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Opening address:

by

Ms. Olga Algayerova

United Nations Under-Secretary-General

Executive Secretary

of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

at the

2019 Future Networked Car Symposium

Geneva, Palexpo, 7 March 2019, 9:00-9:30 am

ITU Secretary General, Mr. Zhao,
Special Envoy, Mr. Todt,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning!

We are living in a world full of challenges, full of staggering technological developments, full of questions and possible answers. One of these elements is mobility of persons and transport of goods. Let me try to draw a picture of the future, of how mobility and transport might look like:

Imagine passengers taken by driverless cars to their destinations; children driven by automated vehicles to and from school; affordable, safe and individual mobility for the elderly and those with disabilities; goods delivered to homes by autonomous pods; platoons of trucks without drivers moving cargo across countries. All of this happening without significant accidents and injuries, without traffic congestion, with minimal pollution. In other words, in a way that is safe, secure and environmentally friendly.

This is a picture of sustainable transport at its best. You may ask “how do we achieve this vision”?

Technology will continue to advance, and we need to harness it to satisfy the needs of our societies. Among the most fundamental needs are safety, security,

and environmental preservation. Governments around the world discussed this topic when they gathered at the UN in February for the annual session of UNECE's Inland Transport Committee. Aiming to capitalize on the potential of automation in inland transport to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Ministers and Vice Ministers of transport and representatives from 31 countries adopted a resolution on "Enhancing Cooperation, Harmonization and Integration in the Era of Transport Automation." The resolution enshrines the commitment of countries to ensure that the accelerated pace of innovation in transport automation and digitalization will be characterized by harmonization and interoperability, as well as the highest levels of safety, environmental sustainability, equal access and the enhanced integration of multiple modes of mobility.

So how can we meet these goals? The key is that all of us – academia, private sector, governments, and international organizations - collaborate on developing and facilitating this vision of future sustainable transport. We have to work together towards the same goal and break "silos".

Such collaboration already exists in the UN system. There is long-lasting and well-established cooperation between the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

This cooperation bears many fruits – for example our event today. But even more important is our daily cooperation. UNECE hosts the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations, the famous WP.29, which is a unique body for setting a global regulatory framework for the certification of vehicles, their parts, systems and components. Last year, WP.29 established a new Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles. Therein, we work not only with governments, industry, academia and NGOs, but also benefit from the rich expertise of ITU representatives.

Our cooperation has already achieved results on cybersecurity and “Over-the-air” software updates, building a new Annex of the Consolidated Resolution on the Construction of Vehicles, R.E.3.

Another example is UN Regulation 144 on E-Call systems - the first UN Regulation that covers the connectivity of cars. This makes an ITU standard compulsory for vehicle approval.

By working together, by exchanging information in an open and transparent way, by supplementing each other’s expertise, by creating a level playing field for all involved, we can build a modern, effective, and harmonized regulatory framework. This is needed to make connected vehicles safe, secure, consistent

with traffic rules, interoperable across borders, and compatible with infrastructure.

This collaboration is not optional – it is, in fact, imperative. We may not reach our vision unless there is coordinated cooperation among all stakeholders.

All the more, I look forward to working with all of you.

Thank you.
