



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

MIN/GA09/06

Istanbul, 12 October 2006

NINTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES

Istanbul - TURKEY

Thursday, 11 May 2006, at 10:00 hrs

I. OPENING CEREMONY

Mr. Cetin Nuhoglu, the BSEC-URTA Honorary President and the President of host Association UND, extended his greetings and expressed the pleasure to host the 9th General Assembly of BSEC-URTA. Mr. Nuhoglu talked about the WTO statistics on trade flows from Europe and Asia to the CIS countries and the increased volume of world trade. He noted the important role of the Black Sea Region, which connects Asia and the Europe. He stressed that it was the right step of the Road Transport Associations in the Black Sea Region to unite efforts and to create the Union. It is reported that the trade volume of the Black Sea Region have increased by 30 % last year and, as the goods move physically, transport and logistics play an integral role in the global economy. Furthermore, Mr. Nuhoglu listed the advantages of road transport and emphasized that they are challenged by the lack of adequate infrastructure. He noticed that the road transport is not powerful enough in the BSEC Region as it is in Turkey, therefore he defined the basic goals of the road transport organizations: to inform the government and society about importance of road transport, to achieve elimination of non-tariff barriers, to improve transport corridors throughout the BSEC region. He hoped for the IRU's support for attainment of these goals. He also informed about plans of the UND and the TOBB in relation with re-opening of the historic Silk Road. He mentioned about holding the 31st IRU World Congress in Istanbul in 2008 together with the TOBB and other IRU Members in Turkey representing the passenger transport industry.

Mr. Ilir Mataj, the President of the BSEC-URTA, the President of the ANALTIR, in his opening speech welcomed participants of the meeting in Istanbul, Turkey and thanked UND for the excellent organization and to the BSEC PERMIS for opening its premises to the meeting with warm hospitality. He welcomed the guests of honor and appreciated their participation. Mr. Mataj referred to the Report on Development of the Transport Infrastructure in the BSEC Region, which estimates that the transport between Europe and Asia along the Black Sea region will increase by 35 - 40 % by 2010. This estimation means that the role of road transport will continue to increase, dramatically, in the region in the next years. Despite this, the road transport in region is still hampered, severely, by artificial barriers like: bureaucratic customs procedures, long and costly procedures for driver visas, corruption, etc. The industry is concerned that the increasing demand for road transport services in the region will aggravate the existing barriers unless the national governments, the BSEC as well as the international organizations such as the UNECE, European Commission, ECMT and IRU will be helpful. Mr. Mataj proudly noted that the BSEC-URTA has already good relations with the mentioned international organizations.

Ambassador Murat Sungar, Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC Organization, thanked for invitation and noticed the importance of the BSEC-URTA's work to the BSEC activities in the field of transportation. Continuous development and innovation in the area of transport are essential to cope with the increase in economic production especially in the dynamic economies of Central and Eastern Europe, where growth rates are high and the demand on the transport system is pressing. He mentioned the latest meetings of the BSEC Transport Ministers held in Thessaloniki in January 2005 and in Bucharest in March 2006 where it was emphasized that there is need to elaborate an integrated and coordinated approach for the development of transport systems as well as to review different models of interconnections between the Trans-European Transport Network and the networks of the BSEC countries. Existing good cooperation between the BSEC and BSEC-URTA is an indication that the BSEC-URTA could contribute a lot to the preparation of the next meeting of the Ministers of Transport in Sochi on 29 September 2006 according to the programme of the current Russian BSEC Chairmanship. Finally, he said that the BSEC will appreciate any input to the discussions on the implementation of the MoU on Facilitation of the Road Transport of Goods in the Region, construction of the Black Sea Ring Highway as well as other issues of importance included in the agenda of this important BSEC event.

FIRST SESSION

The Chairman opened the first session.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda of the Meeting (DOC/GA09/AG/06) was adopted unanimously.

III. ADOPTION OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chairman briefed on the Order of Business.

The Order of Business of the Meeting (DOC/GA09/OB/06) was adopted unanimously.

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

The Chairman invited to consider the Minutes of the 8th General Assembly.

Minutes of the Eighth Meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly (MIN/GA08/05) were adopted unanimously.

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V. HOST COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

The Chairman passed to the fifth item of the Agenda and invited Mr. Kemaloglu to talk about road transport system in Turkey.

Mr. Nesip Kemaloglu, Regional Director for Transport in Istanbul, addressing to the guests has informed that road transport is in the lead position among all transport modes in Turkey. As a main objective of the Ministry of Transport concerning the road transport industry, he has named the elimination of barriers and liberalization. Future forecasts confirm that the road transport will continue growing. Mr. Kemaloglu has said that the Turkish Government achieved the most significant progress in the whole transport industry with legal regulating of the road transport including enactment of a law on road transport and enforcement of road transport regulations and the regulations on professional competency training for the road transport industry, the regulations on the services offered by coaches, regulations on circulating capital undertakings and the regulations on vehicle technical inspection stations, their operations and the practice of vehicle inspections. Mr. Kemaloglu informed that this legislative work still continues. He concluded that their objective is to create a competitive, liberal and high quality international road transport industry with a high market share.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Kemaloglu for his presentation and invited Ms. Mine Kaya to present the UND's management system.

Ms. Mine Kaya, Vice-Chairman of the UND Executive Committee, expressed her sincere pleasure to welcome the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Istanbul. She started the presentation by giving general information on the Turkish international road transport industry and noted the constant growth of share of the industry among all transport modes in Turkey. Subsequently, Ms. Kaya explained in details about vision and mission of the UND. She informed that the UND aims to make Turkey a logistics center and to raise the annual value added provided by the sector to the economy up to USD 45 billions by 2012. She informed about foundation and history of the UND and gave a detailed description of the UND activities and services. UND has a training center to prepare their members for global competition as well as increase their quality of services in all aspects. There is also a UND Visa Unit, which offers facilitated visas to both the transport operators and the professional drivers. UND closely cooperates with Ministry of Transport of Turkey. Finally, Ms. Kaya has mentioned UND priorities for 2006 including: elimination of impediments before the road transport sector; harmonization of border crossings; realization of single window payment system at the borders; strengthening public-private partnership; minimizing non-tariff barriers; ending corruption; simplification of visas; realization of international vehicle weight certificate; liberalization of bilateral permits; realization of special and complete transport agreements with the EU, the Arab Union, etc. She has finished the presentation expressing gladness and readiness of the UND to share their experiences and knowledge with all sister associations in the region.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Kaya for her presentation and invited the representative of the Turkish logistics company "Ekol" to make his presentation.

Mr. Cem Kumuk, Member of the Steering Committee of Ekol Logistics, Inc. thanked the host association UND for invitation and introduced his company, which is a middle sized third party logistics provider in the region. Mr. Kumuk stressed that transport is impossible without logistics. He explained about their own differing approach to transport services, which creates their competitive strength. They offer integrated transportation services together with others in the supply chain and, as a result, they don't do production and marketing but they undertake any roles related with the purchase planning, warehousing, stock management, ordering, managing affairs with the public authorities including obtaining licenses and even invoicing commercial transaction on behalf of their customers. He informed that the company has its branches in 8 cities in Turkey, 2 in Germany and 1 in Italy and plans to expand in other European countries, Russia and Ukraine. In addition to the road transportation, the company uses other transport modes, too – sea, air, rail and inter-modal. They use most upto date vehicles for road transport services, which are equipped with vehicle tracking systems. In the warehouses, the company has a very effective automation system for cargo handling and optimum and safe loading of cargo on the vehicles. Warehousing and inventory management circles are integrated as well as order management. Strategies such as cross stocking, flow through management etc. are applied. Automation targets are used in every means of the process in order to eliminate human errors, which cost very expensive. Mr. Kumuk told that their company invests in all sources of automation systems to provide very accurate order planning and loading, and demonstrated their automation system of storing and loading operations on slides. He told that, thanks to implementation of such integrated services and innovative approach, Ekol Logistics, Inc. became #1 service provider for German Metro Group worldwide. Mr. Kumuk also described their different tracking systems where information flows are handled together with physical cargo flows. In their system, information is used in an interactive way and tracking is performed on item level but not the truck level, where all shipment details and product information can be monitored in their software. He emphasized that neither the information without product nor the product without information is meaningful; whereas the transport itself without involving other segments of the logistics services has become less valuable and innovative approach is the key for success.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Kumuk for the presentation and invited participants to make comments.

Mr. Vladimir Florea, President of AITA, thanked speakers for the presentations and sharing their experience. He asked Ms. Kaya about the conditions that a company must meet to deal with international road transport in Turkey. He also requested information about the role of association as regards how these conditions are introduced and also the way they are introduced, about mechanisms of influence on tariffs and possibilities for association to influence system of permissions and its interaction with the Ministry of Transport.

Ms. Mine Kaya told that, according to the legislation introduced by the Ministry of Transport, companies should have not less than 10 trucks to work on international road transport market, as well as ensure fulfillment of some other criteria. Regarding the influence on tariffs, she informed that the UND prepares an overview of costs and tariffs and publishes on the web site. Regarding road transport permits, the UND works closely with Ministry of Transport, prepares detailed files with transport

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statistics where needs of the sector are mentioned. She also told that the UND and the Ministry of Transport usually hold joint committee meetings on this subject.

Mr. Yanis Tsozbatzoglou, SECI PRO Coordinator, asked Ms. Kaya about relations of UND with Ministry of Transport and how efficient they are.

Ms. Mine Kaya informed that, in UND, they have a special procedure to organize joint committee meetings or joint economic committee meetings with Ministry of Transport. UND has an operation department which daily monitors situation in various countries and prepares official letters to the Ministry of Transport in that regard.

Mr. Yanis Tsozbatzoglou asked whether such cooperation with Ministry of Transport can be improved.

Ms. Mine Kaya expressed her opinion that the cooperation has to be improved and it is an urgent need for the sector.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan, Secretary General of the BSEC-URTA, thanked speakers for the excellent presentations. He stressed that the reason of having such presentations is to share good examples among the BSEC-URTA Members, which may inspire others to follow the same examples and experiences. He appealed to participants not to miss the opportunity to analyze and try to benefit from experiences learned, and mentioned that all presentations are accessible from the BSEC-URTA web site.

Mr. Adrian Albu, Deputy Secretary General of the BSEC-URTA, mentioned about public-private relations between UND and other authorities for reconstruction of Gurbulak border crossing point at the Turkish border with Iran. He asked if there are any plans to continue this practice at other borders and how such an agreement was reached with government.

Ms. Mine Kaya replied that there are new projects in this regard: UND supports the reconstruction by the TOBB of certain other border gates including Habur with Iraq, Sarp with Georgia, Cilegozu with Syria, Derekoj with Bulgaria, Kapikule with Bulgaria and facilities of the Halkalı Customs Office in Istanbul, which is one of the most important customs offices in Turkey.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan expressed his opinion that there is a potential for the associations in the region to realize similar projects in other countries in the region, particularly in Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. Commercial difficulties may be overcome via cooperation with international and national financial institutions. He informed as an example that the Georgian border crossing facilities at its border with Turkey will be reconstructed by the TOBB upon granting to it of a special privilege by the Georgian Government.

Mr. Yanis Tsozbatzoglou asked if there is any data on clearance times at borders before and after reconstruction in relation with Gurbulak.

Ms. Mine Kaya replied that waiting and clearance times at borders are monitored and it is much shorter after the reconstruction.

The Chairman thanked again for presentations and comments and presented a plaque of merits to Ekol Logistics Company.

This gesture was met with applause.

VI. REPORT OF THE BSEC-URTA MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Chairman invited the BSEC-URTA Secretary General Mr. Ozkan to report about the meeting of the Management Council.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan reported that Management Council (MC) held its meeting last evening, according to the Agenda. At the meeting, President, two Vice-Presidents, Honorary President and Secretary General were present. The meeting evaluated main conclusion and the resolutions of the BSEC and BSEC related bodies during their last meetings in Bucharest in April, and it decided to draw attention of the Member Associations to the fact that the BSEC Ministers requested the Member States to inform in written the PERMIS about their readiness to sign the BSEC Visa Agreement. He stressed that it is important for every Member Association to follow up this issue at home in order to make sure that its Government sends the expected confirmation letter to the BSEC PERMIS as soon as possible. MC mandated the International Secretariat to work closer with other transport NGOs in the BSEC for improved combined transport services in the region and working together for creation of new NGOs in the BSEC region. MC evaluated the internal audit report and considered a recent letter sent by the AIRCA asking for its exemption from contribution fees for 2 years and agreed to recommend to the General Assembly to make a favorable decision in this regard. MC also considered new membership applications from Medjunarodni Transport and Ingosstrakh. Due to the fact that only IRU Active Members in the BSEC Member States can become BSEC-URTA members, it recommended to amend the BSEC-URTA Statutes in order to create an observer status and then to grant to the applicants the status of an BSEC-URTA Observer, accordingly. Mr. Ozkan also informed that UND invited to host the next meeting of the BSEC-URTA General Assembly in Antalya in autumn 2006, which will mark the 5th Anniversary of the BSEC-URTA. He informed that the MC welcomed the UND invitation and agreed to recommend to the General Assembly to decide holding its next meeting in Antalya, Turkey. Finally, he informed that the MC also studied all working documents of the General Assembly meeting and endorsed them without any amendments.

VII. BSEC-URTA REGIONAL OUTLOOK REPORT

Mrs. Evgeniya Camurcu, Administrative Officer of the BSEC-URTA, presented the BSEC-URTA Regional Outlook report for 2005 (REP/OUTLOOK/GA08/05).

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Camurcu for her report and invited participants for comments, if any.

Mr. Peter Krausz, Head of CTM of the IRU, noted that the International Secretariat made a good usage of IRU BWTO system data as an analytical tool. He informed that IRU has been seriously working on updating this system, which have the same functionality but utilization will be much easier. In the new system, there will be more flexibility to change and add border crossing points and, hopefully, it will start working by the end of 2006.

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The Chairman thanked for the comments, closed the first session and announced the lunch break.

SECOND SESSION

Mr. Haydar Özkan commented on the fact that the growth of trade among the BSEC Member States is two times higher than the world trade growth, and that total BSEC trade with the world is also growing very fast. He highlighted that the BSEC countries grow faster than the world, and therefore there is a faster increase in the region in the demand for transport services. He noted that the industry tries utmost to meet this increasing demand in the BSEC region but the global tendencies indicate that, in the future, there will be even bigger opportunities and therefore pressure on the road transport services in the region due to the trade between rising economies of the Far East and developed west economies. Therefore, he concluded that impediments in front of the road transport industry in the BSEC region, such as visa and permits, must be removed. He expressed his hope that the ECMT Representative *Mrs. Fouvez* will share such opinions on these matters. He invited *Mr. Albu* to start the discussions on the next item of the Agenda.

VIII. FUTURE PAN-EUROPEAN ROAD TRANSPORT MARKET AND THE ROLE OF THE ECMT QUOTA SYSTEM

Mr. Adrian Albu underlined the good cooperation between the ECMT, IRU and BSEC-URTA. In his presentation he demonstrated data on performance of the industry, the ECMT multilateral quota for 2005 and its expected increase in 2006, statistics about truck journeys in the BSEC region and other statistics. He noted that the transport operations made under bilateral permits represents a huge percentage in all BSEC transport operations, where 10 % of total trips within the BSEC region are carried out by use of an ECMT license.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan highlighted that 1 out of 10 trucks used ECMT licenses in the BSEC region during last year. He mentioned that some countries don't want to develop ECMT system anymore, for national concerns and other reasons, but also there are other countries, mainly outside the EU, which request for further expansion and increase of the quota. He recalled the potential of the BSEC countries, which can be realized if the BSEC countries can enjoy a more liberal road transport market either through increased ECMT quota or by creating a BSEC quota under the ECMT multilateral quota system among the interested BSEC Member States giving additional quota to each other on a reciprocity basis. He addressed the question to *Mrs. Fouvez* whether such an idea can be realized on technical and political grounds.

Mrs. Martine-Sophie Fouvez, Principal Administrator of the ECMT, thanked for invitation and appreciated the interest extended to the ECMT. She commented that, in the ECMT, problems began in 2004 with some of the EU countries, which, instead of having an approach to liberalization and integration of Member States, raised against it because of high competition. She told that the ECMT quota is a very flexible instrument and it has proven to be very successful in the past in liberalizing and regulating the market. As a result of discussions in the Moscow Meeting, the reform of the system was accepted, with some compromises. She informed that the decision on refining the criteria for redistribution of quota will be taken at the ministerial and deputy ministerial level in Dublin this year and the BSEC countries will be beneficiaries of this redistribution. The basic principle in the reform is to distribute quota according to actual needs. She demonstrated statistics of share of each category of vehicles over the last 5 years, which is the reason why quota for Euro 4 and Euro 5 cannot be reformed and green lorries cannot be removed. But she recognized that new technologies should be developed and promoted, and such technical criterion is the most successful one since it motivates countries to invest in new technologies. She expressed her opinion that it may be simple to introduce quota in the BSEC region, because it is a model for mutual liberalization. She assumed that since there are already territorial limits in the current quota system, it should be possible to have other territorial limitations motivated not by restriction but extension of the system. Therefore, she found the proposal a good idea, which can be feasible. But she emphasized that there is a need for a strong political will of the BSEC countries to realize this idea, which should also receive endorsement of all the ECMT countries. She stressed that the quota is a symbol of highest quality in the international road haulage and it must improve the efficiency and opening of markets. Moreover, it implies strengthening and the organization of controls and sanction, the lack of which is the main problem in the BSEC region. *Mrs. Fouvez* concluded by expressing her belief that this role of the ECMT quota system is well appreciated by the BSEC-URTA and the ECMT Secretariat will be interested to cooperate with the BSEC-URTA to improve further role of the system in the BSEC region, which, of course, would mostly depend on the BSEC countries themselves.

The Chairman thanked *Mrs. Fouvez* for her intervention. He told that the issue about the ECMT quota system is very sensible for the industry, and expressed his hope that the a closer cooperation between the BSEC-URTA and the ECMT Secretariat would be possible in the near future.

Mr. Vladimir Florea supported the idea, stressing that this issue is very important for Member Associations, and as the first step, a common framework should be drafted out of the deliberations, today. He appreciated the attempt of reforming the ECMT quota system and emphasized that without quota, mutual trade is not possible. He also stressed the necessity to develop joint actions of the BSEC-URTA Member Associations and to prepare a common position of the BSEC Member States at the related ECMT meetings to avoid setbacks in the future. He expressed his full support to any efforts of the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat to develop a multilateral quota system in the BSEC region similar in nature to the ECMT, which will require a lot of time and energy. In conclusion, he called upon the BSEC-URTA Member Associations to be more active in this matter and to develop a common proposal, which can be presented to the ECMT. He also stressed that the future is not for bilateral agreements but for multilateral systems.

Ms. Mine Kaya told that new ways have to be explored to increase the ECMT multilateral quota. She proposed to establish a new Working Party to work out a common proposal as suggested, which would be mandated to prepare the details of the proposal, referring to concrete statistics, and would supply this proposal to ECMT. In parallel, a certain work can be done in governments and ministries.

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Mr. Adrian Albu agreed with the previous speakers that some governments in the ECMT do not support the quota in the same manner as the others. Therefore, the Associations have to lobby for a common position on behalf of the BSEC Member States.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan thanked Mrs. Fouvez for her supportive views regarding the technical possibility of developing the ECMT multilateral quota system among the interested BSEC Member States.

Mrs. Martine-Sophie Fouvez confirmed that it is feasible but stressed that it may not be fast to implement. She emphasized that the idea is interesting and has to be developed further.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan called upon the Member Associations to take initiative and visit their ministries to protect development and improvement of the system. He commented that, in the future, there will be more demand for road transport along the Eurasian landmass with the re-opening of the Silk Road. He stressed that some of the BSEC Member States are or will be EU Members, which will not depend on multilateral quota system for their trade with the EU. However, these countries will benefit with double advantages if they would like to transport goods between East and West. In this context, if a country is a member of different regional groupings and initiatives, like Moldova, it will be able to better use the opportunities. In conclusion, he commented that, taken note of technical possibility of the idea to develop a regional multilateral quota system in the framework of the ECMT, the BSEC-URTA Member Associations should decide if the idea is good for them, and if so, they should decide on establishing a Working Party as proposed by some delegations, which would be mandated to elaborate on this idea, in cooperation with ECMT Secretariat.

The idea of establishing the BSEC-URTA Working Party was supported by the BSEC-URTA General Assembly, unanimously. The BSEC-URTA Working Party on Development of the ECMT Multilateral Quota System in the BSEC region was established with the participation of representatives from AITA, ARTRI, UND and AIRCU.

The Chairman noted that, due to its importance, this issue took so much time and hopefully other matters will be discussed faster. He passed to the next item on the agenda for information.

IX. COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

a) Mandatory Retro Reflective Marking of HGVs according to newly amended UNECE type approval Regulation Nr. 48

Mr. Adrian Albu gave information on introduction of retro reflective marking of heavy goods vehicles under UNECE Regulation Nr. 48 (DOC/GA09/UNECE/06). He informed that this amendment is supposed to improve the provisions but actually is a burden for the road transport industry. He stressed that the BSEC governments should have the common position and defend interests of the industry in the BSEC region. He also informed that the said amendment was already opposed by the IRU with several arguments. However, according to the UN procedure, if no objection will be sent to the UN by at least 8 Contracting Parties, it will enter into force. But if not less than 8 countries express their objection in written, the amendment can be blocked for those opposing countries.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan informed that UND was active in requesting from its national authorities to send a letter of objection to the UN while Bulgaria and Romania made firm decisions at national level not to object. He asked about the position of other countries.

Mr. Leonid Dokil, Vice-President of AIRCU, informed that Ukraine fully supports the IRU's position, and a proposal was prepared by AIRCU to the government of Ukraine. He recalled that in 2004 there was a similar problem and AIRCU contributed a lot for its solution to stop it. He stated that retro reflective marking hardly affect safety of transport. According to statistics, HGVs in Ukraine constitute only 2% of the whole number of trucks, and there is hardly any impact of the markings on such trucks. Moreover, risk of accident of the commercial international road transport vehicles is 30 times less than all transport means all over the world. Therefore, AIRCU takes all possible actions and hopes that their government will support the opposition to this regulation.

Ms. Neli Salo informed that AEBTRI has sent a letter to the Ministry of Transport informing that they oppose the introduction of such a regulation, but the Ministry answered that since there were no objections raised at the related UN Working Party, they will not object it.

Mrs. Mine Kaya informed that UND has also sent letters to two Ministers responsible for such matters, explaining about the problem but they have also replied that they haven't noted any objections at the time of decision about this subject. She expressed her opinion that the IRU and other organizations should be more active to express their objections to governments.

Mr. Vladimir Florea told that they were informed about the IRU position and AITA has prepared, on the behalf of the Ministry of Transport, a proposal, which will arrive at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs soon. He expressed his assurance that their Ministries will support the objection, however the only concern is that it is a long procedure which has to be finished in a stipulated time.

Mr. Tofiq Nurullayev, President of ABADA, told that ABADA also has submitted a letter to the Ministry of Transport with the position of the IRU, unfortunately, they have not received any formal answer, yet.

Mr. Alexander Chkheidze, President of GIRCA, informed that the situation in Georgia is same as in Azerbaijan.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan summarized that almost all BSEC-URTA Member Associations took actions in the form of a written letter to their national authorities, but the lack of any objection in the working party seems to be impediment for them to become first country to be opposed. He suggested that the BSEC-URTA also writes a letter as an international organization informing about the common concern of the industry in the region and asking to object this new regulation which will enter into force soon. The BSEC-URTA International Secretariat also will follow up any developments with high level representatives of Associations.

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The Chairman mandated the Secretariat to send such a letter to all authorities and related Member Associations to inform about the BSEC-URTA's position, and to follow the developments in every country in this context.

b) Joint ECMT-IRU Survey on Secure Truck Parking Areas

Mrs. Evgeniya Camurcu informed about the IRU-ECMT Survey on Truck Parking Areas (DOC/GA09/IRU/06).

Mr. Peter Krausz told about the intention of the IRU to update this Survey on Truck Parking Areas, which is a very well-known document. He said that last edition was published in 2003 and it is a high time to update it, taking into account the changes in time. He informed that IRU has received many positive and also negative comments regarding the content of the related forms to be filled in by the IRU Members. Some of the Members replied that they were unable to identify the level of security in a parking area while some others found the criteria listed in the questionnaire too strict. Since all criteria could not be met in many countries, *Mr. Krausz* informed that even information about parking areas which satisfy some of the compulsory criteria will be accepted. He also mentioned that the ECMT would try to check and verify the provided information by the IRU Member Associations with the Governments, which would be meeting soon. IRU has reserved a budget for this survey and is ready to cover expenses of associations to visit, control and verify parking areas, which are approved to be included in the survey.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan informed that AEBTRI, ARTRI, AIRCU have sent their answers so far. He stressed that the expenses of associations will be covered by the IRU as much as possible, and the information will be verified later by ECMT. In the light of these and with respect to importance of this publication for the road transport industry, he called upon the BSEC-URTA Member Associations to fill in the related forms and send to the IRU as soon as possible if they have not done so, yet.

c) Digital Tachograph: New EU Driving and Rest Time Rules Regulation and related amendments to the AETR Agreement

The Chairman invited *Mr. Albu* to give information about this issue.

Mr. Adrian Albu informed about new EU regulation on Driving and Rest Time Rules (DOC/GA09/AETR/06), based on the information, which was already provided by the IRU.

Mr. Peter Krausz stressed that starting from 1 May 2006 each driver has to keep on board a list for the last 2 weeks. He called upon the Associations to warn their members which travel to the EU countries. He also warned that operators in non-EU countries which are going to buy new vehicles, should not buy new digital tachograph, they better use old manual one not to be in a trouble. He also stressed that the year 2010 is not so far away and authorities have to take necessary measures from today, to train the officers and have necessary infrastructure ready.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan stressed that in order to facilitate entering into force of these new rules, the BSEC-URTA Members can organize seminars for their members – hauliers, and encourage their national authorities to start preparations. He reminded that on 28-29 September 2006 the IRU Academy organizes a special information seminar on this issue in St. Petersburg, and called upon Associations to send their training specialists and big companies to take part in that seminar.

The Chairman thanked for the comments made during consideration of this item.

X. BSEC-URTA ACTIVITY REPORT

Mr. Haydar Ozkan briefly presented the report (DOC/GA09/ACTIV/06). He stressed that the guidelines of the BSEC-URTA activities are set by the vision, mission and objectives of the BSEC-URTA. He mentioned that an annual working program is adopted by the General Assembly at every autumn session, accordingly. In this context, *Mr. Ozkan* presented important sections of the Activity Report to the consideration of the General Assembly as follows: Regarding the BSEC Visa Agreement, he informed about the last decision of the BSEC Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and appealed to the BSEC-URTA Member Associations to actively work and make sure that their governments send a letter of readiness to sign this agreement. Regarding the IVWC, the Annex 8 was adopted and will enter into force if there will be no objections. He asked the Member Associations to inform about any situations, which might prevent entering into force of this Annex 8. Regarding the accession to the UNECE Conventions, he informed that since last general assembly meeting, Ukraine acceded to the AETR, Albania joined AETR Protocol and Turkey joined 1982 Harmonization Convention. He urged the Member Associations to spend more efforts to join more conventions. He also informed that during the Romanian Chairmanship in the BSEC, the Ad Hoc Expert Group for Customs Matters was convened for the first time in February 2006. BSEC-URTA will be able to contribute to preparation of a plan of actions by the Ad Hoc Group of Experts, which would pave the way to a closer cooperation between customs authorities of BSEC Member States for simplification of border crossing procedures. Regarding the radioactivity controls at Serbian borders, Serbian authorities informed a shortened list of goods subject to radioactivity control. *Mr. Ozkan* also informed that the BSEC Ministers of Foreign Affairs approved in Bucharest in April 2006, the text of an MoU, which would be signed soon between the IRU and the BSEC. Regarding regional statistics, he noticed problems with data submission in Greece and Armenia. He called upon Member Associations to check the BSEC-URTA web site for regional information and also to provide more information with the International Secretariat about their activities. He called upon Member Associations to make use of the BSEC-URTA Outlook report, promote it to third parties and use its contents in their speeches as well as to contribute to its content. He informed about intention to improve cooperation with transport related BSEC NGOs and to organize a round table. Finally, he mentioned about the cooperation with Superfast ferries and their recent visit to the BSEC-URTA International Secretariat.

The Chairman thanked *Mr. Ozkan* for the report and announced a short coffee break.

THIRD SESSION

XI. FINANCIAL MATTERS



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The Chairman recalled that in February 2006 two elected auditors performed an internal audit of the BSEC-URTA accounts. He invited Mrs. Camurcu to brief about their main conclusions.

Mrs. Evgeniya Camurcu briefed about main conclusions of the auditors (REP/AUDIT/GA09/06).

The Audit Report on Implementation of the BSEC-URTA Budget for 2005 and the BSEC-URTA Accounts for 2005 were adopted, unanimously.

The Chairman proposed to elect new auditors for 2006.

Mr. Gia Tsipuria from GIRCA (Georgia) and Mr. Manuel Trifanciuc from ARTRI (Romania) were elected as the BSEC-URTA Auditors for 2006, unanimously.

XII. NEXT MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairman reiterated the recommendation of the Management Council to have the Tenth meeting of the General Assembly in Antalya in the end of October where the BSEC-URTA's 5th anniversary will be also celebrated. Exact date would be communicated by the Secretariat, officially.

Proposal to have the next Meeting of the General Assembly in Antalya in October 2006 was approved, unanimously.

XIII. BSEC-URTA CALENDAR FOR 2006 - Second Half

Mrs. Evgeniya Camurcu informed that the calendar (DOC/GA09/CAL/06) will be published at the BSEC-URTA web site.

XIV. DECISIONS OF THE NINTH MEETING OF BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Chairman informed that the Secretariat will prepare summary of decisions of the meeting, which will be submitted to signature of the participants, later in the evening.

XV. MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Haydar Ozkan invited to discuss several matters under this item. He reminded that there was AIRCA's application for exemption from contribution fees, which was considered by the Management Council in a favorable way. He invited General Assembly to make a decision on this matter.

Mr. Tofiq Nurullayev mentioned that AIRCA already doesn't participate in the BSEC-URTA meetings and it doesn't fulfill its obligations as a member.

Mr. Vladimir Florea said that continued membership of AIRCA in BSEC-URTA is important in political terms and proposed to approve the recommendation of the Management Council, unanimously, if not, the Chairman should put the matter to the vote.

Mr. Eduart Kasa reminded the mission of the BSEC-URTA: "solidarity is our strength". If AIRCA has objective financial difficulties, other Members should help to it.

Mr. Florinel Andrei, Secretary General of ARTRI, proposed to vote for a decision unless there is not a unanimity, yet.

Proposal of the Management council to give an exceptional exemption to the AIRCA for its contribution fee to the BSEC-URTA Budgets for 2005, 2006 and 2007 was voted and agreed by majority of votes. Result of the related vote on this decision: ABADA, against – AEBTRI, AITA, AIRCU, ANALTIR, ARTRI, GIRCA, OFAE, UND, in favour – AIRCA, ASMAP, absent.

Mr. Haydar Ozkan informed that, according to the BSEC-URTA Statutes, 2/3 of votes are enough to make a decision. Then he passed to another matter and informed about new requests for BSEC-URTA Membership from Medjunarodni Transport Association from Serbia and Montenegro, and Ingosstrakh Insurance Company from Russian Federation. However, he noted that since neither Medjunarodni Transport nor Ingosstrakh is an IRU Active Member, according to the current BSEC-URTA Statutes, any of the applicants cannot join the BSEC-URTA as a Member. Therefore, the BSEC-URTA Management Council decided to recommend to the General Assembly to change the BSEC-URTA Statutes in order to create a status of Observer. He briefed about the proposed amendments.

Proposed amendments to the BSEC-URTA Statutes to create a status of the BSEC-URTA Observer, were adopted, unanimously.

According to the amended BSEC-URTA Statutes, BSEC-URTA General Assembly decided to grant an Observer status to the Medjunarodni Transport and Ingosstrakh, unanimously.

Ms. Natalia Polunina, Director of Transport Operations Insurance Department of Ingosstrakh, expressed her pleasure for the decision made by the BSEC-URTA General Assembly and expressed her hope that this cooperation will be fruitful mutually and their services will become useful for the interested Member Associations.

XVI. CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chairman, concluding the 9th Meeting of the General Assembly, thanked the UND President Mr. Cetin Nuhoglu for his hospitality and the excellent organization. He noted that many items were discussed under the Agenda of the Meeting, and the General Assembly made important decisions. He thanked all participants for their important contributions to the lively deliberations and their support to the chair in successful conduct of the meeting.

The Chairman presented a token of thanks to Mr. Nuhoglu on behalf of the BSEC-URTA Member Associations, Observers as well as all the participants *and officially closed the Ninth Meeting of BSEC-URTA General Assembly.*

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