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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on Land Transport

N° prev. doc.:	ST 5999/26
Subject:	Draft letter on behalf of the Union to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as regards truck blockages in the Republic of Belarus - Commission Non-Paper

In preparation of the meeting of the Working Party on Land Transport on 17 February 2026, the Presidency suggests making a couple of adjustments to the background and context of the draft letter to the UNECE Executive Secretary, and one change to the content of the letter. The changes result from additional information provided by Poland and supported by Lithuania.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Between 29 October 2025 and 19 November 2025, Lithuania closed its border with Belarus, due to increasing safety and security concerns¹. Exemptions for road transport were granted for Kaliningrad transit, diplomatic personnel, citizens of the EU, EEA and NATO countries, and for European hauliers returning to the EU.

According to the Lithuanian and Polish governments, the Belarusian authorities introduced restrictions on the movement of lorries and semi-trailers/trailers registered in those Member States within Belarusian territory, **allowing them to enter/exit only through the section of the Belarusian border that borders the country of registration of the vehicle. As regards Polish vehicles, Belarusian authorities have introduced those restrictions starting in 2023.**

In the context of these restrictions, **1 000 Lithuanian-registered vehicles and** approximately 500 **semi-trailers registered in Lithuania, but at the sole disposal of Polish carriers** ~~Polish registered and 1 000 Lithuanian registered heavy duty vehicles~~ have been prevented from returning to EU territory, due to decisions of the Belarussian government over this period, despite the reopening of the border crossing points. The EU-registered vehicles have been directed towards dedicated parking areas with a daily parking fee of EUR 120 per truck, with a risk of having the vehicles confiscated in the absence of payment.

Following the various Belarusian measures, a problem has arisen with combined vehicle combinations (a Polish tractor-trailer and a Lithuanian semi-trailer). Due to different Belarusian regulations for Polish and Lithuanian vehicles, these combinations currently have no way of leaving the territory of the Republic of Belarus.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is a major international forum which facilitates cooperation among its member countries in road transport through policy dialogue, negotiation of interna

tional legal instruments, development of regulations and norms and exchange and application of best practices as well as economic and technical expertise. European Union Member States, as well as Belarus, are Members of UNECE. The UNECE Secretariat is notably managing the European agreement concerning the work of crews of vehicles engaged in international road transport (AETR).

¹ See also Foreign Affairs Council, 15 December 2025: [Belarus: Council broadens scope of sanctions regime to cover hybrid activities against EU member states - Consilium](#).

2. RELEVANCE FOR THE UNION

a. *Impact of the measures taken by the Republic of Belarus*

The Commission shares the views of the Polish and Lithuanian authorities that the immobilisation of these vehicles by the Belarusian authorities is unacceptable. In particular, such actions are against the general principles of the UNECE Consolidated Resolution on the Facilitation of International Road Transport (R.E.4)², as well as the spirit of the AETR³.

The Belarusian government has not provided justifications to the Member States concerned.

The Commission therefore believes it is appropriate to inform UNECE and all AETR Contracting Parties in UNECE of the above-mentioned behaviour of the Belarusian authorities with regards to Lithuanian and Polish hauliers, in view of their gravity and potential systemic nature.

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b. *Necessity of a joint letter on behalf of the Union*

While carriage from Member States to third countries is still largely addressed through bilateral agreements between the Member States and those third countries, unilateral and unjustified actions such as the ones taken by the Belarusian government in this case could potentially affect any EU haulier in the future. Furthermore, a coordinated letter on behalf of the EU would carry more weight, providing more robust support to the most affected Member States, in particular those bordering Belarus.

3. PROPOSED WAY AHEAD: REQUEST TO RAISE THIS ISSUE WITHIN UNECE

In light of the above, the Commission proposes the following:

- That a letter is sent to the UNECE Executive Secretary (draft laid out in Annex) to request to discuss this topic at a meeting of an upcoming session of UNECE Working Party on Road Transport, and/or Expert Group on AETR, where the Union is represented by the Commission as a Member of the Expert Group, and as an Observer in the Working Party.
- At the discussion, the representative of the Commission expresses the key messages along the lines of the above mentioned letter, and if appropriate, complemented by the elements laid out in Sections 1 and 2 above.

² CERD; in particular point 1.2.1.1.

³ See in particular the preamble of the [AETR](#).

Annex – Draft letter to the UNECE Executive Secretary in the interest of the Union

Subject: Blockages of EU-registered trucks by the Belarusian government.

Excellency,

In the period running from 29 October 2025 [until...], the Government of Belarus has immobilised hundreds of EU-registered heavy-duty vehicles in the Belarus-Lithuania border area, without providing any sound justification, and imposing a daily fee to avoid full confiscation of the vehicles and goods they contain.

These actions represent unacceptable behaviour by the Belarusian authorities.

The European Union urges the Belarussian government to release these EU-registered vehicles and to return them to their legitimate owners in the European Union swiftly and without additional obstacles.

Given the role of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as a major international forum which facilitates cooperation among its member countries in road transport through policy dialogue, negotiation of international legal instruments, development of regulations and norms and exchange and application of best practices as well as economic and technical expertise, in particular in the framework of the *European agreement concerning the work of crews of vehicles engaged in international road transport* (AETR), and in view of the gravity and potential systemic nature of the above-mentioned problems experienced by some EU hauliers, I would be grateful if you could convey this message to the Belarusian authorities, and to forward this correspondence to the other Contracting Parties of the AETR.

We would appreciate if this topic could be brought to the agenda of the next meeting of the UNECE Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) **and earlier on the forum of its expert groups.**

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Deputy Permanent Representative of [Member State holding the Council Presidency] to the European Union;

Chairman of the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part 1).