

BS/SC/FRTG/R(2011)1

**REPORT
OF THE FIFTH MEETING
OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE
ON FACILITATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS
IN THE BSEC REGION**

Istanbul, 12 April 2011

1. The Fifth Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region was held in Istanbul on 12 April 2011.
 2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Damir LEDENCAN, Head of International Road Transport Department, Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy of the Republic of Serbia.
 3. The representatives of the following Contracting Parties to the MoU participated in the meeting:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Georgia
 - Hellenic Republic
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Serbia
 - Republic of Turkey
 4. The representative of PABSEC participated in the Meeting in the capacity of the BSEC Related Body.
 5. The representative of the Czech Republic attended the Meeting as BSEC Observer.
 6. The representative of BSEC-URTA also attended the Meeting.
- The list of participants is attached as Annex I.
7. H. E. Ambassador CHRYSANTHOPOULOS, the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS, addressed the participants of the Meeting.

8. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed, amended and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.

STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON FACILITATION OF ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE BSEC REGION:

a/ Progressive liberalization of international road transport of goods (Article 3);

9. BSEC-URTA made a detailed presentation on the existing road transport agreements and exchange of permits in the BSEC region, as well as on the issuance of the ECMT Licenses to the BSEC Member States. It was concluded that the international road transport market in the region is strongly dominated by the bilateral permit system.

10. In the BSEC region, the bilateral transport is free of permits in 19.7 %, transit transport is free of permits in 16 %. There are no bilateral road transport agreements in 16.7 %.

11. As regards the ECMT multilateral system of permits, the BSEC region has a number of 12408 licenses for 2011, out of which 10883 are restricted in the Hellenic Republic and 7042 are restricted in the Russian Federation.

12. As far as the BSEC Permit is concerned, 6 Member States participating in the Pilot Project, namely Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Turkey expressed their willingness to extend its usage in 2011, on a voluntary basis, to bilateral transport operations, too.

13. The Steering Committee considered that efforts should be made by the Member States to speed-up the pace of liberalization both for transit and bilateral road transport.

14. The representative of the Republic of Armenia presented the situation with respect to the usage of the BSEC transit permits in Armenia and made a statement which is attached as Annex III.

15. In this respect, the Secretary General of BSEC PERMIS, Deputy Secretary General of BSEC-URTA presented the recent encouraging measures taken by the Republic of Turkey towards the solving of this issue.

b/ Accession to international agreements – harmonization of maximum permissible weights and dimensions, transportation of dangerous goods and social regulations (Article 4);

16. The Table about the State of affairs with regard to the accession by the BSEC Member States to international agreements harmonization of maximum permissible weights and dimensions, transportation of dangerous goods and social regulations is attached as Annex IV.

17. The Steering Committee took note with appreciation that that the Republic of Bulgaria and the Republic of Serbia have accessed to all transport agreement and conventions foreseen by the MoU.

18. The Delegation of the Republic of Turkey informed that the Annex 8 to the UNECE International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982) as well as the Agreement on the international Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be used for such Carriage (ATP) are passing internal legal procedures in the Parliament. The Republic of Turkey has become a Contracting Party to the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) but for domestic transport the transitional period will be used. The Provision about marking, labelling and

packaging will be applied after 1 January 2012. The provision about vehicles, trucks and other transport will be applied after 1 January 2013.

19. The Steering Committee emphasized that the entering into force of the new Annex 8 to the UNECE International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982) on 20 May 2008 should make the practice of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC) universal and it will greatly facilitate the road transport of goods in the region. Currently, 53 countries, including the 12 BSEC Member States, and the European Community are Contracting Parties to this Convention.

20. The experience of Belarus, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova in using the IVWC showed that the BSEC countries could also benefit from introducing the IVWC. In this regard, the BSEC-URTA proposed to BSEC PERMIS and UNECE to organize a Meeting of Experts for elaboration of concrete measures for starting implementation of the IVWC under Annex 8 during the Russian Federation Chairmanship in the BSEC.

c/ Charging policies - information system on charges related to road transport (Article 5);

21. The Steering Committee considered the Matrix of Road User Charges, other Charges and Fees, presented by BSEC-URTA, and noted that several taxes and fees are paid by both domestic and foreign haulers, having a negative effect on the cost of transport, which is finally paid by consumers of each country.

22. It was decided to consider the possibility of organizing a meeting of the experts from the BSEC Member States on taxation in order to start reassessing the charging policies.

d/ Facilitation of visa procedures for professional drivers (Article 6)

23. The Steering Committee analyzed the information presented by BSEC-URTA regarding facilitation of visa procedures for professional drivers nationals of the BSEC Member States.

24. The Steering Committee recalled the invitation of the Sixteenth Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States (19 April 2007) to the interested states to sign the Agreement.

REVIEW OF THE TIMETABLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOU

25. The Steering Committee discussed, amended and adopted the Timetable for the Implementation of the MoU. The Timetable, as adopted, is attached as Annex V.

26. The delegation of the Russian Federation reserved its right to submit proposals for reviewing the Timetable through official channels.

STATE OF AFFAIRS WITH REGARD TO X-RAY CONTROLS AT THE BORDERS

27. The Steering Committee took note of the information provided by the IRU and BSEC-URTA with regard to the repetitive X-ray controls of transport at borders and proposed that the issue be considered in the BSEC working groups on Customs Matters and on Health and Pharmaceutics.

ELECTION OF THE NEXT CHAIRMANSHIP IN THE STEERING COMMITTEE

28. The Steering Committee approved the Republic of Serbia for the position of the Chairmanship of the Steering Committee for the next one year period.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

29. No issues were raised under this agenda item.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

30. The delegation of the Russian Federation extended invitation for the next Meeting to be held in Krasnodar, Russian Federation. The date of the event will be communicated to the Parties through BSEC PERMIS in due course.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

31. The Steering Committee adopted the present Report for submission to the next Meeting of the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials.

Annex III to BS/SC/FRTG/R(2011)1

**Statement by the Republic of Armenia
Istanbul, 12 April 2011**

The Republic of Armenia expresses its concern about the refusing by the relevant authorities of the Republic of Turkey in issuing permission for the Armenian professional lorry drivers to enter Turkey within the BSEC transit permits project.

This approach of the Turkish authorities contravenes Articles 3 and 6 of the 'Memorandum of Understanding on Facilitation of the Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region' signed in 2002 and ratified by the esteemed Parliaments and Governments of the BSEC Member States.

The Republic of Armenia regards the next to ten years old reservation of the Republic of Turkey to the said MoU as an obstacle on the way of enhancing multilateral cooperation within BSEC and calls upon the Turkish authorities to take practical steps towards removing barriers hampering mutually beneficial 'win-win' participation in transit transportation.