



## Conclusions, recommendations and roadmap

### Background

1. The TIR Executive Board (TIRExB) supervises and provides support in the application of the TIR Convention at the national and international levels. As part of its program of work, TIRExB shall promote the implementation of the eTIR procedure by Contracting Parties. With that in mind, the Chair of TIRExB, with the support of the UNECE secretariat and at the kind invitation of the customs administration of Uzbekistan, decided to organize a Friends of the Chair meeting with the aim to promote the implementation of the eTIR procedure along the middle corridor.

### Why the eTIR procedure is key for the middle corridor

2. The middle corridor, regardless of the detailed routes envisaged by various initiatives (e.g. MCI, BRI, ...), connects the East and the West of the Eurasian continent through Central-Asia. It provides the transport sector with an efficient alternative to the northern and southern corridors as well as to the maritime routes. The importance of the middle corridor is currently further strengthened by the geopolitical situation.

3. Harmonization and computerization are essential concepts allowing customs administrations to efficiently perform their work while facilitating legitimate trade and transport. Among the numerous United Nations international legal instruments aimed at facilitating trade and transport, the TIR Convention, 1975, in particular since the entry into force of its Annex 11, is key to providing the most effective soft infrastructure along the middle corridor. The eTIR procedure, as described in Annex 11, is aimed at a seamlessly interconnecting customs administrations and transport operators. It takes advantage of the power of ITC to further improve and secure the TIR procedure, which has been the only global transit procedure for many decades.

### Status of interconnection project

4. Further to the entry into force of Annex 11, a number of customs administrations have expressed interest in interconnecting their customs systems with the eTIR international system, the first required step to enable the eTIR procedure.

5. Since then, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan along the middle corridor have completed their interconnection projects and finalized the conformance tests. Pakistan and Tunisia are also at the verge of finalizing the conformance tests. Furthermore, Turkey has already made significant progress in their interconnection project and should soon start the conformance tests.

### Next steps to enable the eTIR procedure along the middle corridor



6. Following the deliberations during the TIREXB friends of the chair meeting, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan are strongly recommended to start the interconnection of their customs systems with the eTIR international system.

7. To further speed up the implementation of the eTIR procedure, countries not yet interconnected with the eTIR international system are recommended to consider the usage of the eTIR National Application developed by the TIR secretariat. An application which, once deployed, allows customs administration to manage the eTIR procedure, including the reception and sending of all relevant eTIR messages from and to the eTIR international system. The application is offered for free by the secretariat and it dramatically reduces the interconnection time and the number of resources required.

8. During the meeting the following next steps were agreed by the participants in order to speed up the implementation of the eTIR procedure along the middle corridor:

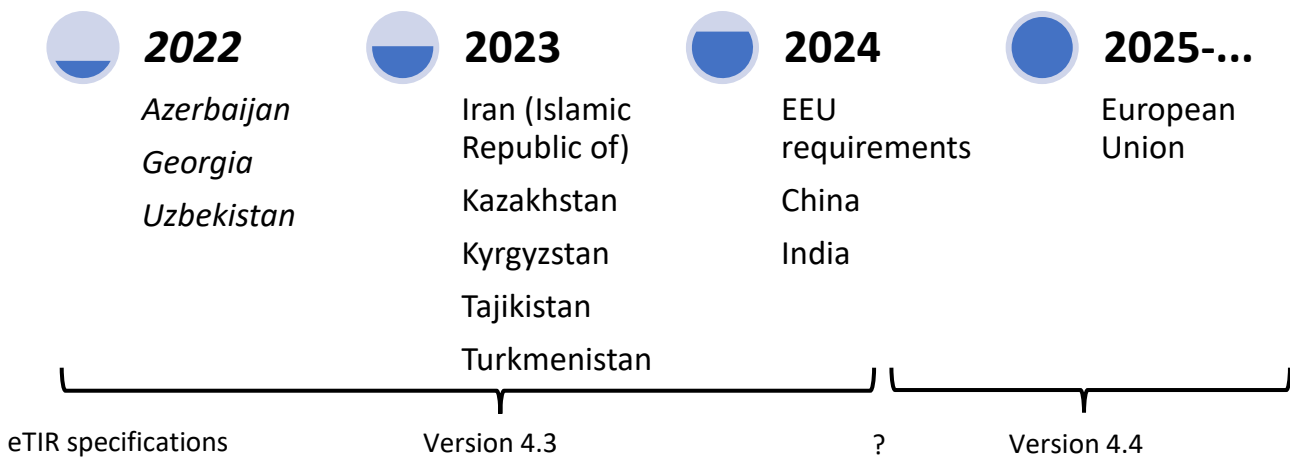
- **Eurasia Economic Union:** A consultant / expert on the Eurasian Economic Union customs code will be funded by the TIR secretariat (United Nations funds) and be selected by the Customs authority of Kazakhstan in order to analyse the requirements of the EEU countries and find and propose concrete IT solutions. The TIR secretariat and representatives of the five countries will participate to those meetings to ensure that all requirements are discussed and the proposed IT solutions if possible are agreed. Next step should be that friends of chair meeting(s) of TIRExB to be organized with interested in those solutions stakeholders to discuss and agree those solutions with as many as possible contracting parties before submitting them to TIB,
- **Kazakhstan:** Secretariat held already a meeting with Customs Authority of Kazakhstan. A consultant will be proposed by the customs authority of Kazakhstan and funded by the TIR secretariat (United Nations funds). The consultant will analyse the case of Kazakhstan using the eTIR National Application developed by the TIR secretariat only for transit trips coming from China, temporarily, until the new customs system will be deployed, and full interconnection will be achieved.
- **Kyrgyzstan:** Secretariat held already a meeting with the Customs Authority of Kyrgyzstan. It was agreed that the customs authority will send to the secretariat soon an official reply letter and a meeting will be organised towards the end of August. The secretariat stands ready to financially support the Kyrgyz customs authority (United Nations budget or other external donors) in case consultants are required to perform the interconnection.
- **Iran:** No reply received to secretariat's letter and not contact with the customs authority has been achieved so far. The customs authority did not participate at the meeting.
- **Tajikistan:** No reply received to secretariat's letter and not contact with the customs authority has been achieved so far. The customs authority did not participate at the meeting.
- **Turkmenistan:** An official letter was received mentioning that the project / discussions can start on November this year when the current project with GIZ will be finalised. In coordination with IRU and GIZ the secretariat will try to move the day for starting the discussions in September and proceed as quickly as possible. The customs authority did not participate at the meeting.
- **United Nations ECE representative in the region:** UNECE / TIR Secretariat will try, depending on customs authorities of the region willingness and the availability of extra budgetary funds to have a TIR secretariat representative in the region for the next 2 years to ensure the immediate



implementation of eTIR interconnection with the national customs systems of the region and along the middle corridor and speed up the processes.

- **Next follow up meeting:** it is suggested that a follow up meeting to the Samarkand meeting should take place most probably in October this year to review the status of the interconnection processes to the eTIR international system in the region and adapt if needed the road map accordingly. Any customs authority or organization would like to host such a meeting should contact the secretariat.

**eTIR Roadmap along the middle corridor (*dates that interconnection projects will be initiated*)**



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