

COMMITTEE ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTATION WITH  
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

RESOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ON  
"TRANSPORT OF PASSENGERS AND THEIR LUGGAGE"

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INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
International Headquarters  
38 Cours Albert ler, Paris VIIIe.

Transport and Communications  
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65th MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

(December 3rd, 10 a.m., 3 p.m., and December 4th, 10 a.m.)  
38 Cours Albert ler, Paris

RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS  
ON THE SIMPLIFICATION OF FORMALITIES  
IN INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT OF PASSENGERS AND THEIR LUGGAGE

The ICC requests the progressive and rapid return to the pre-1914 regime which includes the minimum amount of barriers to free passenger traffic. The resumption of international trade on which the reconstruction of a war-ravaged world economy and the restoration of a reasonable standard of life for the populations of the world depends, calls for the sweeping away of the artificial barriers which hamper, when they do not entirely prevent, business and tourist travel. Transactions of international trade require, in particular, personal contacts between business men in the different countries, and last minute decisions and speed are essential to business travel.

The ICC considers that in the present state of affairs countries would be considerably more interested in a free and dense passenger traffic, especially of business men, than in the maintenance of protection and security measures. A year ago, a justification could have been found for these latter, but their continuance at the present time means, for those countries applying them, a loss rather than a gain.

On the other hand, it is regrettable that the efforts of the carriers towards re-establishing and speeding up international communication are more or less nullified by administrative regulations and controls.

\* French text will be submitted by the ICC and distributed later.

It is high time that the administrative regime applying to the movement of passengers and of goods be brought into line with the requirements of a world where more and more speedy and perfected means of transporting are available.

In 1914, with less rapid trains, with motor traffic in its infancy and without airplanes, a business man could decide to travel and could travel between two capitals in a few hours. In 1946, between his decision to travel and the actual journey weeks and even months may go by. This situation, born of the war, is today not only absurd but disastrous.

As regards the first lap, which must be covered now, the ICC requests:  
- the abolition of those formalities which, set up during the war, are no longer justified by reason of the termination of hostilities;

- as regards other formalities and controls, the introduction of the widest possible alleviation, simplification and flexibility.

The ICC recognizes that the abolition of certain formalities arising out of the political and economic difficulties from which the world still suffers, depends upon the disappearance of these difficulties. These difficulties must be surmounted, and, as in the past, the ICC is ready to contribute to the accomplishment of this task.

But even these formalities can be alleviated and altered in such a way as to render the process less hampering and less onerous for the carriers and users already submerged by all kinds of administrative requirements in their everyday work.

The ICC is convinced that, by a frank comparison of the legitimate desires of governments and the no less real and legitimate needs of users and carriers it is possible to bring about now a marked improvement in the present situation.

Moreover, to set up barriers for traffic as a whole by means of strict regulations which aim merely at certain abuses which could be corrected by other and less hampering means constitutes more often a policy which is ruinous to the public welfare. It is much better that the community accept certain risks and losses rather than that the movement as a whole should suffer paralysis.

It is, besides, evident that those countries which set up a more liberal regime in their mutual relations will derive therefrom a certain advantage by an increase of trade. It would thus appear to be to the interests of governments and of their nationals to adopt in this field a courageous policy aiming at complete freedom from barriers. This policy is none other than that laid down before the war by governmental conventions and conferences and more especially, by the International Convention for the Simplification of Customs Formalities of the 3rd of November 1943, and the Passport Conference of 1926. By reason of the extreme urgency of putting an end to the obstacles set up by certain formalities, the ICC requests governments to apply without delay those provisions and recommendations which are still in force. A very marked alleviation could thus be realized, before the introduction of the complete revision mentioned above.

To encourage and facilitate this task of revision, the ICC submits to government and to the official international organizations concerned the following recommendations which have been drawn up by the Committee of Experts constituted by the Chamber for this purpose:

## A. PASSPORTS AND VISAS

### I. PASSPORTS

The ICC states that the aim to be achieved in the shortest possible delay should be the return to the pre-1914 regime, that is to say, the abolition of obligatory passports. This abolition already an accomplished fact between certain countries, should be extended.

One simplification for travellers who are nationals of countries requiring possession of identity cards, would consist in the recognition, by other countries, of these identity documents as sufficient for crossing frontiers. This simplification has also been achieved in certain cases.

The ICC urges Governments to introduce these improvements, either by autonomous decisions or by the signature of bilateral agreements, which would naturally be concluded in the first place between countries maintaining close relations.

Until such time as obligatory passports have been abolished, the ICC recommends an improvement in the present regime and more especially that:

- passports be obtained rapidly and easily, without the requirement of numerous documents and multiple formalities causing unnecessary delay and annoyance;

- the duration of its validity be extended to the maximum, and in no case, be less than two years. In this respect a method similar to the one in force in the United Kingdom where passports are valid for a period of five years, and can be prolonged for a further period of five years, should be adopted. In this manner further formalities and additional costs required for the renewal of passports are avoided;

- the validity of passports be extended to all foreign countries or to as many groups of countries as possible;

- the delivery of passports be no longer considered as a source of national revenue. In certain cases the fees are so high as to be almost prohibitive. Fees should be calculated in such a way as to procure a revenue to the State, not in excess of the expenses incurred in the production and delivery of passports.

These improvements (and particularly the latter which is essential) should result in restoring to passports their essential characteristics of a universally recognized identity document which every citizen should have the right to obtain without difficulty or excessive costs.

The ICC also favours a simplification and unification of passports, such as proposed by the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization (Section 8 and Annex 4 of the PICAO Recommendations).

It further urges the delivery of collective passports which offer several advantages, particularly, as regards fees, and which benefit certain categories of travellers.

### II. VISAS

The ICC notes with satisfaction that visa requirements have been abolished by means of bilateral agreements between various countries, and that there is a growing tendency, at the present time, to do away with this formality.

/It urges

It urges the signing of further agreements of this kind in view of the earliest possible abolition of exit visas, entry visas and transit visas.

In point of fact, formalities required for visas are often more troublesome than those required for the granting of passports themselves, particularly for the great number of people whose residence is removed from places where there are consulates.

Exit visas, which were an emergency measure made necessary by war conditions, no longer have any justification and have indeed been abolished in numerous countries. They should be abolished both in the case of nationals and of foreigners residing permanently in a country.

Entry visas should also be abolished and where this is not immediately possible, their delivery should be made easy and expeditious.

It should be noted that the impossibility of obtaining two entry visas into a country, when a journey makes it necessary to cross this country on both the outward and inward journey, is an added inconvenience to the already grave inconveniences connected with obtaining a visa.

The police formalities to which travellers are still liable in certain cases, after their arrival in the country they are visiting, should at least be abolished for short stays in that country. Only in cases where this stay exceeds a certain period, two months for instance, should they be required to appear before the police and state the length of their stay.

There is every reason to protest against the maintenance of transit visas, which are a particular hindrance on long journeys where several countries have to be crossed. The formalities, which are often complicated, and the costs increase in proportion to the transits.

It is difficult to find an economic justification for the requirement of transit visas. If in certain countries, their suppression is considered a danger from the security and police point of view, nations should find other means of protection without impeding passenger traffic as a whole, for the sake of isolated cases.

The suppression of transit visas should meet with even less difficulties in cases where passengers cross the country without changing plane, train or boat, or do not leave the precinct of the aerodrome.

It should be noted that countries offering the greatest facilities to transit passengers, will be the ones whose territories will be used in preference to others.

Countries requiring a maintenance of visas should make them valid for at least one year and should not fix a limit to the number of journeys in that period. This should apply to all categories of visas.

It is essential to reduce delays and formalities - particularly the number and complexity of forms to be filled in for the granting of visas, and especially for business journeys, where speedy travel is often essential. Furthermore, it would also be advisable to do away with photographs for v visas, as they only increase delays and costs.

The size of visa stamps should be reduced; some of these fill an entire page of the passport. Vexatious requirements, such as finger prints, should also be abolished.

One of the most effective means of reducing delays, (and frequently costs), consists in empowering local agents, especially consuls, to grant visas on their own authority. If this is not allowed, the consul has to communicate the requisite information to the competent authorities in his own country, and when this information has to be communicated by cable, the costs of the cable, which are often considerable, are added to the other fees to which the traveller is liable.

Fees connected with visas should be reduced for the same reasons as those already mentioned as regards passports.

## B. CURRENCY

### I. AMOUNT AND AGGREGATE OF THE SUM ALLOWED TO TRAVELLERS

Currency restrictions have given rise to a further category of hindrances, which often constitute the main obstacle to travel, the undertaking of which bristles with difficulties of all kinds. Certain of these regulations amount to a veritable restraint and, by their very stringency, encourage and even oblige the traveller - who is compelled to undertake a journey, - to have recourse to illegal means. It would appear that in many cases, these regulations should be revised, so as to take into account the repercussion they may have upon the "de facto" situation.

The Chamber recognizes that this question is bound up with the economic and financial situation in different countries but considers that - taking into account this situation and without aggravating it, on the contrary, - it is possible to make considerable improvements in the present system. Certain tourist or business journeys contribute to re-establish the balance of payments rather than compromise it further. In general those countries obliged to exercise strict supervision on their balance of payments, are those most concerned in developing their exports, and consequently in allowing their exporters to travel. Moreover, currency exit for business travel finds, on the whole, a compensation.

Among the countries limiting the sums of money allowed to their nationals for journeys abroad, some fix an annual lump sum in the form of a "basic allowance", others calculate this sum according to the journey or the number of weeks spent abroad, others again by days of stay in the country visited.

The ICC recommends the adoption of a practical, expeditious and flexible system of currency allowances, excluding excessive controls which are more costly than effective. A strict control of the number of days spent abroad, for example, requires red tape, an increase in the staff, or in the work of an already overworked staff - hence heavy expenses for practically negligible results.

The system of currency allowances should provide for the granting of larger amounts on mere justification for business travel which, by its very nature, entails increased expenditure.

Travellers should be allotted a minimum sum in cash, to allow them to meet travelling expenses in the course of their journey, before they are able to encash cheques. Travellers in certain countries are often unable to go to a bank; or arrive at their destination on days or at times when banks are closed.

/An increase

An increase in the amount of local currency that a traveller can take out of the country visited by him is recommended. At present, a traveller has to spend the currency remaining to him before leaving the country he is visiting; if his departure is put off one or two days by unforeseen circumstances (plane held up owing to atmospheric conditions, for instance), he finds himself penniless.

Motorists should be allowed a supplementary sum in currency in view of the fact that they have to pay for petrol, oil, garage and possible repairs in the currency of the country they cross.

## II. EXCHANGE OFFICES

The ICC urges the setting up, at the main frontier points, of exchange offices open during traffic hours, (even at night) and empowered to encash bankers' cheques as well as foreign currency carried by travellers.

It has been noted that travellers to certain countries are sometimes unable to obtain any cash whatsoever in the currency required. On the other hand, as has been stated above, the traveller may have to stop in transit in a country at a time when banks are closed.

Furthermore, facilities should be granted for the domiciliation of cheques remitted to travellers going abroad or for an extension of the practice of letters of credit and "traveller's cheques". It is often very trying for the traveller in possession of a very small amount in bank notes to have to wait in order to procure the money he requires until he can go to a bank, often at some distance, where he can cash his cheque.

## C. FRONTIER FORMALITIES

Frontier controls should be organized in such a way as:

- not to prolong the duration of the journey, or to prolong it as little as possible. It is an economic inconsistency to deprive users of the benefit of the speed acquired thanks to technical progress in modern transport;
- not to cause travellers unnecessary fatigue or undue annoyance. Travellers are still all too frequently obliged to get out of trains twice (on each side of the frontier) - often in the middle of the night - and to stand, sometimes for an hour, waiting for the various formalities to be accomplished.

The ICC therefore recommends:

- that the control of passports, luggage, currency and if necessary health be combined and simultaneous (or at least in immediate succession) in the course of the journey, that is to say at sea, on board ship, by rail, in the train, either en route or when halted at a frontier station; by road, at adjoining customs houses. This practice, already followed in many cases, should become general;
- that, should control en route be impossible, these formalities to take place in only one of the frontier stations where the authorities of both countries concerned would operate.

/Moreover, steps

Moreover, steps should be taken to reduce, as far as possible, the weary waiting inflicted on passengers. For example; a special place should be reserved in the customs office for travellers having nothing to declare, to avoid their having to wait, often for a considerable length of time while customs officials are arguing with travellers carrying taxable goods. It goes without saying that heavy penalties should be inflicted on persons taking advantage of this facility.

All policy formalities should be carried out at frontier crossings. In certain South America States, travellers' passports are taken from them, and they are obliged to collect them the following day - a procedure which is at once troublesome and could give rise to mistakes. Holders of passports should not, on any account, be deprived of them.

Customs examination of registered luggage should in preference be carried out at the place of destination, if not at that of departure.

Registered luggage in transit and luggage of travellers by air in transit should not be subject to customs examination.

There should be no written customs declaration concerning luggage.

#### D. PUBLIC HEALTH FORMALITIES

The ICG requests that these formalities, when necessary, should be reduced to a minimum should not prolong needlessly the duration of the journey, and should be carried out with the least possible inconvenience to travellers. Public health controls should not consist in requiring superfluous documents. Certificates of health in particular should be abolished; they constitute an obligation which is of no practical use as they do not enable the authorities to track down illness effectively. Medical examinations should be gratuitous.

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