

Importance of Key Trade and Transport Conventions

Background note

I. Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda acknowledge that international trade is an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development. However, high costs of trade significantly constrain the trade potential of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). Due to their geographical location, inadequate transport and transit infrastructure and cumbersome border crossing procedures, LLDCs pay on average more than double the cost of transit developing countries to export and import.

Besides building physical infrastructure and connectivity, the effective implementation of a conducive legal framework is a prerequisite to reducing the high costs of trade and improving the export competitiveness of LLDCs. The Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024 (VPoA) stresses the need to promote harmonization, simplification and standardization of rules and documentation, including the full and effective implementation of international conventions on transport and transit as well as bilateral, sub-regional and regional agreements. The VPoA calls for effective co-operation of LLDCs and transit developing countries and promotion of an enabling legal environment on mutually beneficial basis for making transit transport and trade efficient and effective. The VPoA also underscores the importance of partnerships between LLDCs and transit countries for the improvement and constant maintenance of their infrastructure connectivity and of technical and administrative arrangements in their transport, customs and logistic systems.

There are a number of international conventions that offer a legal and regulatory framework to facilitate transit transport and trade at the international level. Several of these will be highlighted in the 2016 Treaty Event to be held at the margins of the 71st United Nations General Assembly, including the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1975), the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (1982), the Customs Convention on Containers (1972) and the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956), among others. In addition, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the Revised Kyoto Customs Convention are also amongst the key important frameworks for facilitating transit transport and trade facilitation. However, despite their benefits, the ratification and effective implementation of these legal instruments remains low at the global level and particularly among the LLDCs and transit countries.

There is need to support Member States to raise their awareness and understanding of the potential benefits and implications of accession to international and regional conventions related

to the facilitation of transport and trade. Member States need to be informed about the Conventions and Agreements that can provide for faster transit and efficient border crossings. It is also important to intensify capacity-building assistance and training programmes to all stakeholders in order to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Against this background, the aim of this background note is to provide details on the formal procedures for becoming party to international conventions, examine the benefits of acceding to selected international conventions on transport and trade facilitation, review the status of ratification of selected international conventions and make relevant recommendations.

II. Trade and Transport as important elements in achieving sustainable development

2015 was an important year for the United Nations. In September 2015, the 193 member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, comprising 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) designed to end poverty, create more global equality and improve lives in all corners of the world. Countries officially adopted this historic new agenda, focusing on sustainability at the environmental, economic and social levels, in order to ensure that any success achieved with the agenda will be a lasting one, while leaving no one behind. In July 2015, the international community adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), as the outcome of the Third UN Conference on Financing for Development. The AAAA is the foundation for implementing the 2030 Agenda as it contextualizes the latter's means of implementation.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda acknowledge that international trade is an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, and contributes to the promotion of sustainable development. The AAAA also recognized that technical assistance and improvement of trade- and transit-related logistics are crucial for enabling landlocked developing countries to fully participate in and benefit from the multilateral trade negotiations, electively implement policies and regulations aimed at facilitating transport and trade, and diversify their export base. Furthermore, it reaffirms the need to address the special challenges and needs of the LLDCs in developing efficient transport and transit systems.

At the same time, the importance of sustainable transport has also been acknowledged. The role of transport for sustainable development has been recognized as early as 1992 at the United Nations' Earth Summit. However, over the years, major United Nations decision making bodies have identified transport and mobility as being central to sustainable development. Although sustainable transport is not represented by a standalone SDG, target 11.2 of SDG 11 calls for provision of access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all. It is also mainstreamed across several other SDGs, especially those related to food security, health, energy and infrastructure. It is worth noting that the activities of UNECE in the field of transport have been actively representing the principles and objectives of sustainable development for several years.

The Secretary General established and launched, in August 2014, a High Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport (HLAG-ST), representing all modes of transport including road, rail, aviation, marine, ferry, and urban public transport providers, along with Governments and investors, to develop concrete recommendations for more sustainable transport systems that can address rising congestion and pollution worldwide, particularly in urban areas, and are actionable at global, national, local and sector levels. The policy recommendations, to be developed by the HLAG-ST, are expected to be reflected in a global sustainable transport outlook report that will be released in a first global High Level conference on sustainable transport convened by the UN Secretary General and likely to take place at the end of 2016.

III. The importance of a harmonized international regulatory framework

One of the most complicated elements in international trade and transport transactions is to move products across borders and bring them into free circulation in another country. In fact, the effort it takes to move goods from one country to another, across borders, and by means of various modes of transport, could be time consuming and costly. Due to their geographical location, transporters from LLDCs in particular have to face numerous border crossings and associated procedures which are often very cumbersome. Together with inadequate transport and transit infrastructure, this leads to very high transport costs, further constraining their trade and economic potential.

A 2013 study by UN-OHRLLS has estimated that LLDCs, on average, have trade volume that is 60 per cent lower than that of a representative coastal economy. This effect of landlockedness on trade varies across the group, with some countries like Afghanistan, Mali and Niger only able to trade just 33 per cent or less of the trade volume of coastal countries. The data also suggest that on average LLDCs face transport costs that are up to 45 per cent higher than the representative coastal economy.

Table 1 further illustrates the effect of landlockedness on the cross-border transport process. Compared with transit developing countries, LLDCs pay more than twice the cost to export and import a standardized cargo container. Furthermore, these costs have increased significantly over time. For example, while transit developing countries paid, in 2014, 27 per cent more to export than in 2005, LLDCs paid 56 per cent more. In addition, cross-border transport is also much longer for LLDCs. While it takes LLDCs on average 41 days to export, it takes only 22 days for transit developing countries. On a positive note, the length of this process has gone down over time. Similarly, the number of documents required for export and import has reduced, but it remains high.

Cost-effective international trade and international transport of goods requires the alignment of ordering, payment, insurance, logistics, customs inspection and clearance, and border controls. If this complex process is not solved seamlessly, goods are delayed or go missing, the wrong goods are being shipped, and overall transaction costs increase. Border inefficiencies are estimated to cost twice the amount of tariffs, while the removal of those inefficiencies could increase global trade by as much as US\$ 1 trillion and create as many as 21 million jobs worldwide. Furthermore,

a recent study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) found that reducing global trade costs related to trade facilitation by just 1 percent would lead to a \$40 billion increase in world income.

Table 1: Cost, time and documents required to export and import

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<i>Cost to import (US\$ per container)</i>										
LLDCs	2,701	2,701	2,727	3,068	3,155	3,368	3,411	3,917	4,167	4,344
Transit developing countries	1,298	1,321	1,289	1,452	1,472	1,504	1,522	1,561	1,619	1,599
<i>Cost to export (US\$ per container)</i>										
LLDCs	2,211	2,211	2,242	2,554	2,629	2,746	2,792	3,164	3,328	3,444
Transit developing countries	1,024	1,040	1,035	1,170	1,193	1,220	1,249	1,267	1,309	1,301
<i>Time to import (days)</i>										
LLDCs	57.1	56.8	53.5	51.7	49.3	47.8	47.2	49.9	49.3	49.1
Transit developing countries	38.3	34.8	32.2	30.2	28.8	27.9	27.5	27.8	27.3	26.5
<i>Time to export (days)</i>										
LLDCs	48.1	48.1	46.9	46.4	44.2	42.5	41.9	42.1	41.5	40.8
Transit developing countries	30.5	27.7	26.7	25.2	24.3	23.7	23.2	22.9	22.4	22.2
<i>Documents to import (number)</i>										
LLDCs	11.5	11.5	10.7	10.7	10.4	10.2	10.3	10.2	10.2	10.1
Transit developing countries	9.8	9.2	8.7	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.3	8.5	8.4	8.4
<i>Documents to export (number)</i>										
LLDCs	9.3	9.3	8.9	8.8	8.6	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5
Transit developing countries	7.8	7.7	7.4	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.1

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

In order to stimulate trade, it is critical to lower trade costs and streamline cross-border trade, in particular through harmonization of transport and trade facilitation laws and regulations, standardization and simplification of the procedures and documents. Standardization and harmonization fosters convergence, reduces the cost and time of trading and ultimately can create larger trading opportunities. The main vehicle to achieving harmonization, standardization and simplification of rules, procedures and documentation is through the accession to and ratification of international conventions on transit transport and trade facilitation.

Box 1: Effects of transport delays on costs and performance

- Border-related costs, when importing goods, may amount to as much as 15 per cent of the value of the goods being traded;
- Only about 25 per cent of delays is due to poor road or port infrastructure; 75 per cent is due to non-tariff barriers, such as numerous customs and other tax procedures, clearances and cargo inspections - often before the containers reach the port;
- On average, each additional day that a product is delayed prior to being shipped reduces trade by at least 1 per cent; the effect is larger for time-sensitive agricultural goods - one day of delay reduces the relative exports of such products per country by 7 per cent on average;
- One-day reduction in delays before a cargo sails to its export destination is equivalent to reducing the distance to trading partners by more than 85 km;
- Increasing global capacity in trade facilitation by half, when compared with the global average, would increase world trade by US\$ 377 billion, amounting to a 9.7 per cent rise in global trade.

Source: OECD

As mentioned, the VPoA calls for full and effective implementation of international conventions on transport and transit as well as bilateral, sub-regional and regional agreements. The VPoA, under its priority areas on fundamental transit policy issues and infrastructure development, sets specific, ambitious objectives such as reducing travel time along corridors with the aim of allowing transit cargo to move 300-400 kilometres per 24 hours; significantly reducing the time spent at land borders; improving intermodal connectivity; significantly increasing the quality of roads, including increasing the share of paved roads; expanding and upgrading the railway infrastructure in LLDCs; and completing missing links in the regional road and railway transit transport networks. In order to achieve these specific goals within the ten years of implementing the VPoA, it is important to improve transit cooperation between the LLDCs and the transit countries under the framework of relevant legal instruments.

On trade facilitation, the specific objectives of the VPoA are to further simplify, harmonize and streamline border crossing and transit procedures; to improve transit facilities and their efficiency with the aims of reducing port and border delays and transaction costs for LLDCs, respectively; and to ensure that all transit regulations, formalities and procedures for traffic in transit are published and updated in accordance with the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). Achievement of these specific objectives will depend on improved cooperation between the LLDCs and the transit developing countries in particular under the framework of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

IV. Formal procedures for becoming a party to international conventions

There are legal steps and requirements that need to be followed for states to become a party to an international convention. Transit transport treaties typically appoint the Secretary-General of the United Nations as their depositary, which means that the Secretary-General keeps custody of the original of the treaty, receives any signatures, instruments, notifications and communications relating to participation in the treaty, and informs States of such legal acts and the entry into force of the treaty. The Secretary-General is the depositary of more than 560 multilateral treaties concluded in the framework of the United Nations, in various areas of international relations, such as human rights, protection of the environment, commodities, disarmament, etc. The Treaty Section of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) is the sole office responsible for the discharge of the depositary functions of the Secretary-General. All information on the status of United Nations treaties (number of Parties, date of entry into force, signatures, ratifications, accessions by States, etc.) is available on the website: <https://treaties.un.org>.

The process of becoming a party to a multilateral treaty is a complex one. After the end of the negotiations on the treaty and the adoption of the text, multilateral treaties usually set a date from which States may sign the treaty, thus signaling their intention to launch the domestic process to express their consent to be bound by the treaty. Through their signature, States also undertake not to refrain from acts that would defeat the object and purpose of the treaty.

The domestic process of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to a multilateral treaty depends on the legislation of each country. Once these processes are concluded, States shall submit to the depositary their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. These instruments must be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs, and must contain an unambiguous expression of the State's intent to consider itself bound by the treaty on the international plane.

Box 2: 2016 Treaty Event

A special occasion for ceremonies for the signing of multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General, or for the deposit of the instruments relating to such treaties (ratification, acceptance, approval, accession, etc.) is the annual Treaty Event. The 2016 Treaty Event is to be held from 19 to 23 September 2016 at the margins of the general debate of the 71st United Nations General Assembly. Several conventions will be highlighted for accession, including the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982), the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (1975), the Customs Convention on Containers (1972) and the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956), among others. Member States are urged to take advantage of this opportunity to ratify, accept, approve or accede to these and/or other international conventions.

All instruments relating to the participation in a multilateral treaty (including, ratification, acceptance, approval or accession) must be deposited with the Treaty Section, which discharges the depositary functions of the Secretary-General. The original may be sent to the Treaty Section

by mail or courier; it can also be deposited in the course of a solemn ceremony with officials of the Treaty Section. The Section accepts to proceed to the deposit of an instrument on the basis of a signed copy, provided that the original is sent to the Section as soon as possible thereafter.

Following the deposit of the instrument, the treaty does not enter into force immediately. Different conventions have different timelines for entry into force. It is worth noting that becoming a party to a convention does not end the process for the country: with the entry into force of the convention, the State becomes enjoys the rights and will become bound by the obligations relating to the implementation of the Convention. The benefits only come from effective implementation.

Following the entry into force of a convention, its implementation is no longer overseen by the Treaty Section, but rather by the offices that discharge the secretariat functions of each convention. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which is one of the five United Nations regional commissions, is the Secretariat of many transport-related conventions. UNECE's work in the field of transport in particular, aims to promote sustainable transport which is safe, clean and competitive, through the development of freight and personal mobility by inland transport modes by improving traffic safety, environmental performance, energy efficiency, inland transport security, infrastructure development and efficient service provision in the transport sector. The work is guided and supervised by the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), a unique intergovernmental forum dedicated to inland transport.

The primary focus of the ITC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as of the ECOSOC Committees serviced by the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division, is to administer the 58 United Nations Conventions, agreements and other legal instruments which shape the international legal framework for inland transport. The international legal framework provided under the auspices of UNECE covers road, rail, inland waterway and intermodal transport, as well as road safety, facilitation of border crossing, dangerous goods transport and vehicle construction.

V. Highlights of selected International Conventions on trade and transport facilitation

a. WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (WTO)

In December 2013, WTO members concluded negotiations on a Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) at the Bali Ministerial Conference, as part of a wider "Bali Package". The TFA aims to further expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit and thereby significantly cut the costs of trade. An amendment protocol for the TFA was adopted by the WTO General Council in November 2014 to bring the TFA into the WTO's legal framework. The Agreement will enter into force when two-thirds of WTO members ratify it and deposit their instruments of acceptance with the WTO Secretariat.

Summary of Potential Benefits

Of particular importance for LLDCs are the provisions covering goods in transit, as well as the requirements on customs-related fees, procedures and documentation; transparency; trade facilitation measures; and improving cooperation between different countries' customs authorities and border agencies. Additionally, the Agreement contains innovative special and differential treatment provisions for developing countries, related to the capacity of each country to implement the provisions of the Agreement.

The WTO notes that the full implementation of the TFA will have a greater effect on some product sectors and regions than on others. In particular, speeding up the clearance of goods across borders, trade facilitation could provide a big boost to trade in perishable agricultural goods and to intermediate manufactured goods. According to updated analysis from the OECD¹, the full implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement could reduce the costs of trade between 12.5 per cent and 17.5 per cent worldwide, with developing countries that are open to trade likely to benefit the most. Potential cost reduction from a full implementation of the TFA is 16.5% of total costs for low income countries, 17.4% for lower-middle income countries, 14.6% for upper-middle income countries and 11.8% for OECD countries. The WTO notes that for LLDCs, the full implementation of the TFA would reduce global trade costs by an average of 15.4%.² Improvements in the area of formalities (simplification of trade documents; streamlining of border procedures; and automation of the border process) appear to have the greatest impact on trade costs, generating cost savings of 2.8% to 4.2% depending on the level of development.

According to the WTO, the implementation of the TFA would also reduce the time to import by over a day and a half and the time to export by two days. Other benefits from the full implementation of the WTO TFA include creation of significant export diversification gains for developing countries; increased opportunities for implementing developing countries to participate in global value chains; increased likelihood of micro, small and medium-sized firms to export and to increase their export shares than large firms; and increased ability for developing countries to attract more foreign direct investment.³

Status of Ratification

The TFA will enter into force once two thirds of WTO members (108) complete their domestic ratification process. Early ratification and subsequent implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement is very important. There has been encouraging progress in the ratification of the agreement. Some LLDCs and transit countries are among those who have already ratified the agreement. As of 13 June 2016, 9 LLDCs and 11 transit countries have ratified the TFA (see annex 1 for details).

¹ OECD (2015)

Trade Facilitation Indicators: The Potential Impact of Trade Facilitation on Developing Countries' Trade (OECD Trade Policy Paper No. 144, 2013)

² WTO World Trade Report 2015

³ WTO World Trade Report 2015

Status of Ratification of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement as of 13 June 2016

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of countries ratified	10	21	10	37*	3	81
Number of LLDCs	5	2	1	1	-	9
Number of transit dev. countries	3	8	1	-	-	12

Source: WTO

*The European Union ratified the Agreement on behalf of its member states.

How to become a party to the agreement?

It is important to encourage countries to ratify the agreement so as to enable the agreement to come into force as soon as possible. A WTO member should formally ratify the TFA and deposit their instruments of acceptance with the WTO Secretariat. Furthermore, LLDCs and transit developing countries should ensure that they notify the WTO of their capabilities to implement the different provisions of the TFA, in order to receive the necessary technical assistance.

b. Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods Under Cover of TIR Carnets (The TIR Convention), 1975 (United Nations Convention⁴)

The TIR Convention is a UN Convention which is a valuable trade and transport facilitation instrument with 69 Contracting Parties (68 countries and the European Union). The TIR Convention offers the legal, procedural and operational framework for transit. The TIR Convention, adopted in 1975, is a successor agreement to the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets adopted in 1959. Today, the TIR system is operational in 58 countries.

Summary of Potential Benefits

The TIR Convention enables a vehicle or container covered by a specific customs document - the TIR Carnet – to travel by road from one customs office of departure to a customs office of destination, without intermediate check of the goods carried and without the deposit of a financial guarantee at each border. The procedure includes the use of secure vehicles, an international guarantee chain, set up under the Convention, to cover duties and taxes at risk throughout the journey. The TIR Carnet certifies the contents of the cargo as checked at the customs office of departure and also serves as a guarantee document (proof of the existence of a guarantee). This process results in a minimum number of procedures and delays at borders and in lower transport costs.

TIR Carnets are issued by the secretariat of the International Road Transport Union (IRU) in Geneva, pursuant to its authorization by the TIR Contracting Parties, and distributed to national

⁴ UNECE is the Secretariat of the Convention

associations representing IRU in the countries which are Contracting Parties to the Convention. To obtain a TIR Carnet, the carrier must belong to a national association which can furnish professional and economic guarantees and which is authorized to issue carnets. The vehicle and containers used must fulfill technical and other conditions laid down in the Convention.

Thus, the TIR system used by the TIR transit regime is an example of how an international guarantee chain operates. A guaranteeing association in a particular country and authorized by the Customs of that country guarantees payment within that country of any duties and taxes which may become due in the event of any irregularity occurring in the course of a TIR transport operation. This national guaranteeing association guarantees payment of the duties and taxes of national and foreign carriers under TIR Carnets which have been issued by that national guaranteeing association itself or by an affiliated association in another country.

Box 4. Specific benefits of the TIR System

- Goods move across international borders with minimum interference from authorities because of TIR and related streamlined border crossing procedures
- Opening the TIR procedure and Customs clearance take place at internal Customs points and not at often congested borders or in likewise crowded ports
- Possibility to implement dedicated quick “Green Lanes” for all TIR trucks with all related facilities
- Reduced delays resulting in less costs for trade and international transport of goods
- Accrued security in the supply chain: only approved hauliers and vehicles; loaded vehicles doing transport operations sealed with seals mutually acknowledged by Customs
- Guaranteed payment of Customs duties and taxes in the case of irregularities thanks to a reliable international guarantee chain
- No restriction as to the mode of transport used, i.e. TIR intermodal operations possible
- High rate of return on investments, if needed, for the introduction of the system coupled with reasonable permanent costs of operation for all actors involved: trade and transport operators, Customs, etc.; most physical facilities and institutional arrangements as well as system maintenance required by TIR management serving various other purposes than just the operation of the TIR System (spin-off effect and cost dissemination)
- Extensive IT support

Source: IRU study Krausz P. 2015, Economic Benefits of TIR: UNESCAP Focus

A 2015 an IRU study⁵ quantified potential economic benefits of using TIR in 9 selected UNESCAP countries (Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam) based on the volume (weight) of traded goods expressed in the number of 20-tonne load units and over the period 2014-2018. The study estimated that the potential economic benefit of implementing TIR is between 0.14% and 1.31% of national GDP. This shows that there are significant potential monetary savings in implementing the TIR

⁵ Krausz P. 2015, Economic Benefits of TIR: UNESCAP Focus, Study mandated by the International Road Transport Union (IRU), Geneva.

Convention and that the nine countries examined should either seriously consider the practical implementation of the TIR Convention or undertake the necessary diplomatic steps for TIR accession.

Box 3: Further steps in the TIR system

The intergovernmental process towards the computerization of the TIR procedure (eTIR) has gained momentum. In Geneva, TIR Contracting Parties, have concluded the work on the technical and conceptual aspects of eTIR and have established a dedicated expert body to work on developing the appropriate legal framework for computerization. At the same time, Contracting Parties launched a pilot project on eTIR that would serve as a basis for identifying any potential drawbacks in the system before complete operationalization of eTIR.

UNECE organized and held a Regional Seminar on the application of the TIR Convention in Dushanbe, in May 2015, with the participation of officials from Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Azerbaijan, among others. The Seminar demonstrated the increased use of TIR in Central Asia, as well as the readiness of many countries in the region to proceed with computerization of customs procedures and establishment of single window concepts. The main message that emerged from the Seminar is that several countries in the region are now mature in their policy goals and strategic plans to achieve deeper integration and modernization of their trade and transport processes, especially border crossing procedures.

Status of Ratification

As of 14 April 2016, the TIR Convention has been ratified by 69 parties, including the European Union. The TIR Convention is widely adhered to in continental Europe, but it is applicable to all countries in the world. That being said, it is not fully adhered to in regions with landlocked developing countries because not all countries have acceded to the convention. The summary status of ratification of the TIR convention is presented in table 2 below.

Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of parties to the Convention	4	16	2	45*	2	69
Number of LLDCs	0	7	0	4	-	11
Number of transit dev. countries	1	2	2	-	-	5

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection, available at <https://treaties.un.org/>

*Includes the European Union as a party to the convention.

How to become a party to the Convention?

The country has to:

- Ratify or accede to the Convention in accordance with national legal procedures and modification, if need be, of national laws, regulations and administrative instructions in line with the provisions of the Convention;
- Deposit the instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General, who discharges his depositary functions through the Treaty Section of the Office for Legal Affairs of the United Nations in New York (as per guidelines listed above).

c. International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982) (United Nations Convention)⁶

The International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, generally known as the “Harmonization Convention”, seeks to harmonize and simplify international frontier controls. It forms one of the most broadly accepted legal foundations of coordinated border management. The Convention aims at streamlining administrative procedures at borders and reducing the number and duration of controls carried out by customs authorities. It applies to all goods being imported, exported or in transit and to all modes of transport. In substance, the Convention covers the following control services at border crossing points: Customs procedures and other controls; Medico-sanitary inspection; Veterinary inspection; Phytosanitary inspection; Control of compliance with technical standards; Quality control measures.

Summary of Potential Benefits

Through the harmonization of border controls at the national level and facilitation of control procedures, the implementation of the Harmonization Convention can contribute to a better use of scarce manpower and technical resources at border stations. More specifically, the Convention foresees measures that include joint controls of goods and documents through the provision of shared facilities, same opening hours and same types of services at the same border. It aims at promoting the one-stop-shop principle for border controls and also provides best practices for efficient controls of goods at border crossings. The Convention thus provides the basis for the conclusion of bilateral agreements on concrete measures. These measures can contribute to a better flow of goods in international transport to the benefit of the national economy. It also encourages cooperation and collaboration of public and private stakeholders of both sides of the border to address the issues and the problem they encounter with a view to finding appropriate responses. As a result, the Convention reduces border delays, leading to lower transport costs.

Advantages for the transport industry include: the speeding up of border crossings by transport vehicles and reduced waiting time due to nonaligned opening hours as a result of improved cooperation among the various national border control services as well as improved coordination of border crossing procedures at adjacent border crossing points. Apart from Customs procedures, a number of other regulations falling within the competence of various national administrations are emerging more and more often. Examples of such regulations are: medico-sanitary, veterinary, phytosanitary inspections, controls of compliance with technical standards and

⁶ UNECE is the Secretariat of the Convention

quality controls in general. The cooperation of the various control and inspection services involved and the abolition of not essential procedures, particularly for transit traffic, could facilitate international transport considerably.

Status of Ratification

As of 14 April 2016, 56 States and the European Union were Contracting Parties to the Convention.

International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of parties to the Convention	5	8	1	43*	0	57
Number of LLDCs	1	6	0	4	-	11
Number of transit dev. countries	1	1	0	-	-	2

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection, available at <https://treaties.un.org/>

*Includes the European Union as a party to the Convention.

How to become a party to the Convention

The country has to:

- Ratify or accede to the Convention in accordance with national legal procedures and modification, if need be, of national laws, regulations and administrative instructions in line with the provisions of the Convention;
- Deposit the instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General, who discharges his depositary functions through the Treaty Section of the Office for Legal Affairs of the United Nations in New York (as per guidelines listed above).

d. Customs Convention on Containers, 1972 (United Nations Convention⁷)

The Customs Convention on Containers 1972 replaced the Customs Convention on Containers of 1956. It has two principal objectives. First, it provides for temporary importation of containers, free of import duties and taxes and free of import prohibitions and restrictions, subject to re-exportation within three months from the date of importation. Secondly, the Convention provides for approval of containers for transport under Customs seal. Containers approved by a Contracting Party as complying with the provisions of the Convention for the transport of goods under Customs seal shall be accepted by other Contracting Parties for any system of international carriage involving such sealing.

⁷ UNECE is the Secretariat of the Convention

Summary of Potential Benefits

For customs authorities and the national economy the benefits stems from the fact that authorities can avoid the organization of national documentary systems, if they so wish, and the administration of national guarantee systems. However, customs authorities retain the right, under certain circumstances, to require the furnishing of a form of security and/or the production of customs documents. In case control measures are to be carried out, customs authorities can request to check the records kept by container operators or their representatives in the country as regards all container movements. Thus, the Convention provides customs authorities with a flexible instrument to reduce administrative work while at the same time, safeguarding customs control.

For the transport industry, the Convention allows for the temporary importation of containers into a country without payment or the deposit of duties and taxes and, in principle, without the production of customs documents. As the Convention also provides for the possibility to use temporarily imported containers at least once for internal traffic before re-exportation, container transport operators not only can avoid the deposit of large sums of security upon importation and avoid delays in border crossing procedures, but can also react in a flexible manner to emerging transport needs.

The Customs Convention on Containers requires that containers admitted temporarily into the territory of one of the Contracting Parties must be re-exported within three months. This period can be extended, provided that the containers are in an unaltered state and cannot be substituted by another or similar container. The Convention also imposes restrictions as to the use of temporarily imported containers in internal traffic. It is required that the journey in a country of temporary importation shall bring the container by a reasonably direct route to, or nearer to, the place where export cargo is to be loaded or from where the container is to be exported empty. It is also required that the container is used only once in internal traffic before being re-exported.

Status of Ratification

The Convention is widely adhered to in Europe. As of 14 April 2016, 39 countries are Contracting Parties to the Convention.

Status of ratification of Customs Convention on Containers (1972)

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of parties to the Convention	5	8	2	20	4	39
Number of LLDCs	1	3	0	2	-	6
Number of transit dev. countries	1	1	0	-	-	2

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection, available at <https://treaties.un.org/>

How to become a party to the Convention

The country has to:

- Ratify or accede to the Convention in accordance with national legal procedures and modification, if need be, of national laws, regulations and administrative instructions in line with the provisions of the Convention;
- Deposit the instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General, who discharges his depositary functions through the Treaty Section of the Office for Legal Affairs of the United Nations in New York (as per guidelines listed above).

e. United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) (United Nations Convention⁸)

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) opened for signature in December 1982 and entered into force in November 1994, 12 months after the date of deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification or accession. UNCLOS is one of the most comprehensive, and likely one of the most important legal agreements in history. It is based on the fundamental premise that all the problems of the oceans are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole. It addresses issues of relevance for the LLDCs, including (i) access to and from the sea; the (ii) transit, and the terms and modalities thereof; (iii) freedoms of the high seas, and other internationally lawful uses of the sea related to these freedoms, in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of coastal States; (iv) access to the surplus of the allowable catch of the living resources of coastal States of the same sub-region or region; (v) the granting of nationality to ships and rights of navigation, as well as (vi) benefits from activities carried out in the international seabed area.

Benefits of UNCLOS for LLDCs

The Preamble of the Convention recognizes the necessity to take into account the interests and needs of mankind as a whole and, in particular, the special interests and needs of developing countries, whether coastal or landlocked. Several UNCLOS articles refer to the LLDCs. Among them, the provisions that concern the right of innocent passage in the territorial sea (art. 17), freedoms in the exclusive economic zones of coastal States (EEZ) (arts. 58, 62, 69 and 70) and on the high seas (Art 87, 90). For instance, under article 62(2), coastal states are to determine their capacity to harvest the living resources of the EEZ and where they did not have the capacity to harvest the entire allowable catch of a fishery they are to give other states access to the surplus, having particular regard to landlocked states. As for the freedom of the high seas, article 87 states that the high seas are open to all States, whether coastal or landlocked and all enjoyed exactly the same rights.

⁸ Secretariat of the Convention is the United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS)

Article 69 (1) of UNCLOS provides that the Land-locked States shall have the right to participate, on an equitable basis, in the exploitation of an appropriate part of the surplus of the living resources of the EEZ of coastal States of the same sub-region or region, taking into account the relevant economic and geographical circumstances of all the States concerned and in conformity with the provisions of article 69 and of articles 61 and 62.

Article 125 establishes the right of LLDCs of access to and from the sea and freedom of transit. The freedom of transit, however, is not self-executing: the terms and modalities for exercising freedom of transit shall be agreed between the land-locked States and transit States concerned through bilateral, sub-regional or regional agreements. Transit States, in the exercise of their full sovereignty over their territory, shall have the right to take all measures necessary to ensure that the rights and facilities provided for in this Part for land-locked States shall in no way infringe their legitimate interests.

In order for the LLDCs to benefit from the regime established by UNCLOS, they need to first become party to it.

Status of Ratification

As of 14 April 2016, there were 167 Contracting Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including the European Union.

Status of Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of parties to the Convention	47	41	29	44*	6	167
Number of LLDCs	11	3	2	3	-	19
Number of transit dev. countries	18	7	4	-	-	29

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection, available at <https://treaties.un.org/>

*Includes European Union as a party to the Convention. European Union deposited instrument of formal confirmation.

How to become a party to the Convention

The country has to:

- Ratify or accede to the Convention in accordance with national legal procedures and modification, if need be, of national laws, regulations and administrative instructions in line with the provisions of the Convention;
- Deposit the instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General, who discharges his depositary functions through the Treaty Section of the Office for Legal Affairs of the United Nations in New York (as per guidelines listed above).

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the Office of Legal Affairs is available to support LLDCs through the provision of information, advise and assistance on UNCLOS and its implementation.

f. International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (The Revised Kyoto Convention) (World Customs Organization)

The Revised Kyoto Convention (RKC) is an international agreement that provides a set of comprehensive Customs procedures to facilitate legitimate international trade while effecting Customs controls, including the protection of Customs revenue and society. It deals with key principles of simplified and harmonized Customs procedures, such as transparency and predictability of Customs actions, standardization and simplification of the goods declaration and supporting documents, simplified procedures for authorized persons, maximum use of information technology, coordinated interventions with other border agencies, minimum necessary Customs control to ensure compliance with regulations and modern Customs techniques (e.g. risk management, pre-arrival information, and post-clearance audit). The RKC was adopted in 1999 and entered into force in February 2006.

Summary of Potential Benefits

The revised Kyoto Convention promotes trade facilitation and effective controls through its legal provisions that detail the application of simple yet efficient procedures. The revised Convention also contains new and obligatory rules for its application which all Contracting Parties must accept without reservation.

The WCO⁹ highlights the tangible benefits of implementing specific RKC measures as: faster release of goods; lower trade costs; increased revenue; more FDI and economic competitiveness; various non-economic benefits; and the use of RKC as a basis for implementing other Customs instruments and tools. In particular, many of the RKC measures such as electronic data interchange customs systems, customs risk management systems and pre-arrival information, are expected to lead to faster customs release times and lower trade costs. It has also been shown that RKC implementation serves as a basis for implementing other customs instruments and tools, including for example the authorized economic operators systems.

Status of Ratification

Status of Ratification of the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedure (1999) - The Revised Kyoto Convention

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of parties to the Convention	28	26	3	42*	4	103
Number of LLDCs	10	3	0	3	-	16
Number of transit dev. countries	10	8	1	-	-	19

Source: WCO

*Includes European Union as a party to the Convention.

⁹ WCO paper: Benefits of the Revised Kyoto Convention, available at http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/facilitation/instrument-and-tools/conventions/~/_/media/WCO/Public/Global/PDF/Topics/Facilitation/Instruments%20and%20Tools/Conventions/Kyoto%20Convention/BenefitsRKC.ashx

As of 14 April 2016, there were 103 Contracting Parties to the Revised Kyoto Convention, including the European Union.

How to become a party to the Convention

A State should deposit the country's instrument of accession to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Revised Kyoto Convention - RKC) to the World Customs Organization.

g. Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956) (United Nations Convention¹⁰)

The Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles facilitates the temporary admission into a country that is Party to the Convention of commercial road vehicles registered in another country that is also Party to the Convention without payment of import duties and taxes for the vehicle. The Convention sets up the principle of temporary importation of such vehicles under cover of the international document "Carnet de passage en douane". These Carnets guarantee payment of import duties and taxes on the vehicles to national competent authorities if the vehicle that has been temporarily admitted is not re-exported. The Carnets are issued by authorized organizations or associations, which guarantee the payment. The Convention describes the functioning of the temporary importation procedures and the documents to be used as well as claims procedures to be applied when the exportation of vehicles has not been done within the time limits prescribed.

Summary of Potential Benefits

The Convention introduces a standardized procedure and provides for an internationally recognized document, which replace national procedures and documents, often different from one country to another. The procedure also avoids the operation of national guarantee systems, as all taxes and duties are covered. In addition, it ensures accurate filling-in by competent authorities and transport operators. As a result, the Convention helps minimize procedures and delays at border crossings.

Status of Ratification

The Convention is open to all United Nations Members. As of 14 April 2016, 41 States and the European Union are contracting parties to the Convention.

¹⁰ UNECE is the Secretariat of the Convention

Status of Ratification of the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles

	Africa	Asia-Pacific	Latin America and Caribbean	Europe	Other	TOTAL
Number of parties to the Convention	2	6	1	33*	0	42
Number of LLDCs	0	3	0	3	-	6
Number of transit dev. countries	1	1	0	-	-	2

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection, available at <https://treaties.un.org/>

*Includes European Union as a party to the Convention.

How to become a party to the Convention

The country has to:

- Ratify or accede to the Convention in accordance with national legal procedures and modification, if need be, of national laws, regulations and administrative instructions in line with the provisions of the Convention;
- Deposit the instrument of ratification or accession with the Secretary-General, who discharges his depositary functions through the Treaty Section of the Office for Legal Affairs of the United Nations in New York (as per guidelines listed above).

VI. Recommendations for Nurturing Effective Implementation of Important International Conventions and Agreements on transit transport and trade facilitation

More needs to be done to encourage accession of Member States to the key international conventions related to facilitation of trade and transit transport, in particular by LLDCs and transit countries. However, evidence shows that countries face various challenges when it comes to accession to key international conventions. A study undertaken by ESCAP¹¹ to examine issues relating to participation in international conventions in the region found that some countries had concerns with respect to the cost of adjustment to meet the requirements of conventions; difficulties in implementation; lack of involvement in elaboration and amendment of conventions; and inadequate national capacity. A study undertaken by ECA¹² on the implementation of legal instruments on the African continent found that African countries were implementing trade and transport legal instruments at varying degrees through several regional, national and bilateral efforts. Although several agreements had been reached, the key challenge was varied degree of

¹¹ ESCAP, 2013, Discussion Paper on Harmonization and Strengthening of the Regulatory and Legal Framework Pertaining to International Transport and Transit; Presented at the ESCAP/OHRLLS/ECE/Government of Lao PDR Final Regional Review of the Almaty Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries held 5-7 March 2013 in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic.

¹² ECA, 2013, Report on the Implementation of Trade and Transport Legal Instruments in Africa, Presented at the Experts Group Meeting (EGM) on assessing the status of implementation of trade and transport facilitation instruments and measures in Africa, on 15 July 2013 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

effective implementation due to economic, political and geographical constraints. The study noted that ratification of key international conventions such as the TIR Convention was not as high as in the other regions.

In 2015, OHRLLS undertook regional studies for Latin America, Euro-Asia and Africa on Improving transit cooperation, trade and trade facilitation for the benefit of LLDCs and prepared a synthesized global report. The reports were presented and discussed in an Expert Group Meeting on Improving Transit Cooperation, Trade and Trade Facilitation for the Benefit of the LLDCs held in December 2015. The discussions in the meeting noted that ratification of the relevant legal instruments on transport and trade facilitation was low and that implementation was not fully effective. The major challenges faced by countries were identified as: lack of awareness about the legal instruments and the potential benefits from ratification; lack of capacity; weak enforcement mechanisms; and high turnover of experts and regulatory staff. The meeting stressed that full implementation of the legal instruments can generate substantial revenue for governments and for the private sector and simultaneously create the conditions to advance national and regional efforts toward the achievement of the SDGs as well as the Vienna Programme of Action.

As a way forward, the following recommendations are proposed:

- To ensure full implementation, national governments must evaluate the suitability, adaptability and the process of becoming party to international legal instruments and identify the duration and changes necessary for full compliance. In this regard, in depth studies and analyses encompassing the costs and benefits of joining the conventions are needed in order to obtain greater insights.
- Based on these studies, clear strategic options and recommendations should be formulated which can then feed into developing robust and effective advocacy tools to raise awareness of the legal conventions and their potential benefits.
- Guidelines could also be developed for use in implementing the conventions and agreements.
- Once ratified or acceded to, these legal instruments must be properly documented and disseminated to the general public who are the consumers of trade and transport instruments. Mainstreaming of the international conventions as well as other regional agreements at the national level is important as it will allow for their incorporation in national plans and budgetary allocations.
- The political will at the national level to become party to the international conventions and effectively implementing the obligations is essential.
- International organizations, including the United Nations Organizations, the IRU, World Bank, WTO, WCO and others should provide necessary capacity building to promote greater awareness and understanding of the implications of accession to the international conventions. They should also provide technical assistance, as well as training sessions and workshops for relevant government officials on the importance of the conventions. It is critical that Governments, in particular those of LLDCs, present their requests for technical support to these institutions.
- Finally, Member States are encouraged to participate in the 2016 Treaty Event that will be held in New York at the sidelines of the 71st Session of the General Assembly from

20 to 23 September 2016 and to take advantage of this opportunity to visibly accede to these and other international conventions.

Annex 1. Summary Status of Ratification of Key International Trade and Transport Facilitation Conventions

Convention	LLDCs	Transit Countries	Total
World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)	9	12	81
International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (the Revised Kyoto Convention)	16	19	103
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	19	29	167
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)	11	2	57
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)	11	5	69
Customs Convention on Containers (1972)	6	2	39
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)	10	9	64
Vienna convention on Road Traffic (1968)	13	11	73
Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (1956)	10	1	55
Customs convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	6	2	42
Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949)	13	18	96

Source: UN OLA Treaty Collection, UNECE, WCO, WTO

Annex 2. Status of Ratification of International Conventions by African Countries

Convention	#	Category	Names of Countries
World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)	10	LLDCs	Botswana, Lesotho, Mali, Niger, Zambia (5)
		Transit	Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Togo (3)
		Others	Mauritius, Seychelles (2)
International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (the Revised Kyoto Convention)	28	LLDCs	Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe (10)
		Transit	Algeria, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo (10)
		Others	Cape Verde, Egypt, Gabon, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Sudan (8)
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	47	LLDCs	Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe (11)
		Transit	Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania (18)
		Others	Cabo Verde, Comoros, Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tunisia (18)
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)	5	LLDCs	Lesotho (1)
		Transit	South Africa (1)
		Others	Liberia, Morocco, Tunisia (3)
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)	4	LLDCs	
		Transit	Algeria (1)
		Others	Liberia, Morocco, Tunisia (3)
Customs Convention on Containers (1972)	5	LLDCs	Burundi (1)
		Transit	Algeria (1)
		Others	Liberia, Morocco, Tunisia (3)
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)	9	LLDCs	Central African Republic (1)
		Transit	Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Senegal (4)
		Others	Liberia, Morocco, Seychelles, Tunisia (4)
Vienna convention on Road Traffic (1968)	12	LLDCs	Central African Republic, Niger, Zimbabwe (3)
		Transit	Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa (5)
		Others	Liberia, Morocco, Seychelles, Tunisia (4)
Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (1956)	2	LLDCs	
		Transit	
		Others	Morocco, Tunisia (2)
Customs convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	2	LLDCs	
		Transit	Algeria (1)
		Others	Sierra Leone (1)
Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949)	26	LLDCs	Botswana, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe (10)
		Transit	Algeria, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo (10)
		Others	Congo, Egypt, Madagascar, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Tunisia (6)

Source: UN OLA Treaty Collection, UNECE, WCO, WTO

Annex 3. Status of Ratification of International Conventions by Asian-Pacific Countries

Convention	#	Category	Names of Countries
World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)	21	LLDCs	Kazakhstan, Lao PDR (2)
		Transit	Cambodia, China, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam (8)
		Others	Brunei Darussalam, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong China, Japan, Macao China, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates (11)
International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (the Revised Kyoto Convention)	26	LLDCs	Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia (3)
		Transit	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Thailand, Viet Nam (8)
		Others	Bahrain, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Malaysia, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, Yemen (15)
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	41	LLDCs	Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal (3)
		Transit	Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, Viet Nam (7)
		Others	Bahrain, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Oman, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Yemen (31)
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)	8	LLDCs	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan (6)
		Transit	Iran (1)
		Others	Jordan (1)
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)	16	LLDCs	Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (7)
		Transit	Iran, Pakistan (2)
		Others	Indonesia, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Republic of Korea, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates (7)
Customs Convention on Containers (1972)	8	LLDCs	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan (3)
		Transit	China (1)
		Others	Indonesia, Lebanon, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia (4)
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)	15	LLDCs	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (6)
		Transit	India, Iran, Pakistan, Viet Nam (4)
		Others	Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Philippines, United Arab Emirates (5)
Vienna convention on Road Traffic (1968)	14	LLDCs	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (6)
		Transit	Iran, Pakistan, Viet Nam (3)
		Others	Bahrain, Kuwait, Philippines, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (5)
Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (1956)	10	LLDCs	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (6)
		Transit	Iran (1)
		Others	Jordan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic (3)
Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	6	LLDCs	Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan (3)
		Transit	Cambodia (1)
		Others	Saudi Arabia, Singapore (2)

Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949)	19	LLDCs	Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR (2)
		Transit	Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Thailand, Viet Nam (5)
		Others	Fiji, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates (12)

Source: UN OLA Treaty Collection, UNECE, WCO, WTO

*Cyprus is considered as European country

Annex 4. Status of Ratification of International Conventions by Latin American and Caribbean Countries

Convention	#	Category	Names of Countries
World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)	10	LLDCs	Paraguay (1)
		Transit	Brazil (1)
		Others	Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago (8)
International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (the Revised Kyoto Convention)	3	LLDCs	
		Transit	Argentina (1)
		Others	Cuba, Dominican Republic (2)
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	29	LLDCs	Bolivia, Paraguay (2)
		Transit	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay (4)
		Others	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago (23)
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)	1	LLDCs	
		Transit	
		Others	Cuba (1)
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)	2	LLDCs	
		Transit	Chile, Uruguay (2)
		Others	
Customs Convention on Containers (1972)	2	LLDCs	
		Transit	
		Others	Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago (2)
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)	3	LLDCs	
		Transit	Chile (1)
		Others	Cuba, Guyana (2)
Vienna convention on Road Traffic (1968)	6	LLDCs	
		Transit	Brazil, Peru, Uruguay (3)
		Others	Bahamas, Cuba, Guyana (3)
Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (1956)	0	LLDCs	
		Transit	
		Others	
Customs convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	1	LLDCs	
		Transit	
		Others	Cuba (1)
Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949)	13	LLDCs	Paraguay (1)
		Transit	Argentina, Chile, Peru (3)
		Others	Barbados, Cuba, Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela (9)

Source: UN OLA Treaty Collection, UNECE, WCO, WTO

Annex 5. Status of Ratification of International Conventions by European Countries

Convention	#	Category	Names of Countries
World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)	37	LLDCs	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom (36)
International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (the Revised Kyoto Convention)	42	LLDCs	Armenia, Azerbaijan, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (3)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom (39)
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	44	LLDCs	Armenia, Republic of Moldova, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (3)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (41)
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)	43	LLDCs	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (4)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (39)
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)	45	LLDCs	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (4)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (41)
Customs Convention on Containers (1972)	20	LLDCs	Armenia, Azerbaijan (2)
		Europe	Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine (18)
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)	37	LLDCs	Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (3)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine (34)

Vienna convention on Road Traffic (1968)	41	LLDCs	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (4)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine (37)
Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (1956)	43	LLDCs	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (4)
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (39)
Customs convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	33	LLDCs	Azerbaijan, Republic of Moldova, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (3)
		Europe	Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (30)
Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949)	33	LLDCs	
		Europe	Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (33)

Source: UN OLA Treaty Collection, UNECE, WCO, WTO

*Cyprus is considered as European country

Annex 6. Status of Ratification of International Conventions by Other Countries*

Convention	#	Names of Countries
World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement (2013)	3	Australia, New Zealand, United States of America
International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (1999) (the Revised Kyoto Convention)	4	Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United States of America
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)	6	Australia, Canada, Cook Islands, New Zealand, Niue, State of Palestine
International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (1982)	0	
Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of the TIR Carnets (1975)	2	Canada, United States of America
Customs Convention on Containers (1972)	4	Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United States of America
Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968)	0	
Vienna convention on Road Traffic (1968)	0	
Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (1956)	0	
Customs convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (1956)	0	
Geneva Convention on Road Traffic (1949)	5	Australia, Canada, Holy See, New Zealand, United States of America

Source: UN OLA Treaty Collection, UNECE, WCO, WTO

*Includes Non-UN Member States.