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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION**

(Geneva, 30 June – 3 July 2008)

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I. ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) held its fifty-fifth session in Geneva from 30 June to 3 July 2008, chaired by Mr. Alexander Yakimov (Russian Federation). Representatives of the following member States participated: Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and United States of America.

2. The World Health Organization and the following non-governmental organizations were also represented: European Cyclists' Federation (ECF); European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR); Federation of European Motorcyclists Associations (FEMA); FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society; International Federation of Pedestrians (IFP); International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA); International Road Federation (IRF); International Organization for Standardization (ISO); Laser Europe and, as observer, India Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE).

II. INTRODUCTION

3. The chairman of the session, Mr. A. Yakimov (Russian Federation), opened the fifty-fifth session of WP.1.

4. Mr. M. Adamantiadis welcomed the delegates on behalf of Director of the Transport Division, Mrs. E. Molnar. He informed of the work in the secretariat since the last meeting of WP.1.

5. Mr. Adamantiadis expressed the hope that, during this extraordinary session, WP.1 will finalize the text of the Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (RE1).

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/116

6. The agenda was adopted with the following minor technical modifications:

- (a) Informal document 1 replaced ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2008/5
- (b) Informal document 2 replaced ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2008/6
- (c) Report of the fifty-fourth session did not have Add.6

IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY (Agenda item 2)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/115 and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/115/Add.1 to Add.5

7. The report of the fifty-fourth session (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/115 and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/115/Add.1 to Add.5) was adopted with minor amendments in addenda 1 and 5 which will be reflected in subsequent documents.

V. FUTURE ROLE OF THE WORKING PARTY (Agenda item 3)

Document: Informal document 1

8. The secretariat introduced Informal document 1 "Road map on the possible ways for strengthening the contribution of WP.1 to the global road safety". The Director of the Transport Division, Mrs. Eva Molnar, gave an overview of the main objectives of the document:

(a) WP.1 is the only intergovernmental structure dealing with road safety in the United Nations system and its accumulated expertise could benefit countries with economies in transition and with poor conditions of road safety;

(b) The Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals are the core of WP.1's work, but the time has come for WP.1 to be more involved in the implementation of these conventions;

(c) The document aims to create a "value framework" on UN road traffic safety related work;

(d) WP.1's expertise and achievements should be more visible by for example encouraging its contribution in the UNRSC and its involvement in the preparation of the Global Conference on Road Safety to be held in the Russian Federation in fall 2009.

9. The Informal document 1 was warmly received by the delegates and generated a long and constructive discussion, which resulted in the following points of reference:

(a) WP.1 should remain the custodian of the legal instruments that made its fame; at the same time, the creation of ad hoc subgroups, inspired by the structure of the WP.29, could also be envisaged, if needed and in a flexible organization. The outcome of their work would be approved by the WP.1, which would deal with strategic road safety issues.

(b) The road map will be re-arranged and submitted as a working document to the November session of WP.1. The secretariat will benefit from the support of a group of volunteers composed of delegates from the USA, Israel, FIA Foundation, Russian Federation, Italy, Spain and IRTE. (The group of volunteers met during the session and further discussed about the follow-up on the road map. Their conclusions were communicated to the WP.1 during the session).

(c) The revised road map will concentrate on future activities that might be undertaken by WP.1 and will propose priorities for the short, medium and long term, with due care taken of feasibility in terms of financial and human resources;

(d) WP.1 ought to be a global guide in matters of road safety so that developing countries may apply best practices. To do so, an in-depth research of the causes leading to bad road safety parameters, on a country-by-country and region-by-region basis would be most useful. Introducing the legal instruments and resolutions and teaching "what to do" is not enough, this should be followed by teaching "how to do," especially regarding implementation;

(e) The other UN Regional Commissions should be closely involved in the activities of WP.1 as part of advocacy for improved road safety. Their active participation would contribute to the global transfer of WP.1's know-how;

(f) The feasibility of a Trust Fund for road safety activities seems questionable at this point in time but the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility was suggested as a possible solution for financing.

10. In the context of the future role of WP.1, involvement in the Global (Ministerial) Meeting on Road Safety (Moscow, 20-21 November 2009) was considered as an important, achievable short-term activity to promote the global efforts of WP.1.

VI. REVISION OF THE CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC (R.E.1) AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS (R.E.2) (Agenda item 4)

Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1)

Documents: TRANS/SC.1/294/Rev.5 and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/112

A. Restructuring of R.E.1

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2005/15/Rev.7

11. The WP.1 considered document WP.1/2005/15/Rev.7 on restructuring R.E.1 and decided the following:

(i) Point *1.8.1 Overtaking at intersections (1.3)*: This point shall be deleted from the consolidated document.

(ii) Point *1.8.2 Level-crossings (1.2)*: The representatives of Denmark and Italy and the secretariat will prepare a text, circulate it amongst the members of WP.1 and submit it for adoption at the fifty-sixth session of WP.1.

B. General rules regarding vehicles and their equipment

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/23/Rev.2

12. The Working Party approved document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/23/Rev.2 on General rules regarding vehicles and their equipment.

C. Instruction of children in safe road behaviour

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2007/3/Rev.2

13. The Working Party approved document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2007/3/Rev.2 on Instruction of children in safe road behaviour with one amendment, under Point 21, which should read as follows “21. Young persons of this age group **are fairly often** injured...”

D. Information for road users

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/25/Rev.1

14. The Working Party approved the draft text for R.E.1 on Information for road users (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/25/Rev.1) with the following amendments:

- (i) Point 2.3.2.1 “Context” should read as follows:

“With a view to improving traffic safety, road users should be informed of **road and traffic conditions such as** hazardous weather conditions or large-scale traffic disruption, **for** example during weekend or holiday departures or returns...”

- (ii) Text of the first paragraph under 2.3.2.2 Recommendations should start:
“Information on road and traffic conditions should be widely...”

- (iii) Point 2.3.3 (a) should read as follows:

“(a) It is recommended that Governments should take appropriate steps to ensure that drivers are adequately informed of the influence, or dangerous effects of certain medications on the driving of a vehicle.

Such **warning** information should be provided at different stages:

- (i) By the doctor who prescribed the medication(s);
- (ii) By the pharmacist [...] regardless of whether the medication is supplied with or without a prescription;
- (iii) **By an indication on the packaging of the medication concerned, where a written warning and the warning symbol reproduced below should be clearly displayed.”**

E. Driving under influence of drugs and medication

Document: Informal document 2

15. The representative of Italy introduced the document she prepared, in collaboration with the delegates of the Russian Federation and the European Commission. While appreciating this initial document, WP.1 agreed that the subject deserved a more detailed analysis. WP.1 accepted the offer of the representative of Italy to further refine the proposal with the support of the secretariat and through electronic communication with other members of WP.1 and submit a working document for the consideration and possible approval of WP.1 at its session in November.

16. The Working Party agreed on the structure of the document (as indicated below) and examined the text in order to identify the conceptual ideas that might be refined and included in the working document for the next session. The structure of the document agreed upon by WP.1 is as follows:

Chapter 1.3 Driving under the influence of drugs, chemical/psychotropic substances and medicaments:

1.3.1 Context

1.3.2 Recommendations

- Legislation
- Education/ raising awareness
- Road users' information
- Enforcement

F. Motor car insurance

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2008/2

17. The Working Party recognized the usefulness of the compulsory third-party liability insurance for the vehicle. However, the Working Party agreed that the document submitted should be amended in order to make it acceptable for all the member countries of UNECE. To this end, a small group of volunteers consisting of representatives of Bulgaria, the Russian Federation and Laser Europe will prepare a revised document to be considered and possibly adopted by WP.1 at its fifty-sixth session. Such a document should mainly focus on recommending the introduction of the compulsory third-party liability insurance for the vehicle, the proof of existence of such insurance and the possibility of encouraging the use of “bonus malus” system of incentives/penalties.

Consolidated Resolution on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.2)

G. Signing for cycle routes

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/24

18. WP.1 welcomed the presentation of document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2006/24 concerning signing for cycle routes prepared by the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and discussed actively various aspects of this document.

19. WP.1 agreed that the work on this document ought to continue with an aim to harmonizing the cycling signs or the presentation of information contained therein. To this end, the Working Party invited a small group of volunteers, consisting of the representatives of ECF, Denmark, Israel and Laser Europe, to redraft this document for its fifty-sixth session.

20. WP.1 agreed that the work of this small group should be carried out along the following guidelines:

(a) The proposed road sign should have a universal application (should not be restricted to Europe only);

(b) The proposed road sign should be user-friendly and be kept as simple as possible leading to an identical interpretation by users;

(c) The sign should include obligatory features (road number, colour [blue], shape) and may include a number of optional features (the route name, specific elements of the flag of EU/Council of Europe);

(d) The work shall not include definition of routes for international cycling;

(e) The practical implementation shall be left with national authorities.

VII. FOLLOW-UP OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON IMPROVING GLOBAL ROAD SAFETY (31 MARCH 2008) AND THE WORK OF THE UN ROAD SAFETY COLLABORATION MEETING (Agenda item 5)

21. Since March the secretariat has met twice the representatives of the WHO to discuss ways of improving cooperation.

22. As mandated by WP.1 the secretariat followed-up on holding a joint meeting WP.1-United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC): the ninth meeting of the UNRSC will take place in Geneva, on WHO premises, on 17 and 18 November (a.m.) 2008. The joint meeting will take place on 18 November in the afternoon, at the Palais de Nations.

23. The agenda of the joint meeting will include a report by each party (WP.1 and UNRSC) on its main ongoing and planned activities and identification of complementarities and developing synergies. The invitation will be addressed to the UNRSC members by the secretariat and the Chairman of WP.1.

24. In this context, the representative of the Russian Federation informed the delegates that the Global (Ministerial) Meeting on Road Safety was planned to take place in Moscow from 20-21 November 2009; he also stated that the Russian Federation would welcome assistance from WP.1 in the preparation of this high-level event.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 6)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2008/3

25. The Working Party considered the subject of sleeping coaches in international traffic, based on the opinions formulated by the Legal Group.

26. WP.1 came to the conclusion that:

(a) From a technical point of view, there is no provision that opposes both the equipment of buses with sleeping berths and their admission in international traffic. However, the technical aspects of sleeping berths should be dealt with by WP.29;

(b) Contracting Parties are free to ban the use of sleeping berths when in motion;

(c) Before the admission of these coaches to international traffic, competent authorities should be assured of the safety of passengers, both as concerns sitting and lying down;

27. WP.1 requested the secretariat to communicate these conclusions to WP.29.

28. The representative of Denmark informed the Working Party about the outcome of a recent scientific survey on the impact of the change in the mandatory speed limit on motorways on the number of road traffic accidents in his country. This survey started in 2004 when Denmark increased the general speed limit on motorways from 110km/h to 130km/h. The major conclusion of the survey was that an increase in the average speed was correlated with an increase in the number of personal injuries (deaths, serious and slight injuries) and a decrease in the average speed was correlated with a decrease in the number of personal injuries (deaths, serious and slight injuries).

29. WP.1 and the secretariat have asked the representative of Denmark to kindly provide them with copies of the survey and to allow the secretariat to publish the results on the Transport Division website.

30. WP.1 decided that the agenda of the meetings would include an additional regular item dedicated to information, by the participants, on developments in their countries/regions in the area of road safety or in other areas of interest to the WP.1. This would also assist the secretariat in updating its database. In this context, WP.1 invited participants to check the database and send their comments and updates to the secretariat.

31. The WP.1 requested the secretariat to take the necessary measures for correcting the typing error on page 37 of the consolidated text of the Convention on Road Signs and Signals: in Section B, "STOP" sign, model B2^b "**yellow** border" shall be replaced by "**red** border".

32. WP.1 welcomed and appreciated a presentation by the Spanish delegation of the bilateral assistance provided by her country on road safety to countries in Latin America. She also informed about a high-level meeting on road safety of Latin American countries hosted by Spain in Madrid in February 2009, in which WP.1 and the secretariat would be invited.

33. The representative of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) informed of his organisation's ongoing work on developing road safety management standards, which would produce its first results by next year.

34. The delegation of the Russian Federation asked for the support of the other delegations in providing data on their national requirements for passenger and cargo carriers, based on a questionnaire distributed in the room. The secretariat also offered support in collecting replies to the questionnaire through the dedicated e-mail address roadsafety@unece.org and transmitting them to the Russian Federation.

35. The representative of Laser Europe informed the delegates about the film festival on road safety that will take place on 14 October 2008 in Paris, back-to-back with the European day of road transport safety. The deadline for the submission of films is 29 September 2008.

36. The representative of Israel, Dr. Dan Link, announced that he would retire from the service in his Government. On behalf of WP.1, the Chairman expressed his gratitude to Dr. Link for his 16 year-long constructive contribution to the work of WP.1, and hoped that his cooperation with the WP.1 will continue.

IX. ADOPTION OF REPORT (Agenda item 7)

37. The Working Party adopted its draft report.

38. The fifty-sixth session of WP.1 will take place from 18 to 21 November 2008 and the deadline for submission of documents is 9 September 2008. However, in order to allow the secretariat to comply with Documents Section requirements, the participants wishing to submit documents are encouraged to do so as early as possible before that date.
