

U.S. Statement for UNECE 68th Commission Meeting

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USA item-2

Mr. / Madam Chair, Madam Executive Secretary, distinguished colleagues, I am honored to represent the United States of America at UNECE.

The United States is dedicated to country-led, market-driven economic development that unlocks the potential of all our citizens. This commitment is reflected in our approach to economic growth and our focus on innovation. To this end, the United States welcomes this year's focus on fostering technology and innovation and improving governmental transparency in the development of smarter infrastructure.

Our U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for example, encourages innovation through their annual Affordable Housing Student Design Competition. In this competition, the Department selects a public housing authority site, and students redesign the site to achieve livable and sustainable housing.

We believe that a variety of solutions will drive development of smart cities. One such solution is tax incentives, such as U.S. Opportunity Zones, which help to bring new economic vitality to economically distressed communities by spurring revitalization and economic growth.

In the area of transportation, the pace of technological and societal change is stunning! America has been shaped by innovation and change – from early transformative technologies such as the steam engine to subsequent technological revolutions in aviation, motor vehicles and space. Transportation innovation throughout our history propelled economic growth, increased mobility, built communities and raised the quality of life for everyone.

Innovation is still driving growth, and continues to give us hope for a better future.

In October 2018, the Department of Transportation released a document Automated Vehicle 3.0 Preparing for the Future of Transportation (AV 3.0). AV 3.0 is the first joint, multi-modal guidance document for on-road surface transportation automation and helps provide direction so that the United States can continue to be a leader in the development of these technologies. This document provides value to stakeholders in three key areas:

- Providing new multi-modal safety guidance
- Reducing policy uncertainty by clarifying roles
- Outlining a process for working with DOT as the technology evolves

What often gets lost in the excitement about automated vehicles is that automation technologies are still new and rapidly evolving. This is why the right approach to achieving safety improvements begins with a focus on removing unnecessary barriers and issuing voluntary guidance, rather than regulations that could stifle innovation.

The Department of Transportation has also recently announced the creation of a new body of senior government transportation leaders who will be charged with handling the complex questions regarding non-traditional and emerging innovations in transportation, such as hyperloop. It will ensure that transportation innovators and project sponsors have a single point of access to discuss plans and proposals for new cross-modal technologies.

For all of these actions the United States will insist on the following 6 principles:

1. We will prioritize safety;
2. We will remain technology neutral;
3. We will modernize regulations;
4. We will encourage a consistent regulatory and operational environment;
5. We will prepare proactively for automation; and
6. We will protect and enhance the freedoms enjoyed by Americans

We look forward to working with UNECE and the private sector as we look for innovative ways to empower smart cities.