



**Message from Alan Bryden,
ISO Secretary-General,
On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the
1958 Agreement**

The Role for Standardization

**Geneva
26 June 2008**

Celebrating a 50th anniversary is, in itself, quite an accomplishment. On this occasion, I would like to extend our warm greetings to the UN/ECE WP29 on behalf of the ISO family now strong of 157 national member bodies from countries representing 98% of the world population. We congratulate you for your exceptional contribution at the world level to improving the safety of motor vehicles and reducing their impact on the environment. ISO celebrated its 60th birthday last year, so this means that we have a long standing relationship. Your anniversary gives a good opportunity to measure and appreciate the collaboration we have developed over the years, for which Mr. Cheynet, Chairman of our TC22, and Mr. Abram, the relevant ISO Technical Programme Manager, here present, have directly contributed.

The world in general and the automobile sector in particular have undergone drastic changes and evolutions over this half century. The globalization of trade has resulted in the need to eliminate un-necessary barriers to trade possibly resulting from technical regulations. To this end, the now 152 countries party to the World Trade Organization are committed to use consensus based International Standards of the type produced by ISO. National regulators have to take this commitment into account. This has been a first driver in enhancing our collaboration. The orientation you took in 2003 to refer, whenever possible, to International Standards and to request proactive standardization to facilitate regulatory work goes in the right direction. Some 150 ISO standards are currently referenced by your Technical Regulations. We are ready to continue to deliver and welcome a good coordination to capture your expectations and adjust our production of standards accordingly. "Just on time" is a key commitment in the automobile industry, even if some times reaching consensus may take time: this is the price to pay for having globally relevant standards.

The automobile sector itself has had an exponential growth, from around 100 million automobiles in 1958 to more than 600 million today and twice that much expected within 30 years. The industry has concentrated through mergers and acquisitions and expanded its investments to many countries, to accompany the growth of the market. The efficiency of production, but also the monitoring of its quality and safety, require that regulations be harmonized

at a global level and that industry can have an input in the technicalities of its implementation. There again our complementarity and cooperation are welcome.

Other now globalized issues impact directly our common work, because they imply public policies which may result in regulatory requirements and call for international coordination and cooperation. Energy efficiency in the use of fossil fuels, the use of alternative energies such as bio fuels, electricity and eventually hydrogen to reduce the impact on the emissions of green house gases by motor vehicles, the attention paid increasingly to noise emissions in urban environments, the need to promote and optimize recycling and durability, the introduction of electronics and telecommunications in motor vehicles, and their impact on safety, raise new technical issues which, in turn, expand our collaboration, in the context of our TC22 and beyond with other ISO technical committees. ISO is indeed well immersed in all these new areas.

Another facet of ISO activities relevant to our partnership relates to organizational and management issues, an area where our scope has significantly increased and gained exposure over the past 20 years. This is the case for conformity assessment, where the ISO17000 series now provides a complete toolbox of standards and guides on testing, certification, inspection and accreditation services. A recent development relates to our new project for the development of an International Standard on road safety management. This document should eventually provide guidance for voluntary programmes of organizations, such as those operating fleets of vehicles, looking to improve their performance and to better meet regulatory requirements.

So, if we have done indeed a lot together over the past 50 years, much more remains to be done. We are complementary. Our collaboration is fully in line with world trends for public policies and with ISO's Strategic Plan, which, under the general heading of "international standards for a sustainable world", sets, i.a., the objective of promoting the use of our standards as a support to technical regulations. We therefore look forward to many more years of fruitful collaboration.
