

Distr.: General
10 October 2023

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Road Transport

118th session

Geneva, 17-19 October 2023

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

Other Business

Submitted by Türkiye

This document contains a proposal to start an initiative in UNECE by the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) to establish an International Intergovernmental Road Organization (IRO) and collaboration with relevant organisations in this frame.

Initiative to Establish an International Intergovernmental Road Organization (IRO)

1. The road sector is a major contributor to economic and social growth, as it is the most effective, convenient, and adaptable form of transportation. On the other hand, it brings along many challenges such as road safety, energy consumption, and issues of international road transport, intelligent transport systems, and the transport of dangerous goods.

2. In order to effectively address these issues and challenges, it is essential to have comprehensive international support to ensure coordinated strategies, harmonised rules, common standards, best practices, technical assistance, and capacity building for Member States. These challenges must be addressed in one comprehensive platform. While the maritime, air and railway transport sectors each have their own organizations, namely, International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and a number of railway organizations including Organization for Cooperation of Railways (OSJD) and Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF); the road sector has been left without a comparable organisation.

3. There is a large number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations working on various aspects of road issues at the international, regional, sub-regional, bilateral, and national levels. As a result, there are certain aspects of road transport policies, legislation, and operations that are not being adequately addressed within the existing institutional framework. These "institutional gaps" are not only present in relation to issues that arise in the road sector but also in terms of geographical location. In particular, a number of developing countries are not, or feel that they are not, included in global processes that are designed to address issues arising from the road sector. Therefore, there is a pressing need for an organization similar to IMO or ICAO to provide comprehensive and unified support for international road transportation, greenhouse gases emissions, road safety and security, ITS, dangerous goods and security.

4. This is an urgent issue that must be addressed in order to ensure that the sector continues to promote economic and social growth while addressing issues in a way that is in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda provides a chance for all nations to collaborate in order to revolutionize the road transportation sector for the benefit of all. The development and implementation of cutting-edge sustainable road solutions will necessitate the utilization of regional and international cooperation. The work of Member States under the auspices of UNECE provides regional solutions. Consequently, the establishment of an International Intergovernmental Road Organization (IRO) could be a viable solution to address the current global institutional deficiencies and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the road sector.

5. There is a similar initiative of ESCAP to establish an International Intergovernmental Road Organization (IRO), and a comprehensive report namely, Making the Road Sector a Key Vehicle for Sustainable Development, was prepared in 2016 accordingly. In this context, we hereby propose to the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) to start an initiative also in UNECE to establish an International Intergovernmental Road Organization (IRO) and collaborate with ESCAP and any other relevant organisations in this frame.
