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**Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and  
Connectivity (TWG-STTC)**

24<sup>th</sup> Session  
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Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

**Road safety issues and policy interventions in SPECA countries**

(Item 4.7 of the Agenda)

*Note by UNECE/ESCAP*

1. About 1.35 million people globally die each year as a result of road traffic crashes —that’s nearly 3,698 deaths a day. Nearly half of those dying on the world’s roads are “vulnerable road users”: pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. In 2016, ninety-three per cent of the world's fatalities on the roads occur in low- and middle-income countries, even though these countries have approximately sixty per cent of the world's vehicles. Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among people aged between 15 and 29 years. Without sustained action, road traffic crashes are predicted to become the seventh leading cause of death by 2030. An estimated 50 million more people suffer non-fatal injuries, with many incurring a disability as a result of their injury.
2. Road traffic injuries cause considerable economic losses to individuals, their families, and to nations as a whole. These losses arise from the cost of treatment as well as lost productivity for those killed or disabled by their injuries, and for family members who need to take time off work or school to care for the injured. Road traffic crashes cost most countries 3% of their gross domestic product.
3. In 2010 United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/255 (GA) has proclaimed the current 2011-2020 decade, as the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety. The envisaged goal is to stabilize and reduce the forecasted level of road traffic fatalities worldwide through increasing the number of road safety activities conducted at the national, regional and global levels. Regrettably, there has been limited improvement in overall global road safety (killed, injured and accidents) since the launch of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety. Therefore, much remains to be

done to meet the Decade's goal, especially in low- and middle-income countries which are highly affected by road traffic fatalities and injuries.

4. In September 2015 in New York, United Nations member States officially adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Global leaders reaffirmed their commitment to international development and formally adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has set an ambitious target of halving the global number of deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020. Road safety is included as sub-goal 3.6 "By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents" of SDG 3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" and as sub-goal 11.2 "By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons" of SDG 11 "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable".

5. The GA Resolution A/70/L.44 adopted in April 2016, reaffirms the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets on road safety outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Resolution requests WHO, in collaboration with United Nations Regional Commissions, to continue facilitating a transparent, sustainable and participatory process with all stakeholders to assist countries to develop voluntary global performance targets on key risk factors and service delivery mechanisms to reduce road traffic fatalities and injuries. Finally, the resolution requests the UN Secretary-General to consider the possibility of establishing, from voluntary contributions, a Road Safety Trust Fund, to support the implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action and road safety-related SDGs.

6. In consideration of the global challenges encountered by the member countries, the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) was established in April 2018 as a multi-partner trust fund to facilitate concrete action toward achievement of the road safety targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Fund aims to help low- and middle-income countries put in place effective national road safety systems to a) substantially curb the number of fatalities and injuries from road crashes, and (b) reduce economic losses resulting from them. Its grants strengthen national and local capacity to manage and improve road safety by providing funding and technical expertise.

7. The Global Framework Plan of Action for Road Safety guides the Fund's activities, focusing on applying the safe system approach in road safety management: safe users; safe vehicles; safe roads;

and effective post-crash response, and addressing them as the essential blocks for developing an integrated and effective national road safety system.

8. Following the third session of its Advisory Board, held in Geneva on 3 September 2019, the United Nations Road Safety Fund launched its first formal call for project proposals. The Fund will disburse USD 4 million to finance selected projects aimed at contributing to reduce global road traffic fatalities, giving priority to individual country and multi-country projects having immediate and tangible impact. The call was officially opened in early October 2019, and project proposals should be submitted to the Participating United Nations Organizations no later than 4 December 2019. The available documents are at:<https://www.unece.org/unrsf/call-for-proposals/invitation.html>; <https://www.unece.org/unrsf/call-for-proposals/application-form.html>

### **UNECE Road safety activities**

#### **A. Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1)**

9. The Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) serviced by the UNECE secretariat is the only inter-governmental permanent road traffic safety body in the United Nations system. Participation in WP.1 is open to all countries across the world. Typically, WP.1 meets twice a year in Geneva, Switzerland. The UNECE Sustainable Transport Division provides the group's secretariat support: it services sessions, prepares documents, agendas and reports, collects and disseminates information and facilitates the liaison among Governments.

10. Amongst other matters, WP.1 considered amendment proposals to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic with a view to maintaining consistency between the convention and the provisions of vehicle regulations adopted in the framework of the 1958 Agreement, such as light and light signalling. Furthermore, WP.1 is considering a proposal to amend the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and has been discussing issues related to automated driving, the mutual recognition of driving permits, a safe system approach, multidisciplinary crash investigations and distracted driving.

11. Starting in 2014, WP.1 oversees the work of a Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals. The mandate of the Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals is to review and to suggest ways to facilitate better comprehension of road signs and a more effective implementation of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals.

## **B. United Nations legal instruments**

12. From the last TWG meeting, the number of contracting parties to the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic was changed to 98. Two new contracting parties joined 1968 Convention on Road Traffic bringing the total number to 79 and another joined 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals bringing the total number of contracting parties to 67. The number of contracting parties to the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals remains the same at 35.

13. Under the administration and responsibility of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Harmonized Technical United Nations Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be Fitted and/or be Used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these United Nations Regulations (Revision 3), and the 1998 Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or used on Wheeled Vehicles, had 56 and 38 contracting parties respectively, covering most of the countries with a major automotive industry. The number of contracting parties to the 1997 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections was increased to 15.

14. The World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) has recently adopted a considerable number of technical modifications to United Nations vehicle Regulations related to safety and environmental aspects with focus on modern driver assistant systems (Blind Spot Information System for the Detection of Bicycles) as well as automation of vehicles (Automated Emergency Braking Systems for passenger cars and light vans and Automated Controlled Steering Functions). In 2018 a formal Working Group on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles was established that delivered in 2019 first regulations on automated driving functionalities as well in proposals for United Nations Regulations on cyber-security and data protection. Furthermore, WP.29 has initiated further amendments to ECE Regulation No. 22 on Motorcycle Safety Helmets to further enhance the safety of riders of powered two wheelers but also to enhance their wear-ability in areas with high temperature / high humidity climate. In addition, the requirements for periodic technical inspection of vehicles have been extended by two new Rules on testing of LNG/LPG/CNG fuelled vehicles and on testing of electric and hybrid-electric vehicles. The 1997 Agreement was amended

with elements on conformity of technical inspection process requirements and thus strengthening the quality of periodic technical inspection regime.

15. As regards transport of dangerous goods, the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, in cooperation with the Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) and the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), finished in 2018 work to ensure harmonization of the international agreements for the transport of dangerous goods by road, rail and inland waterways with the provisions of the twentieth revised edition of the Model Regulations. This work resulted in the adoption of a series of amendments to the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Rail (RID) and the European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) to further enhance transport safety and security, for entry into force on 1 January 2019. These amendments address, for instance, transport of articles containing dangerous substances, transport and packing of electric storage systems (e.g.: new, defective or damaged lithium batteries), transport of unstable substances under temperature control or a modified concept for explosion protection on board tank vessels.

### **C. Technical assistance in the road safety field**

16. Road Safety Performance Review Kazakhstan - Based on results of the UNDA-funded project “Strengthening of the national road safety management capacities of selected developing countries and countries with economies in transition” – the Government of Kazakhstan agreed with UNECE to prepare Kazakhstan Road Safety Performance Review. The project will assist Kazakhstan to strengthen the road safety management capacity and effectively address and improve national road safety record. It will help Government to identify the most critical road safety aspects and priority needs by preparing Kazakhstan Road Safety Performance Review. The project should be completed until end 2020.

17. The capacity development workshop “The 1958 Agreement – a road map for implementation workshop” on United Nations legal instruments and technical regulations applied to the broad automotive sector, addressing the safety and environmental performance of wheeled vehicles, their subsystems and parts was held on 20-21 May 2019 in Tbilisi. The aim of the workshop was to strengthen knowledge of experts from Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan on how to efficiently implement provisions of the 1958 Agreement and update national legislation to be in full

conformity with the Agreement. The workshop provided hands-on training on United Nations Regulations for the approval/certification of new wheeled vehicles, type approval, reciprocal recognition under the 1958 Agreement, testing and monitoring methods. The workshop allowed exchange of international and national best practices on efficient implementation of the 1958 Agreement. Furthermore, workshop strengthened national capacities to improve road safety legislation.

#### **D. United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for on Road Safety**

18. On 29 April 2015, Mr. Jean Todt was appointed Special Envoy for Road Safety by the United Nations Secretary-General. In this role, Mr. Todt is helping to mobilize sustained political commitment towards making road safety a priority; advocating and raising awareness about the United Nations road safety legal instruments; sharing established road safety good practices; and advocating for adequate global funding for road safety. Along with UNECE, the Special Envoy established and launched the United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund in April 2018. To date, the Special Envoy met with 25 Heads of States and more than 160 Ministers in 82 Member States, encouraging high-level political commitment to road safety, especially in the most affected areas. Below is the summary of Mr. Todt's engagement with SPECA countries in 2016-18.

19. In September and November 2016, the Special Envoy travelled to the Kyrgyz Republic (meeting with Ministry of Internal Affairs), the Republic of Kazakhstan (meetings with First Deputy Prime Minister, Ministry of Investment and Development and Astana and Almaty Mayors) and Turkmenistan (meetings with Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Motor Transport) to advocate for increased priority on road safety especially in view of the Sustainable Development Goal targets 3.6 to halve the number of road deaths by 2020 and 11.2, which aims to provide safe and affordable access to sustainable transport systems for all by 2030. Mr. Todt highlighted the importance of aligning national strategies to those of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 as well as increased accession to and successful implementation of the United Nations Road Safety Conventions.

20. In Turkmenistan, the Special Envoy attended the Global Sustainable Transport Conference, where he alongside UNECE launched Consultations on a paper exploring the establishment of the United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund. Furthermore, the Global Sustainable Transport Conference held on 26 and 27 November 2016 provided an opportunity to ensure that road safety does not go

unforgotten during discussions of broader transport development issues. Road Safety must be part and parcel of sustainable transport and a basic condition for a sustainable development.

21. In September 2019, the Special Envoy travelled to the Republic of Kazakhstan (meetings with First Deputy Prime-Minister; Deputy Chair of Senate; Minister of Health, Minister of Interior, Vice-Minister of Culture and Sport; as well as Mayors of Nur-Sultan and Almaty). In the course of his meetings, the Special Envoy encouraged stronger commitment to the issue and coordinated efforts towards implementing the National Road Safety Strategy aimed at achieving no more than 12 road traffic fatalities per 100,000 population by 2020 as well as contributing to the road-safety-related targets in the 2030 Agenda. As Kazakhstan is already a contracting party to seven United Nations road safety conventions, the Special Envoy encouraged their successful implementation. Furthermore, the discrepancy in the nationally reported road traffic fatality numbers and WHO-estimates was emphasized during the meetings, and relevant officials were strongly encouraged to address the issue by improving road safety data collection. The Special Envoy shared about Road Safety Performance Reviews, which will be initiated by UNECE later in the year and presented the United Nations Road Safety Fund, encouraging support and submission of project proposals during the first formal call in October 2019.

22. In September 2019, the Special Envoy travelled to the Republic of Uzbekistan for the first time (meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs; Chair of Senate; Deputy Ministers of Health, Transport and Interior; as well as Deputy Mayor of Tashkent). During his meetings, the Special Envoy congratulated on Uzbekistan ranking as the best performing country on road safety in Central Asia, encouraging sustained commitment and efforts to further advancing road safety. Among recommended measures, the Special Envoy emphasized the importance of stronger law enforcement, better education, safer vehicles and infrastructure as well as efficient and timely post-crash care. Given the substantial differences in WHO-estimated and nationally reported road traffic fatalities, stakeholders were encouraged to strengthen data collection and greater coordination of data between relevant stakeholders. As Uzbekistan is a contracting party to four out of seven United Nations road safety conventions, the Special Envoy advocated for successful implementation of those and accession to of the remaining three. The recently established United Nations Road Safety Fund was presented to the Government of Uzbekistan suggesting to consider contributions and to submit project proposals.

**Road safety activities by the ESCAP**

23. The United Nations ESCAP is designated to serve as the focal United Nations organization for the Asia-Pacific region. In consideration of the internal process of the United Nations ESCAP and detailed consultation and finalization time that would be necessary prior to submitting proposals to the UNRSF secretariat, a draft proposal had to be received by the United Nations ESCAP by 31 October 2019. Please contact the ESCAP Transport Division for more information.

24. In support of the Commission resolution 66/6 on “Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific” and resolution 73/4, as well as updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016-2020 with the goal to halve number of road traffic injuries and fatalities in line with target 3.6 of the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Regional Action Programme on Sustainable Transport Development (2017-2021) adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Moscow in December 2016, ESCAP continues to provide capacity building and technical assistance to member countries in meeting their commitments under the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016-2020, the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety through the organization of workshop, seminar and training to raise awareness and enhance the capacities of member countries in relevant road safety issues.

25. ESCAP in association with the development partners is supporting member countries to work towards improving road safety in the region. As one of its initiatives, ESCAP, with funding support from the Government of the Russian Federation, has conducted studies on two major causes of road crashes: i) Speeding and ii) Drink-driving which are expected to be finalized by December 2019. The regional seminar on road safety was organized in New Delhi on 24-25 April 2019 and two capacity development workshops on road safety for Southeast Asia (27-28 August 2019 in Manila) and North and Central Asia Subregions (3 to 4 October 2019 in Baku) were organized by ESCAP. They aim of these activities was to strengthen the capacity of the participants from the member countries in tackling the two main causes of road traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities: i) Speeding and ii) Drink-driving. In the North and Central Asia subregional capacity workshop, more than twenty participants from six SPECA member countries, namely Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, participated.

26. ESCAP in association with the relevant stakeholders, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, is assisting the member countries in an initiative towards establishing the Asia



and Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO) which would become the regional forum on road safety data, policies and practices across Asia and the Pacific. The mission of APRSO would be to generate robust road crash data, undertake analysis and develop evidence-based policies for road safety. As a part of the initiative, the ESCAP secretariat along with the development partners is preparing to hold the Second Meeting related to the APRSO initiative on 3-4 December 2019 at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok.

27. Following the establishment of the UNRSF in 2018, an early harvest project proposal of the United Nations ESCAP was approved in early 2019. The project entitled “Strengthening Speed Management in the Philippines” is currently being implemented by the United Nations ESCAP in partnership with the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) and in cooperation with other entities. The lessons learnt from this project in the Philippines is expected to be a good case study for the SPECA member countries for future road safety interventions.

**The Thematic Working Group may wish to:**

- Continue their efforts to develop and implement national road safety strategies and action plans, strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation to achieve goals and targets in line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety as well as road safety-related SDGs;
- Efficiently implement United Nations legal instruments on road safety;
- Consider activities under the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF);
- Work towards achieving updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016-2020;
- Ask for political support and commitment as well as scaling up of funding for road safety endeavors in the SPECA countries, including infrastructure improvements and advocacy programs;
- Ensure the collection of quality road safety data and request technical assistance in data collection to facilitate the regular monitoring of road safety at the national and regional levels;
- Encourage SPECA countries to use the SafeFITS model to assess the results of various road safety activities and strategic actions;

- Build on the results of Road Safety Performance Reviews, encourage SPECA Member countries to ask for technical assistance in road safety through RSPR.