

DOC/GA18/CARAVAN/10

Istanbul, 14 October 2010

EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Room B, Centre de Conférences Varembe (CCV)
Geneva - Switzerland
Wednesday, 03 November 2010, at 15:00 hrs

ECO-IRU SILK ROAD TRUCK CARAVAN PROJECT

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

I. BACKGROUND

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), an intergovernmental regional organization, and the IRU organised the ECO-IRU Silk Road Truck Caravan between 22 September and 23 October 2010.

Upon request of the IRU, the Seventeenth Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly mandated the International Secretariat to support the organisation of this Project, which also involves (ABADA) Azerbaijan and (TOBB, UND) Turkey, being members of both the BSEC and the ECO Organisations.

The BSEC-URTA Deputy Secretary General Mr. Adrian Albu was assigned by the IRU as the Caravan Leader, who accompanied the Truck Caravan together with a representative of the ECO Secretariat.

II. THE ECO-IRU SILK ROAD TRUCK CARAVAN PROJECT

The ECO-IRU Silk Road Truck Caravan created a valuable momentum for the road transport industry in order to promote the road transport in the ECO region, which is a strategic land bridge between Asia and Europe.

On the occasion of the side contacts undertaken by the IRU with the national authorities, considerable progress was maintained with respect to joining of Pakistan in the TIR Convention and for the re-activation of the TIR System in Afghanistan.

The IRU signed a special MoU with the Government of Afghanistan for re-activation of the TIR system and development of road transport in Afghanistan on the occasion of a special ceremony held in Kabul on 18 October 2010.

Inspired by the successful Black Sea Ring Highway Caravan in 2007, the ECO-IRU Silk Road Truck Caravan took part in high level national ceremonies attended by the Ministers of Transport in every country. The truck drivers visited educational facilities and distributed caravan souvenirs to the ECO children throughout the journey.

In parallel, the Caravan Leaders from the ECO and the IRU collected important data about the road transport conditions in the ECO region, which will be analysed by experts in the future.

The Caravan findings and results of this scientific analysis will be presented to the competent ECO organs in order to assist in setting the right priorities to develop and further facilitate road transport in the ECO region.

III. RESULTS FOR THE BSEC-URTA

The involvement of the BSEC-URTA in the ECO-IRU Silk Road Truck Caravan Project, among others, contributed to fulfilment of the BSEC-URTA strategic objective aimed at supporting the revitalisation of the Silk Road.

Inspired by the Black Sea Ring Highway Caravan 2007, the ECO-IRU Silk Road Truck Caravan also promoted the BSEC and the BSEC-URTA in the ECO region.

Future analysis of the conclusions of this Caravan may also be expected to provide the ECO governments with reliable information with a view to facilitating road transport from Asia via the BSEC region to Europe.

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