



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

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Istanbul, 7 October 2009

SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE BSEC-URTA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Conference Centre Varembé (CCV)
Geneva – Switzerland
Wednesday, 04 November 2009, at 15:00 hrs

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE UNECE JOINT SEMINAR ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
NEW ANNEX 8 TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON HARMONIZATION OF
FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS**

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

The International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 establishes commonly agreed requirements for coordinated border management and reduction of border formalities as well as the number and duration of all types of border controls of goods.

53 countries (including the 12 BSEC Member States) and the European Community are Contracting Parties to this Convention.

On 20 May 2008, the new Annex 8 (on road transport) to the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982, entered into force creating a legal framework for the Contracting Parties to introduce simplified control procedures and replace actual inspections and physical controls at border crossing points by a simple verification of internationally standardized documentation and certificates.

New Annex 8 covers: facilitation of visa procedures for professional drivers, standardized weighing operations and vehicle weight certificate, minimum infrastructure requirements for efficient border crossing points and provisions to monitor the border crossing performance.

Following the BSEC-URTA Resolution on the Need for Urgent Implementation of the New Annex 8 to the International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, in the BSEC Region, adopted in Moscow on 4 June 2008, which calls on the UNECE to convene the Administrative Committee to the Convention in the shortest time possible in order to assure immediate implementation of the Annex 8, and calls on the BSEC to organize in cooperation with the UNECE a Regional Seminar on the same issue, the UNECE and the BSEC organized on 18 June 2009 in Geneva, a Seminar on the Implementation of Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention.

The Seminar aimed at capacity building to ensure a more effective implementation of the Harmonization Convention and was designed for government officials responsible for customs, transport and trade policies. It was also open to representatives of transport industry.

The Seminar was attended by 80 representatives from 31 countries and 8 international organizations and was structured under 4 main topics:

1. Harmonization Convention - a tool for border crossing facilitation and coordinated border Management
2. Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention and its application at national level
3. International vehicle weight certificate and weighing procedure
4. Monitoring the border crossing performance and implementation of Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention

The Seminar included presentations by experts from various governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as by representatives of countries and the UNECE secretariat. More details can be found on the UNECE website at:

http://www.unece.org/trans/seminars/WP30_HarmonizationConvention_Jun09.htm?expandable=3

MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEMINAR

- The global economic crisis calls for an increased efficiency of transport and trade. This goal can only be achieved by removing infrastructure gaps and implementing facilitation measures.
- The International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982 is a key legal instrument in the area of border crossing facilitation and coordinated border management. Its proper implementation can not only reduce border delays and transport/trade costs, but also minimize governmental expenditures on the infrastructure and operation of border crossing points.
- The road transport industry can benefit from the facilitation measures set out in Annex 8 to the Harmonization Convention, namely:
 - Facilitation of visa procedures for professional drivers;
 - operational measures to speed-up border crossing procedures for goods, particularly for urgent consignments, such as live animals and perishable goods;
 - Harmonized technical provisions relating to faster controls of road vehicles (technical inspections) and equipment used for the transport of goods under controlled temperatures;
 - Standardized weighing operations and procedures to avoid, to the extent possible, repetitive weighing procedures at border crossings;
 - Minimum infrastructure requirements for efficient border crossing points;
 - Monitoring provisions facilitating appropriate implementation of the Annex 8 in all Contracting Parties to the Convention.
- Given the fact that the Harmonization Convention provides for a flexible legislative framework, examples of best practices and/or guidelines are essential for its harmonized application at the national level. Various speakers at the Seminar presented a number of such examples.
- Effective public-private partnership is instrumental for the implementation of border crossing facilitation measures, in particular:
 - Monitoring the situation at border crossings and sharing this information with all parties concerned;
 - Meeting the infrastructure requirements for efficient border crossing points;
 - Use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to speed up border crossing procedures.
- Monitoring is a crucial element to ensure proper implementation of the provisions of Annex 8.
- Harmonized border performance indicators and/or benchmarking are required to further improve the efficiency of border crossing points.