphasised the global facilitation instruments during their interventions and contributions in the following BSEC meetings since the last meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly:-

- Meeting of the BSEC Ministers of Transport, Sofia, 15 April 2010
(Please read the Sofia Declaration in Annex – in English language only).
- 22nd Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Sofia, 28 May 2010.

Status of BSEC Contracting Parties to the UNECE transport conventions and agreements are given in the Table below.

- c. *Request the BSEC PERMIS to design and publish an electronic webpage on information about customs procedures and charges in the BSEC Member States with respect to international road transport of goods, and search how the IRU could assist the BSEC PERMIS in this connection.*

No action was taken under this matter, yet.

5. HARMONIZATION OF CHARGES

- a. *This subject is unfortunately not attached a priority by the BSEC Member States, yet. However, cooperate with the SC.F Chairmanship to keep this subject on the agenda of the future meetings of the SC.F, which could, at least, decide for conduct of a comparative regional analysis of the actual charges in the BSEC region as a first step.*

Since the 16th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Geneva on 4 November 2009, the BSEC Steering Committee for Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods did not hold a meeting, yet. The Committee, which is led by Mr. Damir Ledecan from the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Serbia, is expected to convene in the third quarter of 2010.

UNECE ROAD TRANSPORT RELATED AGREEMENTS / CONVENTIONS

Status as of 01 May 2010

	Nr.	UNECE Convent. / Road Transport	BSEC Member States												
			AL	AR	AZ	BG	GE	GR	MD	RO	RU	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	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 Markings1973	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		X			
	20	Taxation Road Passengers Vehicles, 1956	X							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	X		
	36	Harmonization Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982	X	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	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			23	8	12	29	14	29	15	32	24	32	20	17	

6. BSEC-URTA FACILITATION PROGRAM

- a. *Support regional projects and activities involving three or more BSEC-URTA Member Associations or BSEC Member Countries, in principle, the BSEC, the IRU and interested leading international and regional organizations, which are aimed at promoting or supporting the abovementioned BSEC-URTA objectives as regards the facilitation of road transport in the BSEC region.*

[For item, read Document no.: DOC/GA17/ECO Licence/10].

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: IRU-BSEC Interaction:

1. IRU-BSEC COOPERATION

- a. *Contribute to implementation of the MoU between the BSEC Organization and the IRU if and when possible.*

Bearing in mind the excellent level of cooperation between the BSEC and IRU, the International Secretariat did not feel the necessity to take any new action on this matter, yet.

- b. *Coordinate participation of the BSEC Secretary General or his delegates to take part in the events organised by the IRU and BSEC-URTA and vice versa.*

The Secretary General of the BSEC Organization Ambassador Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos attended the 16th Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Geneva on 4th November 2009.

On the occasion of entry into force of the BSEC Permit on 16 February 2010, the BSEC Secretary General also participated in a special Ceremony organized in Istanbul, Turkey by the BSEC-URTA together with its Member Associations TOBB and UND.

The BSEC Secretary General also sent a special message to the First Euro-Asian Bus and Coach Forum organised by the IRU in Istanbul on 25 March 2010, expressing the continuous support of the BSEC to facilitating road transport of goods and passengers in the BSEC region.

2. IRU-BSEC BUSINESS COUNCIL COOPERATION

- a. *Encourage participation of the new Secretary General of the BSEC Business Council (BSEC BC) in the future meetings and events of the BSEC-URTA and if possible, the IRU, on a reciprocal basis.*

BSEC BC is invited to the BSEC-URTA events, systematically.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Re-opening of the Silk Road:

1. BSEC-URTA SILK ROAD PROGRAM

- a. *Support regional projects and activities involving three or more BSEC-URTA Member Associations or BSEC Member Countries, in principle, the BSEC, the IRU and interested leading international and regional organizations, which are aimed at promoting or supporting the re-opening of the historic Silk Road across the BSEC region.*

The BSEC-URTA has been invited by the IRU to support organisation of the ECO-IRU Silk Road Truck Caravan, which will start in Islamabad, Pakistan on 14 August 2010.

This Project will be realised through the territories of 10 ECO Member States including Azerbaijan (ABADA) and Turkey (TOBB and UND).

[For more details please read Document no.: DOC/GA17/CARAVAN/10].

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Professional Training:

1. IMPROVEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING SERVICES

- a. *Make links on the BSEC-URTA web portal of the training instituted operated by the BSEC-URTA Member Associations under accreditation of the IRU Academy and publish their news as provided by the interested Associations.*

No new action was taken under this matter.

- b. *Assist interested Member Associations to develop or diversify professional training services according to experiences of other training institutes in the BSEC region, which are accredited by the IRU Academy.*

The International Secretariat has not received any formal applications or requests from the Member Associations on this subject since the last meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly.

2. COOPERATION AT THE BSEC LEVEL

- a. *Encourage the BSEC Member States to revitalize any efforts for mutual recognition of diplomas and certificates issued for professional training of drivers and transport managers in the BSEC region, which meet international standards set for such training products and services particularly in terms of quality and content.*

No new action was taken under this matter.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Combined Transportation:

1. IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- a. *Support specific cooperation with the sister BSEC NGOs BASPA, BINSAs and BRASS, for elaboration and implementation of joint activities, studies or projects, which are aimed at developing and improving RO-RO services from the user perspective, who are the BSEC transport operators, mainly.*

During the Meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Transport in Istanbul on 24 March 2010, the Delegation of Bulgaria presented a Background Paper on "Integrated Maritime Policy in the Field of Maritime Transport, Ports, Shipbuilding and Ship-repairing in the Black Sea Basin", which was prepared by the BRASS in coordination with the BASPA and the BINSAs.

The BSEC-URTA assisted in finalisation of this Background Paper, which included certain elements to emphasise that the combined transport should be developed in the region in order to contribute to better performance of the road transport industry.

This issue will be discussed at the next meeting of the Working Group. In the meantime, the BSEC Member States were invited to exchange their views on the contents of this Background Paper and how it should be implemented.

- b. *Support entry into force and implementation of the BSEC MoU on Motorways of the Sea.*

At its last meeting in Constanta, Romania on 4-5 March 2010 the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Development of the Motorways of the Sea continued considering its draft Rules of Procedure and a specific Regulation regarding creation and functioning of a specialised Joint Permanent Technical Secretariat.

In the presence of more than one candidate country, the BSEC Member States still need to agree on the venue of this specialised Secretariat.

Operationalisation of this Joint Technical Secretariat will be an important milestone for the implementation of the BSEC MoU on Motorways of the Sea.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: Lobbying and Promotion:

1. COOPERATION BETWEEN TRANSPORT RELATED BSEC NGOs

- a. *Invite the transport related BSEC NGOs to an annual coordination meeting, which could be held in Istanbul, in principle, in the first quarter of 2010.*

During the BSEC Working Group on Transport in Istanbul on 24 March 2010, the International Secretariat exchanged views with the BSEC Transport Related NGOs to hold a coordination meeting within 2010.

The Parties still need to identify a date for such a meeting, which will be held during the Hellenic Chairmanship of the BSEC Organization between 1 June and 31 December 2010.

2. COOPERATION WITH THE BSEC PERMIS AND THE BSEC BC

- a. *Organize mutual working visits whenever necessary and make annual debriefings on activities and policy priorities of the BSEC-URTA.*

BSEC-URTA International Secretariat pays working visits to the BSEC PERMIS, regularly and when necessary.

In the beginning of the year 2010, the Secretaries General of the BSEC and the BSEC-URTA also came together in order to review and coordinate road transport activities and priorities, mutually.

3. COOPERATION WITH THE BSTDB

- b. *Make a working visit to the BSTDB Headquarters in Thessaloniki, Greece, in order to inform about the BSEC-URTA working programme and activities and to discuss opportunities for bilateral cooperation on the regional level.*

The BSTDB appointed a new President, which will assume his functions from the beginning of July 2010.

The BSEC-URTA International Secretariat plans to make a working visit to the BSTDB after the new President will have assumed his functions.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: Good Examples:

1. ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

- a. *Make an electronic BSEC-URTA Membership Catalogue indicating the organisation chart by functions, management structure, services and contact details of each BSEC-URTA Member Association and Observers.*

No action was taken under this matter, yet. However, the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat will plan this activity within the framework of the 10th Anniversary of the BSEC-URTA in 2011.

In this connection, the related design and preparatory works will be launched in the second half of 2010.

- b. *Subject to availability of sponsorship revenues, print the abovementioned Catalogue in English and Russian languages.*

Same as above.

- c. *Continue to allow 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.*

This practice continues on a systematic basis.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8: Information Sharing:

1. BSEC-URTA WEB PORTAL

- a. Work for creation of a special BSEC Road Transport Webpage in cooperation with the BSEC PERMIS and the IRU.*

The International Secretariat developed a new section in the BSEC-URTA webpage concerning the creation and implementation of the BSEC Permit at regional level.

This constitutes the first step of a growing special section on road transport in the BSEC region.

The International Secretariat will also launch a technical work to change the design of the BSEC-URTA web portal in the second half of 2010, which will be promoting the approaching 10th anniversary of the BSEC-URTA.

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

The BSEC-URTA official documents are systematically published on the portal.

The regional road transport news and developments are announced if they are informed by the Member Associations or following the major BSEC events and meetings.

However, the International Secretariat expects more contributions from the BSEC-URTA Member Associations in this connection.

2. REGIONAL TRANSPORT STATISTICS

- a. Update the BSEC-URTA Regional Outlook Report according to information provided by the Member Associations about industry performance and market developments as well as any other information obtained from various other sources particularly with respect to foreign trade and border crossing waiting times.*

The International Secretariat updates the Regional Outlook Report every six months.

The updated reports are presented to the meetings of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly and published on the BSEC-URTA web portal, regularly.

This report is produced with the support of the Member Associations and increasingly becomes meaningful because it includes continuous time series and index analysis of the annual trade and road transport statistics in the BSEC region since 2005.

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