EC/Hungary agreement: road and combined goods transport

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PURPOSE : to conclude the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Hungary establishing certain conditions for the carriage of goods by road and the promotion of Combined Transport. CONTENT : the draft Agreement aims mainly to resolve the problem of road goods transport relations between Greece and the other Member States, in particular through the mutual exchange of road transit authorizations. Furthermore, this draft Agreement provides that the Community will receive annually 12,500 authorizations from Hungary. Each single authorization is valid for one return transit journey. The distribution of these authorizations among Member States, who will be responsable for issuing them to their hauliers, is the subject of a separate Council Regulation (refer to document procedure COD/1999/0267). In return, Hungary will receive from the Community annually 6,000 "blank" authorizations valid for a return transit journey, as well as 3,000 adhesive stamps for each Member State. On each "blank" authorization, the haulier of the partner State would have to validate beforehand the choice of transit route (i.e. the individual Member States transited on a journey) by attaching the adhesive stamp(s) for the relevant Member State(s) whose stamp is affixed to the authorization on both outward and return parts of the journey. All authorizations and adhesive stamps will be supplied by the services of the Commission to both Member and partner States, who will issue them to their hauliers at a charge so as to cover reasonable administrative expenses. The use of the authorization can only be used by vehicles complying at least with Euro I standards. The draft Agreement is concluded for a 5 year period which is renewable for another 3 years. As well as the principle of mutual exchange of transit authorizations, the draft Agreement lays down: - the conditions applicable to the transport of goods operations, mainly concerning the charges linked to transport operations (setting of non-discriminatory charges linked to infrastructure-use) and the use of the road infrastructures (setting of lower charges when the hauliers respect the EC norms of maximum weight allowed on upgraded sections of Eastern European transit routes); - the principles of harmonisation of Hungarian legislation on road transport with those of the Community (in particular, legislation on braking devices, sound levels and speed limitation devices); - the coordination of administrative aspects of road transport. In addition, this Agreement aims to favour combined transport in line with the applicable Community rules. It should also be noted that this Agreement shall become invalid when Hungary becomes a full Member of the European Union.