



BS/SC/FRTG/R(2009)1

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

Istanbul, 11 February 2009

1. The Third Meeting of the Steering Committee on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region was held in Istanbul on 11 February 2009.
2. The Meeting was chaired by Mr. Izzet IŞIK, Head of Department, General Directorate of Land Transport, Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Turkey.
3. The representatives of the following Contracting Parties to the MoU participated in the meeting:
 - Republic of Armenia
 - Republic of Azerbaijan
 - Georgia
 - Republic of Moldova
 - Romania
 - Russian Federation
 - Republic of Serbia
 - Republic of Turkey
 - Ukraine
4. The representatives of UNECE, IRU and BSEC-URTA also attended the Meeting.
The list of participants is attached as Annex I.
5. His Excellency Ambassador CHRYSANTHOPOULOS, the Secretary General of the BSEC PERMIS, addressed the participants of the Meeting.
6. The Draft Agenda of the Meeting was discussed and adopted. The Agenda, as adopted, is attached as Annex II.
7. The Chairman presented to the participants his conclusions on the Round Table devoted to the Implementation of the MoU on Facilitation of Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region, held on 10 February 2009. The text of the conclusions is attached as Annex III.
8. The Steering Committee thanked NEA for the research which allowed the Member States to benefit from expert opinions on the implementation of the MoU. The Steering Committee also commended the BSEC PERMIS and IRU for co-sponsoring the research.

GRADUAL LIBERALIZATION OF TRANSIT AND BILATERAL INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS BY THE BSEC HAULIERS ALONG THE BSEC MEMBER STATES

9. The Steering Committee took note of the information provided by the Chairman that the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Hellenic Republic, Republic of Moldova, the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Turkey and Ukraine provided their information to the Matrix Table on the existing transit and bilateral quotas between BSEC Member States. The Parties which have not yet done so were invited to provide their data to the Matrix Tables.

10. The Steering Committee suggested that three alternatives on the progressive liberalization of the International Road Transport of Goods in the BSEC Region proposed at the Round Table can be applied by the BSEC Member States simultaneously. In particular these alternatives are:

- 1) Gradually liberalize road transport by admitting free bilateral and transit transport through bilateral agreements and protocols
- 2) Create regional multilateral permit system among interested parties
- 3) Develop BSEC permit allowing to perform a single trip in transit of direct transport through concerned BSEC Member States which agreed to have such a permit

11. Some Parties (Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Turkey) informed the Steering Committee about their readiness to implement these three recommendations of the Round Table.

12. The Steering Committee requested the Parties to inform the BSEC PERMIS officially within two months if they are interested to implement any of these recommendations.

13. In this regard, the Steering Committee invited BSEC PERMIS together with the IRU and BSEC-URTA to work on the alternative *three* in order to develop a BSEC permit format and rules for usage. The outcome of this work shall be disseminated to the Parties and presented to the Extraordinary Meeting to be held in the first half of the 2009.

14. For alternative *two*, the Steering Committee also suggested the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group to study the establishment of a regional multilateral system, among the interested Parties.

INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL VEHICLE WEIGHT CERTIFICATE ACCORDING TO ANNEX 8 TO THE 1982 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON HARMONIZATION OF FRONTIER CONTROLS OF GOODS

15. The Steering Committee noted 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 will make the practice of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate (IVWC) universal and it will greatly facilitate the road transport of goods in the region.

16. The Steering Committee considered the outcome of the Round Table and suggested to organize a joint BSEC-UNECE seminar with the participation of all interested parties, to consider the ways of introduction of IVWC in the BSEC region.

17. The Steering Committee took note of the positive experience of application of the CIS IVWC by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova, Belarus, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

18. It was recommended to take into account this experience when the issue of the introduction of Annex 8 will be discussed.

19. The Parties underlined that the Annex 8 has already entered into force. Nevertheless, it is necessary to exchange timely the information on entering into force of the Annex 8 in the Member States as well as the information about authorized agencies for issuing IVWC.

HARMONIZATION OF THE CHARGING POLICIES FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE BSEC REGION. ESTABLISHMENT OF INFORMATION SYSTEM TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON TOLLS AND CHARGES RELATED TO THE USE OF ROADS IN THE BSEC REGION.

20. The Steering Committee took note that, regrettably, no country presented its data to the Matrix table on the existing charging policies in the BSEC Member States.

21. Since no data was provided, the consideration of the issue on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Group of Experts for elaboration of proposals and recommendations on the harmonization of the charging policies was postponed to a later stage.

22. The Parties were invited to provide their data to the Matrix Table as it was requested at the previous meeting.

23. The IRU was kindly invited to share the available information on the existing user charges, tolls and other charges in the BSEC countries, in order to facilitate discussion on the issue at the next meeting.

FACILITATION OF VISA PROCEDURES FOR PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS

24. The Steering Committee welcomed the signing by the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Turkey of the Agreement on the Facilitation of Visa Procedures for Professional Drivers Nationals of the BSEC Member States approved by the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States on 23 October 2008 in Tirana.

25. The BSEC PERMIS was requested to address the Member States, which have not yet signed the Agreement, with a Note about their interest to access the Agreement and readiness to apply Annex 8 to the mentioned Convention related to the visa issue.

REVIEW OF THE TIMETABLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON FACILITATION ROAD TRANSPORT OF GOODS IN THE BSEC REGION

26. The Steering Committee amended the Timetable in the part “Expand key UN Transport Conventions and Agreements to the BSEC region” -Objective 5 as the following:

Action: a) "Priority Conventions identified by the SC and confirmed by the WGT"

27. Due to the fact that the Party requesting the review of deadlines for some objectives did not participate in the meeting it was decided to consider the issue of possible changing deadlines at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Steering Committee in relation with the development of the liberalization process.
28. The timetable as amended at the meeting is attached as Annex IV.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

29. The Steering Committee decided to postpone election of a new Chairman of the Steering Committee to the next Extraordinary Meeting since no party presented its candidacy for the Chairmanship of the Steering Committee.
30. At the same time the Republic of Turkey was kindly invited to continue Chairmanship until the elections take place.

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

31. The date and venue of the next Meeting of the Steering Committee will be communicated to the Parties through BSEC PERMIS in due course.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

32. The Steering Committee adopted the present Report for submission to the BSEC Committee of Senior Officials and the Meeting of the BSEC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held in Yerevan on 29 April 2009.