



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/6
13 July 2009

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

Fifty-eighth session
Geneva, 22-25 September 2009
Item 9 of the provisional agenda

OTHER BUSINESS

Note by the secretariat

1. According to the Programme of Work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2008-2012, the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) is expected, in 2008/2009, to “Follow-up on the implementation of the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) Project “Improving Global Road Safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets”, in particular through the organization of seminars in 2008 and/or 2009” (ECE/TRANS/2008/11, page 10, point (h)).
2. The present document is submitted by the secretariat with the aim of informing the WP.1 of the outcome of seminars organized under the project.
3. It is reminded that the project is a follow-up to the recommendations made in Resolution 60/5 of 2005 on “Improving global road safety” of the United Nations General Assembly and its overarching objective is to assist low and middle income countries to develop regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets and to provide them with examples of good road safety practice that could help them achieve the targets selected by 2015. The project is carried on in 2008-2009 by the five United Nations regional commissions under the coordination of UNECE.
4. Resolution 62/244 of 2008 on “Improving global road safety” of the General Assembly invites all United Nations Member States to participate in the projects to be implemented by the

GE.09-

United Nations regional commissions to assist low- and middle-income countries in setting their own national road traffic casualty reduction targets, as well as regional targets.

5. The main activities under the project are:
 - (a) the organization of seminar(s) by each regional commission, bringing together countries with similar problems. The seminars are meant to facilitate the transfer of know-how and exchange of information on interventions and road safety practices that brought reductions in road traffic injuries and fatalities, in the hope that good examples will be replicated;
 - (b) bilateral advisory missions, as needed and requested by countries.
6. The minimum expected outcomes of the project are:
 - (a) the setting of targets at national, subregional, and regional levels and improved safety on the roads;
 - (b) project findings will become a set of best practices to be used by all United Nations member States needing to improve road safety;
 - (c) the report of the project will be communicated to and taken into account by the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety (Moscow, 19-20 November 2009);
 - (d) increased awareness and commitment, to ensure follow-up and sustainability of project results.
7. UNECE organized a first seminar in Minsk from 12 to 14 May 2009, with the Government of the Republic of Belarus co-hosting the event.
8. The seminar provided the participants from nine CIS countries with the opportunity to learn from each other's experiences as well as from the cases of Australia, France, Great Britain, Poland and Spain where setting targets proved to be effective in assessing the road safety problem and finding ways to solve it. The participants also appreciated the good practices and information communicated by the representatives of the United Nations agencies (Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, World Health Organization) and international governmental (European Commission, Commonwealth of Independent States) or non-governmental organizations (International Road Transport Union, International Road Federation, Global Road Safety Partnership, FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society), programmes (International Road Assessment Program), as well as road safety related private entities (ERTICO).
9. The second event organized by UNECE under the project was a conference in Halkida, from 25 to 27 June 2009, kindly hosted by the Evia Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Hellenic Chambers Transport Association, with the support of the Hellenic Ministry of Transport and Communications.
10. The conference was attended by participants from nine countries in South-Eastern Europe and, as in the case of the first seminar, it was a good opportunity to exchange experiences learn

from the experience of France, Italy, and the Netherlands or gather information from the European Commission, Global Road Safety Partnership, the South East Transport Europe Observatory, FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the International Road Assessment Program, the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims, the National Technical University of Athens, the Hellenic Institute of Transportation Engineers, the Hellenic Road Safety Institute “Panos Mylonas”, the Hellenic Association of Safe Transport and the Hellenic Chambers of Commerce and Industry from all Greece. The conference received very good media coverage and the Hellenic Basketball Federation, FIBA Europe and players from the national basketball team of Greece signed a Declaration requesting “Team Work and Fair Play on the Basketball Court and on Our Roads”.

11. The recommendations of the report of the OECD Working Group “Towards zero – ambitious road safety targets and the Safe System Approach” were presented and the Safe System Approach and the contribution of setting and achieving ambitious road safety targets to the delivery of road casualty reduction were discussed in both the seminar and the conference.

12. In both events the participants welcomed the encouraging positive developments but recognized that road traffic casualties were still dramatically affecting their countries. Considering road safety as a problem which can only be solved through collective efforts and cooperation at all levels, the participants agreed on a set of recommendations, which are quasi-identical, as follows.

13. The lessons learned during the events, especially about road safety initiatives and practices that can help Governments to set and achieve road safety targets at relatively low cost and within a short time frame, should be disseminated to the other government authorities involved in road safety in the countries participating in the seminar (Ministries of Interior, Transport, Health and Education).

14. Quantifying the road safety problem through good national statistics and research is an essential first step in establishing campaigns to improve road safety. Countries should therefore adopt/improve methodology for data collection and set-up/improve the existing national computerised databases on road crashes. To this end, the UNECE Glossary and database on road traffic accidents would be an appropriate basis.

15. Governments have a primary role to play in creating safe road traffic conditions through legislation, enforcement and education and they also need to optimise their expenditures. Reducing the number of road casualties leads to reduced costs for the Governments and the society. It is recommended to countries that have not set road safety targets yet, to begin to analyze and model data in order to produce evidence-based casualty reduction targets. In addition, data should be collected in order to have indicators in terms of different road safety problems or groups of road users (for example, separate targets for drinking and driving, use of seatbelts and child restraints and wearing of helmets). When setting targets, effectiveness should prevail over any other consideration, to the maximum extent possible.

16. Political will and commitment are key in improving road safety and these are needed to secure funds and address properly the main priorities in road safety, such as improving the infrastructure, education and enforcement which are high-cost measures.

17. International cooperation and knowledge-sharing in road safety should be further strengthened taking into account the needs of low and middle income countries; to this end, as a first step, a number of advisory missions should be conducted after the seminar, upon request of countries, in order to assess their road safety problems and help them develop targets in a bilateral setting.

18. It is recommended that Governments actively participate in the decision-making process concerning the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, which takes place in the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1). This would also provide for an appropriate forum where individual member countries learn from each other's experience and are able to compare their progress in achieving the targets with other countries in the region.

19. The results of the two events to be included in the final report of the project should be communicated to the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety to be held in Moscow, from 19 to 20 November 2009, and further promoted as guidelines to be followed by countries in all the United Nations regional commissions geographical areas.

20. The representatives of the Hellenic Chambers of Commerce and Industry participating in the conference adopted their own Declaration, in which they resolved to support UNECE work, use their network in Greece to support promotional campaigns and raise awareness of road users to improve their behavior, advocate specific measures improving road safety, establish funding mechanisms designated to support efforts for improved road safety in Greece, and invite South-Eastern European countries to take actions, agree on road safety goals and fully implement UNECE road safety related legal instruments.

21. The participants in both events were invited to participate in the Road Safety Round Table organized by the UNECE on 23 September 2009 under the title "Are We Victims of Development Success?"

22. The secretariat is grateful to the member Governments of WP.1, as well as to the non-governmental partners that contributed to the success of these two events.
