



A new and consistent approach

In its capacity as an observer, the Secretariat of OTIF takes part in the UNECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport (WP.30).

At the 145th session on 15 February, one of the items on the agenda concerned the examination of the draft new Convention to Facilitate the Crossing of Frontiers for Passengers and Baggage carried by Rail. The draft was submitted by OSJD and the Russian Federation and updates the 1952 Convention.

The facilitation of border crossing procedures for passengers is an important issue. However, it has been difficult to reach agreement between the States Parties for over ten years.

The Secretariat of OTIF therefore made a declaration in which it proposed a new approach.

As the draft new convention defines a cooperation framework that will serve as a basis for future bilateral agreements, in essence the contents of the convention are non-binding; as a result, a tool more flexible than a traditional convention could be considered, without jeopardising the objectives being pursued.

Following the example of the “Model Subregional Agreement on Transport Facilitation” adopted by UNESCAP, the Secretariat of OTIF believes that a non-binding instrument setting out shared principles to facilitate border crossing for passengers is an appropriate and promising solution. For more information (Bulletin 1/2017 will be published in March).

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