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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Seventy-first session
Geneva, 24-26 February 2009
Item 12 (e) of the provisional agenda

**ISSUES THAT NEED CONSIDERATION AND
REQUIRE DECISIONS BY THE COMMITTEE**

Restrictions imposed on the transit quota of road transport permits

Quantitative restrictions imposed on international road transport of goods

Submitted by the Government of Turkey

1. Based on the document submitted by the Government of Turkey on the restrictions imposed on the transit quota of road transport permits, the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) had recognized at its seventieth session held on 19-21 February 2008 in Geneva, that such restrictions might pose obstacles to road transport operators of some UNECE member countries. It had requested that the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) should deal with this matter in the broader context of the liberalization of road transport services, the future regulatory framework of direct and indirect market access conditions to international road transport, the potential impact of the World Trade Organization (WTO) transit facilitation negotiations, etc., and to report about its findings at its next session.

2. Following the request of the Committee, the Working Party agreed at its 102nd session to include the matter on its agenda for the 103rd session and the delegation of Turkey was invited to provide more details on the subject. The Government of Turkey prepared the attached

document and submitted it for consideration to the Working Group at the meeting of the Working Party on Road Transport held between 29 and 31 October 2008 in Geneva.

3. The suggestion of the Government of Turkey on this matter was that either an ad-hoc working group or a Task Force should be established with the participation of representatives from a limited number of Members on a voluntary basis to examine the matter in detail, especially to analyse the current status of transit road transport quotas of permit systems in the UNECE region. It would also explore the disadvantages of the transit regime subject to permits and its impacts on trade and transport, as well as the benefits of the freedom of transit and then find a proper multilateral solution and implement them through the ITC. In addition, conducting an analytical study by a consulting company or by a non-governmental organization such as the International Road Transport Union (IRU) or by specific experts was also another suggestion made by the Government Turkey during this meeting.

4. However, at the meeting of the Working Party on Road Transport, the suggestions of the Government of Turkey were not given the consideration they deserved by some countries, on the grounds that the ITC did not give a clear mandate on this issue to the Working Party, such as to set up a working group or task force as suggested by Turkey. As a result, it was decided that the Secretariat should compile, for the seventy-first session of ITC, an abstract of relevant articles from the United Nations conventions that cover the freedom of transit as well as the facilitation of the international road transport and the list of Contracting Parties thereto.

5. As a matter of fact, without analysing the impacts of quantitative restrictions imposed by some countries on the international road transit transport of goods, including the overall cost and economic losses, it will not be appropriate for ITC to assess and conclude the matter in an efficacious way. To avoid such a situation, the Committee is kindly requested to give a clear mandate to the Working Party on Road Transport or to directly suggest conducting a study through this Group by a road transport union or association and/or, if appropriate, by an independent consulting company. It is sure that this study will allow the members of the Committee to see clearly the results of transit restrictions and act accordingly in this matter. This will also constitute a base for bilateral and multilateral negotiations. Even though any binding decision is not expected by some countries on the matter, the results of this study will of course allow countries to reevaluate the situation from a different point of view that will perhaps lead us to reach fruitful results.

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