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IMO/ILO/UNECE TO UPDATE GUIDELINES FOR PACKING OF CARGO TRANSPORT UNITS

The first meeting of a group of experts, created to update the 1997 IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for Packing of Cargo Transport Units, took place on 6 and 7 October.

Around 80 per cent of goods in international trade are transported by sea; and over the last two decades, containerized cargo in the maritime sector increased more than fivefold. Following inter-secretariat consultations in recent years, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) have set up this group of experts to urgently provide the transport sector with an updated set of international guidelines. If cargo is poorly packed, or if there is no proper blocking, bracing and securing, personnel can get injured and equipment can be damaged. Everybody working in the transport chain is at risk—vehicle drivers, rail workers, crew members, staff at inland terminals, dockers and persons who unpack units.

The guidelines include practical measures for ensuring that cargo is stowed safely, not just in containers but also in road vehicles and railway wagons. The measures apply



to transport operations by sea and all land modes, i.e. to the entire intermodal transport chain. Secondly, they cover safe handling, securing and receiving of cargo transport units and include provisions on training.

Parties involved in the revision of the guidelines are workers and employers in the supply chain, governmental bodies and NGOs, and service providers such as insurance companies. IMO has already started revising the section relating to dangerous goods. Its Maritime Safety Committee approved the revision in 2010.

UNECE hosted the first meeting of the expert group. The group which will meet three times in 2012, hopes to finalize their work by 2013. Once the revision has been completed, the three organizations will adopt the revised guidelines in the form of a Code of Practice. □

The agenda and documents for the first session of the group of experts are available at:
<http://www.unece.org/trans/wp24/guidelinespackingctus/documents.html>

For further information, please contact the secretariat at:
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7th APEC TRANSPORTATION MINISTERIAL MEETING CALLS FOR PARTICIPATION TO WP.29

The 7th meeting of the Transport Ministers of the 21 members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum took place in San Francisco on 14 September.

Participants continued their work towards a safe, secure, seamless, and sustainable transportation system in support of free and open trade and investment in the region.

In their Ministerial Joint Statement, APEC Ministers recalled that "the dynamism of the Asia-Pacific region has made it a driving force for growth in the world economy. As a significant economic



enabler, transportation has been instrumental in the region's recovery and resurgence following the recent economic and financial crisis."

They also reiterated their "commitment to the Action Agenda To Move APEC Toward An Energy Efficient, Sustainable, Low-Carbon Transport Future."

The Statement also refers to various topics for which UNECE has developed norms, standards or best practices, which are used internationally. These include in particular:

- **trade facilitation** - Ministers stated "we recognize the importance to trade facilitation of aligning domestic standards to relevant international standards where possible, and collaboration in other international fora in this regard."
- **road safety** - "We wish to highlight the importance of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety,

2011-2020. We agree to assess opportunities to launch road safety initiatives and increase road safety efforts in our respective economies and direct the TPTWG to give high priority to address such efforts."

- **International Vehicle Regulations** - "We also strongly encourage economies to participate in the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)." Many APEC members are already parties to the 1958 or 1998 Agreements and the use of United Nations Regulations is increasing, notably in South-East Asia.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)** - "We also encourage member economies to assess ways in which transport infrastructure investments can be prioritized and further increased, including through the wider utilization of well-functioning Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)." □

For further information, please visit: <http://www.apec.org>.

FACTS AND FIGURES

DRINKING WATER AVAILABILITY IMPROVES IN UNECE COUNTRIES

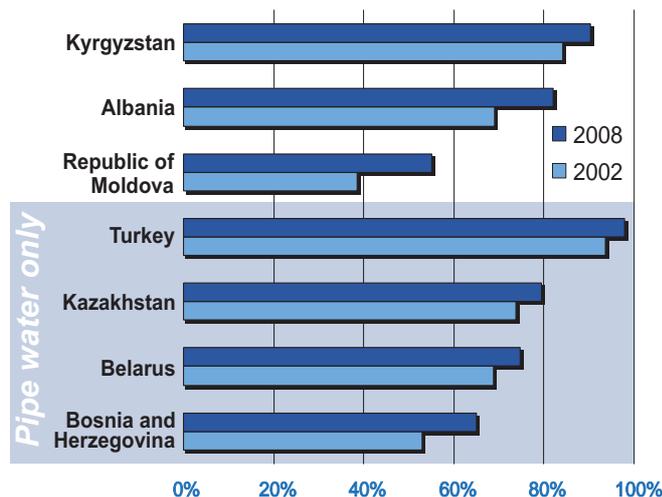
One of the targets of the seventh Millennium Development Goal is to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015, in order to avoid the spread of diseases such as cholera and infant diarrhoea.

Between 2002 and 2008, several countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia succeeded in improving the availability of drinking water to their population.

The proportion of the population using improved drinking water increased in all countries that collect such data. In the countries where improved drinking water had been less available to people (e.g. Republic of Moldova), the increase was higher than in the countries where the availability was already relatively high in 2002 (e.g. Turkey and Kyrgyzstan). Countries with available statistics for the rural and urban population, the availability of improved drinking water is significantly lower for the rural population.

However these statistics only show one side of the problem: in many countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, access to water does not always mean access to safe water suitable for human consumption. This is mostly due to interruptions of the service and other causes of contamination. The UNECE/WHO-Europe Protocol on Water and Health aims to ensure access to safe drinking water for all through a holistic approach that protects the source of drinking water, focuses on prevention and the reduction of contamination risks. □

Population using improved drinking water sources



Source: UNECE MDG database, reporting level: national.
 Notes: For Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2002 refers to 2000; for Kazakhstan, 2008 refers to 2007. Data from 2009 was used instead of 2008 where available (Belarus, Republic of Moldova). Improved drinking water sources include piped water into dwelling, plot or yard, public tap, tube well, protected dug well, protected spring, rainwater collection and bottled water. Turkey, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Bosnia/Herzegovina used a narrower definition that only refers to piped water.