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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS FIFTY-EIGHTH SESSION
(Geneva, 22-25 September 2009)**

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I. ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) held its fifty-eighth session in Geneva from 22 to 25 September 2009 and was chaired by Mrs. Luciana Iorio (Italy). Representatives of the following member States participated: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and United States of America.

2. The European Union, the World Health Organization and the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also represented: European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR), Fédération Internationale de Motorcyclisme (FIM), International Automobile Federation (FIA Foundation) Institute of Road Traffic Education (India), International Association for Driver Education (IVV), International Association for Natural Gas Vehicles (IANGV), International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA), International Road Federation (IRF), International Road Transport Union (IRU) International Touring Alliance (AIT&FIA) and Laser Europe.

II. INTRODUCTION

3. The chairwoman opened the fifty-eighth session of WP.1.

4. The Director of the Transport Division, Ms. E. Molnar, welcomed the participants and identified a number of priorities for the secretariat and WP.1, which would include:

- (a) a new revision of the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, to bring them in line with technological progress and innovations such as the Variable Message Signs;
- (b) the commitment of the secretariat to work towards accomplishing the strategic goal, as expressed by the Secretary-General in his reports on road safety, to achieve universal coverage of road safety-related legal instruments and to ensure that they are not only signed, but also properly implemented;
- (c) the request by the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) to its subsidiary bodies, including WP.1, to review and further improve mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of their respective legal instruments (Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968). Taking into account that previous questionnaires have been replied to only by few countries, WP.1 may wish to define a simpler/more efficient mechanism;
- (d) reference to WP.1 as the "UNECE Road Safety Forum" for visibility and improved communication purposes;
- (e) in March 2010, it will be sixty years that UNECE has been active in the field of road safety and, in September 2010, WP.1 will hold its sixtieth session. Hence, the Director proposed to celebrate this milestone, e.g. by organizing one-day joint sessions with the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) or with the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) dedicated to solving issues of common interest;

- (f) the Director invited WP.1 members to contribute papers to the special session on road safety to be organized by UNECE during the XIIth World Conference on Transport Research that will be held in Lisbon from 11 to 15 July 2010.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/124

5. The Working Party adopted its agenda, with a minor technical correction.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH SESSION (Agenda item 2)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/122

6. The Working Party adopted the report of its fifty-seventh session without modifications.

V. INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO THE WORKING PARTY (Agenda item 3)

7. The Working Party was informed of road safety-related developments that had taken place since its previous sessions.

A. Secretariat

8. The secretariat informed WP.1 of the main developments that had taken place since the fifty-seventh session. Concerning new accessions to the legal instruments, Burkina Faso became a Contracting Party to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1949, and the Protocol on Road Signs and Signals, 1949, and Kenya became a Contracting Party to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968.

9. The developments included two events, organized under the project “Improving global road safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets”. The first one was a seminar held in Minsk from 12 to 14 May 2009 and concerned mainly low- and middle-income countries in the Community of Independent States; the second, a conference held in Halkida, Greece, from 25 to 26 June 2009, which was aimed at low- and middle-income countries in South and South-Eastern Europe. Encouragingly, the participants to these seminars included not only Government officials of countries from and outside the respective regions, but also representatives of municipalities, NGOs and the private sector.

10. The ‘out of the box’ approach in Halkida was to involve basketball celebrities to convey the message about road safety to the widest audience, especially the youth. A special panel, formed by the players of the Greek national basketball team, the Hellenic Basketball Federation and International Basketball Federation (FIBA) Europe, promoted “Fair Play” and “Team work” as a way of ensuring safe roads across Greece and elsewhere. Stressing the importance of adhering to rules that promote fairness and safety – whether it is on the basketball court or on the road – the basketball champions signed a declaration for road safety and committed to support this cause.

11. The representatives of the Hellenic Chambers of Commerce and Industry participating in the conference also adopted a Declaration, in which they resolved to support UNECE work and use their network in Greece to support promotional campaigns, raise awareness and advocate for safer roads.

12. The secretariat continued the cooperation with the international basketball community - FIBA and FIBA Europe - during the Eurobasket 2009 where a declaration on "Respect of the rules" was signed. It is hoped that that this type of cooperation with FIBA will extend to next year's World Basketball Championship in Turkey to reach a global audience.

13. The Turkish delegation in WP.1 had a positive reaction, stating that they will support, at national level, such a development.

B. International organizations

1. European Union

14. The representative of the European Union (EU) informed the delegates that the objective of the Commission was to implement a holistic approach to road safety and include this topic into other economic policies such as health, environment and general economic policy. Studies suggest that for one fatality there are seven persons to take care of; such an integrated approach would thus significantly contribute to increase the quality of life.

15. The representative of the EU also informed of the recent road safety-related activities of her organization as follows:

- (a) A directive was adopted that allows persons with epilepsy, diabetes and impaired vision to drive with aids that were developed thanks to technical progress;
- (b) A directive was adopted that makes mandatory the initial qualification and continuous training of professional drivers;
- (c) Directives were adopted dealing with road infrastructure audits, homologation of new vehicles and obligatory blind spot mirrors on trucks;
- (d) Work is ongoing on legislation that deals with roadside technical controls and inspections;
- (e) The results of DRUID programme on the impact of alcohol and drugs on driving will be known in 2010 and they may provide input for new legislation;
- (f) The Programme of Action on Road Safety 2011-2020 has entered its final stage of public consultation.

C. National delegations

16. WP.1 welcomed information by various delegations on developments that took place since its fifty-seventh session.

17. France stated that it intends to reform the conditions for issuing the driving licence, including its price (cheaper for young drivers); sixteen measures are being put in place to train

safer drivers in a shorter time. The focus is on the two-wheelers and a national consultation process was launched on the new rules. France has improved the enforcement of the drunk-driving rules.

18. Norway informed that it had carried out an in-depth analysis of all fatal road traffic accidents since 2005, which serves as a basis of a new policy towards 2020. The main cause of these accidents is speeding, not necessarily above the speed limit, but above the safety limit that is set by the general conditions and circumstances in the area of accident at that given time; automatic speed control was introduced on some road sections. “Vision zero” applies to fatalities and serious injuries especially for the most vulnerable categories of road users: cyclists and pedestrians.

19. Belgium informed that new legislation was approved and will enter into force in October 2010 allowing for the installation of alcolocks on recidivist drivers’ cars and the saliva testing of drivers who are suspected of driving under the influence of drugs.

20. Spain informed that about 40 per cent of its road traffic accidents had occurred while driving to and from work. Therefore, the country officials are working with the private sector (employers) to adjust the driving behaviour of their staff members.

21. A national roadside survey on driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs has been carried out in the United States of America especially on Friday and Saturday nights; once they will be final, the results of the survey may be shared with the WP.1. In July 2009, the United States of America organized a workshop on data collection for low- and middle-income countries, where multi-disciplinary teams from six countries participated.

22. The Netherlands applies discouraging measures especially for moped drivers, such as high price of the driving license (approximately. 300 Euros). A pilot project on preventing drug driving was sent to the Parliament and may result in laws but the process is likely to be slow. The representative of the Netherlands pointed out that WP.1 was the appropriate body to discuss and regulate drug driving and should pursue its efforts in this field.

23. In Israel, the introduction, three years ago, of numerical goals had a very positive effect; there were 25 per cent less fatalities in 2009 as compared to 2008. Positive effects of enforcement measures leading to 15 per cent reduction of fatalities in the last three years were also mentioned by Turkey, which remains committed to pursuing such measures including the introduction of cameras and automatic control.

24. The representatives of other countries informed of the introduction of the “points system” (Republic of Moldova), and approval of new law allowing for drug driving tests (Luxemburg).

25. The representative of International Association of Drivers’ Education (IADE) explained the importance of education. For example, in Austria, during the past six years, there was a 28 per cent reduction of accidents among young drivers of 17-21 years old. This is mainly the result of new methods of training such as “the second phase” with special trainers and accompanied driving, but also of the “point penalty system” and provisional driving license.

D. Other information

26. The Alliance Internationale du Tourisme/International Federation of Automobile (AIT/FIA) informed of a study they had carried out on the different models of International driving permits (IDPs) issued by motoring organizations and in use world-wide. During the research it was noted that IDPs issued around the world very often differed, in colour as well as in content, from the models contained in the annexes of the 1949 and 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic in two countries, there were even versions of IDPs which combined the 1949 and 1968 models.

27. It is assumed that these combined versions of IDPs are issued by countries which are parties to the 1968 Convention in order to ensure their recognition in countries that are parties to the 1949 Convention since, very often these countries do not accept the 1968 model of IDPs. Moreover, there are countries which are not Contracting Parties to either of the conventions but deliver IDPs and there are even cases when IDPs can be purchased on the internet.

28. WP.1 decided that this subject deserved more detailed consideration and invited AIT/FIA to submit an official document on this subject for its next session.

VI. FUTURE ROLE OF THE WORKING PARTY (Agenda item 4)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2008/5/Rev.2, ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/3

29. WP.1 debated on how it should best restructure its activities so as to adapt to the fast changing situation in road safety and better contribute to improving road safety.

30. The delegates emphasized the need for flexibility and expansion in the work of WP.1. It was suggested that an organization such as the European Traffic Police Network (TISPOL) and the association(s) of insurance companies could be invited to take part in WP.1 meetings and work.

31. A new structure of work in WP.1 may be necessary. Given that some of the issues on the agenda may be very specific (e.g. the work on Variable Message Signs), future work in small groups of specialists was considered and supported.

32. It was suggested that there was a need for an inventory of best and promising practices for road safety, to be compiled, consolidated, constantly updated and published by the secretariat, with the full involvement, inputs and assistance from countries. However, the Working Party was of the opinion that such a work may distract it from its principal objective: to be the global forum that sets the general strategic directions and guidelines for road safety. WP.1 work needs to be focused on legal instruments as it has a limited annual time budget for meetings. Besides, the Consolidated Resolutions contain already best practices but ought to be more visible and more easily accessible.

33. An important issue was raised by the secretariat: if the main role of WP.1 is to encourage countries to become Contracting Parties to the Conventions and ensure the global coverage of the Conventions, why is it that countries participating in WP.1 have not accepted nor ratified the Conventions? This sends a wrong signal to other countries that intend to accede.

34. The Working Party approved the Action Plan for its future role as reproduced in annex 1 to the present report, with the understanding that it should be amended and adapted as the need arises. It was pointed out that it was crucial to ensure coherence and balance in the road safety activities at global level, avoiding duplication of work done in other organizations.

VII. CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE CONVENTION ON ROAD TRAFFIC, 1968, AND THE VEHICLE TECHNICAL REGULATIONS (Agenda item 5)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/2

35. The representative of the International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA) introduced document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/2 on the lack of consistency between the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968, and the vehicle technical regulations, generated by the rapid pace of technical progress which often outdates the provisions of the Convention.

36. The document proposed an adjustment of the Convention as necessary to reflect the favourable effect of technical progress in the corresponding regulation. Otherwise, the Convention may become an obstacle to international movement because new cars have equipments that contravene its provisions (e.g. hazard warning lamps). The secretary of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) complemented this introduction and explained that technical experts do not try to substitute the driver but to assist him/her (e.g. ABS braking system) in avoiding accidents.

37. While agreeing in principle that a solution had to be identified, the representative of Germany requested that the debate on this issue be postponed. She pointed out that her delegation could not automatically accept the technical regulations, as these may lead to breaking the Convention's rule that "the driver must be able to control his vehicle at all times".

38. WP.1 agreed that a debate should also clarify the concern about where to set the dividing line between a driver's full control of the vehicle and the moment he relinquishes this control to technical gadgets. At what point does technology take decisions instead of the driver? There should be a clear distinction between devices that assist the driver and those acting on his/her behalf, and in any case the driver should be able to decide if he wants to let the device act.

39. During an intensive discussion, the delegates outlined various sides of the problem. However, there was common understanding on the following issues:

- (a) In general, the participants agreed with the proposal to include a general clause in the Convention, which was also the solution suggested in the past by the Legal Group;
- (b) WP.1 is the competent body to set the principles for road safety, which include minimum compulsory technical conditions for vehicles to be accepted in international traffic. WP.29 should therefore consult WP.1 whenever they plan to develop new technical regulations. WP.1 stressed the need for coordination at national level between the delegates who participate in WP.1 and WP.29 (or subsidiary) respectively;

- (c) WP.1 ought to be open to new technological developments, especially when they contribute to safety. However, the technical regulations should comply with the Convention and the principle that the driver has to be in full control of the vehicle while driving needs to be considered while introducing new technologies.
40. Regarding the consistency between the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968, and the vehicle technical regulations (agenda item 5), WP.1 decided to postpone the discussion of this item to its next session.
41. However, the Group agreed that an adjustment of the Convention was necessary to reflect the positive effect of technical progress, especially when this progress leads to increased safety.
42. WP.1 decided to send a letter signed by the Chairwoman to WP.29 in order to:
- (a) Invite WP.29 to examine and draft a list of all technical inconsistencies between the Convention and the technical regulations;
 - (b) Express its concern, as a group, that the rapid development of new technologies and their fast adoption as regulations may have an impact on the driver being at all time in full control of his vehicle as per articles 8 and 13 of the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968.
43. The delegates shall offer assistance to the secretariat to find an appropriate definition that would amend Article 3.3 of the Convention. The possibility to use e-tools for exchanging and agreeing on proposals shall be explored and used to the largest extent possible by the secretariat and the national delegations.
44. Relevant additional documents from delegations are welcome by the secretariat before 15 December 2009 in order to prepare them for the next session of WP.1.

VIII. ROUND TABLE « ARE WE VICTIMS OF DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS? » (Agenda item 6)

45. The Director of the Transport Division, Ms. E. Molnar, acted as the moderator of the round table “Are we victims of development success?” the proceedings of which are attached as annex 3 to the present report.
46. The keynote speakers: Mr. R. Baluja (Institute of Road Traffic Education, New Delhi), Mr. W. Labro (International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee), Mr. D. McNamara (Donald McNamara & Company, US) and Ms. L. Sekerinska (World Bank) each gave a presentation on the principal four themes of the debate: safe road infrastructure; safer vehicles; improved behaviour; and the need for a global traffic code respectively. Each key presentation was followed by active debates and presentations by participants.
47. The main conclusions of the participants in the round table can be summarized as follows:
- (a) Improving road traffic safety is also a matter of good governance;

- (b) Road traffic safety ought to be included in planning and financing of road infrastructure projects;
- (c) Ongoing active research in road safety and risk management ought to be continued and results widely disseminated;
- (d) There is a global need for experts' knowledge and certain basic standards in each of the areas: infrastructure, vehicle, behaviour and traffic rules;
- (e) The reasons for road crashes and fatalities need to be more deeply analysed, hence this requires improved databases;
- (f) A stronger participation of citizens is needed for improving road safety situation but funding is necessary at all levels for education/communication campaigns;
- (g) There is a need for better risk perception and risk management; in this sense, it would help if each country better informs foreigners that use its roads about basic differences in traffic rules;
- (h) Investigation of violations of rules and crashes needs to be more profound; in this context, it is important to find opportunities to re-educate offending drivers;
- (i) United Nations Conventions ought to be globally spread, keeping in mind that global harmonization needs to respect local specificities and diversity.

48. The final message from the Round Table was that people have the general right to live with dignity. This includes the right to an improved road safety.

49. The secretariat will ensure that the presentations are available on the Transport Division's web page.

IX. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE CONVENTION ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS, 1968 (Agenda item 7)

50. The Working Party decided not to amend the Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, by adding Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and H₂ signs or new text therein.

51. The Secretariat had a presentation about Intelligent Transport Systems, which was appreciated by WP.1 which is eager to keep up with new technological developments that increase road safety.

52. Upon a proposal by Spain, the Working Party decided to establish an ad-hoc group of experts to deal with Intelligent Transport Systems of relevance to WP.1 and notably with Variable Message Signs. The mandate of this group will be considered and possibly approved at the fifty-ninth session of WP.1.

X. WORK PROGRAMME 2010-2014 (Agenda item 8)

53. The Working Party agreed that it successfully accomplished all the activities that were foreseen in its Programme of Work for the biennium 2008-2009.

54. WP.1 considered document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/5 containing its draft work programme 2010-2014 and adopted it as reproduced in annex 2 to the present report. The secretariat will submit the approved work programme to the Inland Transport Committee at its seventy-second session in 2010.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 9)

Document: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/7

55. The secretariat introduced document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2009/7 on monitoring and encouraging the implementation of the Vienna Conventions. The delegates considered both good and inconvenient parts of the existing questionnaire which was judged to be (far) too comprehensive.

56. The Working Party requested the secretariat to select and mark the most essential questions to which replies are expected and resend the same questionnaire, encouraging again the Contracting Parties to reply. A reasonable deadline ought to be given for complete replies, but if replies cannot be complete, then even the incompletely filled questionnaire needs to be sent to the secretariat.

57. The delegation of the Russian Federation gave the Working Party details concerning the preparation of the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety to be held in Moscow on 19-20 November 2009.

58. Laser Europe informed the Working Party about the road safety film festival to be held from 18 to 20 February 2010 in Marrakesh, Morocco, to which the countries are encouraged to send films.

59. Upon proposal by FEVR, the Working Party decided to include in the agenda for its next session an item on 'Multi-disciplinary accident investigation: a tool for improvement of traffic safety'.

XII. DATE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda item 10)

60. The fifty-ninth session of the Working Party is scheduled to take place in Geneva from 22 to 24 March 2010. Participants wishing to submit proposals for that session are invited to do so by 15 December 2009 at the latest, in order to allow the secretariat to process the documents according to the internal United Nations rules and procedures.

XIII. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS (Agenda item 11)

61. The Working Party adopted a list of decisions taken at its fifty-eighth session, based on which the secretariat has drafted the present report. WP.1 mandated the secretariat to submit to the Group any proposal that it deems necessary for the advancement or improvement of its road traffic safety activities, at any of its sessions.

Annex I

Action Plan for the Future Role of the Working Party

1. Road traffic injuries are obviously a development issue; trends in many countries suggest that the problem could become noticeably worse within the next decade. Despite increased awareness of the issue, there is a pressing need for greater efforts and resources to address the problem, particularly in low and middle-income countries in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region and beyond. The Working Party (WP.1) can and should continue to play a major role in improving road traffic safety at global level.

I. Strategic directions

2. The main goals of WP.1 for the period 2010-2020 should be to ensure global coverage of the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, and to put in place a well-functioning implementation monitoring system. Keeping the legal instruments and the sets of best practices updated shall remain “business as usual”, a permanent task for WP.1, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

3. In addition, WP.1 should adapt to the dynamics of road safety by including in its debates more policy-related issues. Such a strategy for future development would imply a number of organizational changes like, for example, the contribution of thematic ad hoc working groups established when needed and organized in a flexible way (e.g. the creation of an “Expert Group on Variable Message Signs”), as well as the creation of joint working groups on matters with impact on road safety (e.g. joint work with the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) on road safety and infrastructure). The ad hoc working groups will report to WP.1 and the outcome of their work will have to be approved by WP.1.

4. Representatives from other regional commissions should be regularly invited to participate in the meetings of WP.1 and other road safety events. That would be the cornerstone of global transfer of WP.1’s know-how contributing eventually to reach global coverage of the legal instruments. At the same time, debates would provide WP.1 with additional expertise and information, enabling it to elaborate and implement a global vision on road safety that takes into account the needs and capabilities of countries with different levels of development. Such a global vision would build on the legal instruments and best practices elaborated by WP.1.

5. Improved communication on the competitive advantages of WP.1 should be considered as a constant and permanent objective of the Working Party and its members, as well as of the secretariat; achieving this objective will depend to a significant extent on the commitment to assume ownership of products and activities of WP.1.

6. Road traffic safety has an impact on all the components of sustainable development; it should thus be fully taken into account when drafting and implementing sustainable transport policies. WP.1 ought to be a guide in matters of road safety regulations and best practices, applicable at global level and particularly by developing countries. To produce positive

effects, the guidance provided should be based on reliable research of the causes leading to poor road safety performance. Introducing the legal instruments and resolutions and addressing “what to do” is not enough; this should be followed by addressing “how to do,” especially regarding implementation.

7. Road safety is a global problem; while the solutions to the problem have to be global policies, they should mainly be implemented locally. Global policies can only be developed through improved cooperation. WP.1 should therefore foster partnerships and develop synergies with the most relevant stakeholders in road traffic safety. A first step was already taken by inviting the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC) for a back-to-back meeting with WP.1 in November 2008. Organizing such joint meetings with other partners should be envisaged, based on mutual interest and possible complementarities.

8. WP.1 should build on its assets so as to become the most appropriate multilateral platform where concerns, success stories, lessons learnt and failures with regard to road safety can be shared, to the benefit of all the participants.

9. The European Commission should continue to remain a major partner of WP.1 as the European Union (EU) is composed of 27 member States which are also members of the UNECE. The "acquis communautaire" in road safety including legislation, organizational structures and best practices in vehicle safety, infrastructure safety management and user's behaviour is most valuable and might be spread beyond the EU borders with the specific means of WP.1.

II. Actions feasible in the short term (2010-2012)

10. There is no clear indication on the degree or on the correctness of implementation of the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968; based on the principle that “you cannot improve what you cannot measure”, as well as on the request by the Inland Transport Committee, urgent steps are needed. Action:

Define and put in place a well-functioning implementation monitoring mechanism for the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968.

11. Despite repeated appeals, many Contracting Parties to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1949, have not ratified the 1968 Conventions. WP.1 should use all possible means to identify the reasons behind this situation, in order to improve it and facilitate the development of the 1968 Conventions as genuine global legal instruments. Action:

Define a mechanism of inquiry with the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1949, in order to identify their possible difficulties in ratifying and/or implementing the 1968 Conventions. Launch the inquiry and design support measures for the Contracting Parties to overcome the difficulties (this action is to be continued in the medium term).

12. Addressing road traffic safety is a cross-sectoral activity involving different national authorities (policy makers/regulatory, law enforcement etc.) such as the Ministries of Transport, Health, Internal Affairs/Police and Education. Action:

National and regional cooperation amongst competent authorities involved in road traffic safety will be promoted and strengthened. To this end, full use will be made of the findings of the project “Improving Global Road Safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets”, funded by the United Nations Development Account.

13. In a growing number of countries, the Road Safety Council (or similar) plays a key role in coordinating the activities of the different authorities representing a multi-disciplinary portfolio. Despite their vital role, these Road Safety Councils do not seem to have an international network unlike e.g. the railroad regulators, which have managed to set up a regular consultation forum among them. Action:

WP.1 will act as facilitator in promoting the setting-up of a “Club of Road Traffic Safety Councils”. Such a forum would ensure a much faster spread of information at national levels on what WP.1 is actually doing.

14. The road traffic accident statistics database of UNECE as well as the collection of road safety provisions of national legislations constitute assets that should be used by WP.1 to define and/or assess problems and identify solutions thereto. The reliability of the data is highly dependent on the feedback from countries. Action:

WP.1 will make an appeal to its member Governments to contribute to improving data coverage, periodicity, reliability and effectiveness of UNECE road traffic accident statistics as well as of the collection of relevant provisions of national legislations.

15. To make WP.1 more accessible to all UNECE member States and to be able to carry out the activities under a broadened mandate of WP.1, additional resources, notably financial ones, are a prerequisite. Actions:

- (a) Negotiating a specific agreement with the already existing Global Road Safety Facility of the World Bank to support the work of WP.1 in implementing its activities as well as the road safety work of the other United Nations regional commissions;
- (b) Encouraging twinning arrangements (or similar forms of cooperation), e.g. between road safety authorities in developed countries and their corresponding authorities in countries with economies in transition;
- (c) Calling for synergies with major EU-funded projects in the UNECE region (e.g. “Development of Co-ordinated National Transport Policies in Central Asia” in the framework of which a Working Group on road safety has been established, so as to reap the maximum of benefits from each other’s experience.

16. Based on the historic achievements and on-going activities of WP.1, more attention should be given to packaging them invitingly and disseminating/distributing widely. Actions:

- (a) Developing an interactive CD-ROM containing the existing instruments (conventions, resolutions) under the authority of WP.1. The CD-ROM would be distributed in all the important road safety-related events and to the stakeholders;
- (b) Connecting the UNECE website with other websites, relevant for road safety;
- (c) Creating a WP.1/Road Safety mailing list and initiate electronic discussions on a regular basis, with the participation of WP.1 members on a voluntary basis;
- (d) Preparing presentations of the legal instruments and sets of best practices tailored for different levels of understanding and for different target groups (e.g. policy-makers, practitioners etc.);
- (e) Exposing WP.1 (body and achievements) actively and deliberately, and using the UNRSC "How to" manuals as valuable tools worth implementing.

III. Actions feasible in the medium term (2013-2015)

17. WP.1 is equipped with all the necessary knowledge/expertise and experience to expand its role and transfer the know-how to countries beyond the UNECE region, by that being also able to be useful to the other United Nations regional commissions to build capacity and initiate road traffic safety activities in their regions. Actions:

- (a) Provide support to the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1949, in overcoming the difficulties they may have in ratifying the 1968 Conventions;
- (b) Inviting delegates from all regional commissions to WP.1 and ask them to advocate the WP.1 activities in their Commissions;
- (c) Encouraging the establishment by Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of Regional Road Safety Groups (working structures similar to WP.1) aimed at bringing member States closer and improve collaboration between all the road safety stakeholders in that specific region;
- (d) Occasionally organizing WP.1 events in other locations than Geneva, with participation of the working groups of other United Nations regional commissions;
- (e) Promoting and encouraging interaction between UNRSC and the regional road safety groups in the framework of the United Nations regional commissions.

18. In light of the fact that WP.1 is currently the only existing intergovernmental body dealing specifically with road safety in the United Nations system, it should act as a positive catalyst and a facilitator of contacts and cooperation between stakeholders that can contribute to improving road safety. WP.1 should be open to cooperation with other working structures in the United Nations system or external to it, which are relevant for road safety. Actions:

Encourage countries with economies in transition to participate in peer reviews of road safety performance, identify relevant partners (e.g. volunteer reviewers, donor countries, the World Bank, etc.) and facilitate contacts between them and the countries.

Develop synergies between WP.1 and SC.1, starting with joint work on introducing road audits (including safety component) into the European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR).

IV. Actions potentially feasible in the long term (beyond 2015)

19. Road safety is a global problem which needs a global solution. Part of the global solution is given by the existing legal instruments but a complement to operational rulemaking under these rules might be useful. The existing sets of best practices could be supplemented with additional, science-based best practices addressing road safety, applicable by countries at different levels of development. Action:

Consider developing global instruments on road traffic safety covering actual needs, not dealt with by other (existing) instruments, suitable for countries with different levels of development.

20. The International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) was established in 2006 to facilitate expansion of road assessment programmes (RAP) into low and middle income countries. Based on an established methodology using three standards protocols, iRAP enables the implementation of large scale programmes to upgrading the safety of roads where large numbers are being killed and seriously injured. The iRAP initiative supports the development of local models and outcomes that suit the needs and road safety issues within participating developing countries. Action:

Assess all the implications of a possible cooperation with the iRAP and, depending on the results, offering to be associated with it in road safety audits.

Annex II

Draft Programme of Work for 2010-2014

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.3: ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY

Priority 1

Description: Mindful of the worldwide scope of its work, the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) will examine matters and adopt measures aimed at improving road traffic safety. To this end, it will consider, inter alia, the implementation of the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, and the European Agreements of 1971 supplementing them and elaborate proposals for updating these legal instruments as well as the Consolidated Resolutions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.1 and R.E.2). WP.1 will promote road traffic safety through optimal use of new technologies. WP.1 will also seek to promote the global application of its work and adapt itself to the dynamics of road safety by including in its debates more policy-related issues.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety will pursue the following activities:

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

- (a) Encourage **accession to/ratification of** and/or implementation of the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, and the European Agreements of 1971 supplementing them and the Protocol on Road Markings, and elaborate amendment proposals to these legal instruments with a view to strengthening and harmonizing road safety standards. Priority: 1

Output expected by the end of 2011:

- (i) Increased number of Contracting Parties to the Conventions and the European Agreements supplementing them;
- (ii) Consideration and/or adoption where appropriate of new amendment proposals to the above instruments concerning, inter alia, **the relationship between the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968 and UNECE Vehicle Technical Regulations, and possibly security measures concerning road traffic recommended by the Multidisciplinary Group of Experts on Inland Transport Security.**
- (iii) **Wide dissemination of the consolidated versions of the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, in all official United Nations languages.**
- (b) **Publish and widely disseminate the Consolidated Resolutions on Road Traffic (R.E.1) and on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.2)** Priority: 1

Output expected by the end of 2011: Publication of the two resolutions in a more attractive and modern form and wide dissemination, with priority to the other regional economic commissions;

- (c) **Define and put in place a well-functioning implementation monitoring mechanism for the Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968.** **Priority: 1**
- (d) **Define a mechanism of inquiry with the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1949, in order to identify their possible difficulties in acceding to/ratifying and/or implementing the 1968 Conventions.** **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2011: Launch the inquiry and design support measures for the Contracting Parties to overcome the difficulties.

- (e) **Provide support to the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Road Traffic, 1949, in overcoming the difficulties they may have in ratifying the 1968 Conventions;** **Priority: 3**
- (f) **Promote and strengthen national and regional cooperation amongst competent authorities involved in road traffic safety. To this end, make full use of the findings of the project “Improving global road safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets”, funded by the United Nations Development Account.** **Priority: 2**
- (g) Exchange of information on national road safety programmes, in particular taking into account means of financing of road safety activities, and on road safety regulations and requirements in force in member States and circulation of such information in order to avail Governments of the practice and experience gained on these matters. **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2011: Updating the set of tables reflecting current national road traffic safety requirements, national legal instruments and national methods of training and follow-up for categories A and B driving licences. Addition of new tables dealing, for example, with complementary safety equipment required on board vehicles. Issuance of information regarding road safety campaigns conducted by member countries.

- (h) **Incorporate in its work technological developments that would improve road traffic safety.** **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2011: Decision on including Variable Message Signs (VMS) in the Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1968.

- (i) Assist countries in transition and developing countries in the establishment of sound and up-to-date traffic safety practices and procedures. **Priority: 2**

Output expected by the end of 2011: Respond to requests for technical assistance from other regional commissions or their member countries.

- (j) **Encourage the establishment by Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) of Regional Road Safety Groups (working structures similar to WP.1) aimed at improving collaboration between all the road safety stakeholders in that specific region.**

- (k) **Consider developing global instruments on road traffic safety covering actual needs, not dealt with by other (existing) instruments, suitable for countries with different levels of development.**
- (l) Consideration of selected timely topics related to road safety in the form of an in-depth discussion based on papers prepared by experts and undertaking appropriate follow-up action with a view to finding concerted solutions to the most urgent problems in the field of traffic safety. **Priority: 2**

Output expected by the end of 2011: Identification of at least one timely topic for in-depth discussion.

- (m) **Raise awareness about road traffic safety through all means, including sports and cultural events.** **Priority: 1**

ACTIVITIES OF A LIMITED DURATION

- (n) **Act as facilitator in promoting the setting-up of an associative structure of Road Traffic Safety Councils.** **Priority: 2**
- (o) **Contribute to the organization of the Second Global Road Safety Week (in case it is organized).** **Priority: 2**
- (p) **Promote the recommendations and guidelines** of the project “Improving global road safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets”. **Priority: 1**

Annex III

Proceedings of the Round Table¹

1. The Director of the Transport Division, Ms. E. Molnar, acted as the moderator of the round table “Are we victims of development success?” the proceedings of which are attached to the present report. She welcomed the keynote speakers and the participants, and introduced the principal four themes of the debate: safe road infrastructure; safer vehicles; improved behaviour; and the need for a global traffic code.
2. The first topic, safe road infrastructure, was introduced by the representative of the World Bank. Representatives of France, Israel, Republic of Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) and Global Transport Knowledge Partnership (gTKP) also shared their experience in this matter with the audience.
3. The delegates mentioned in their interventions the following major issues:
 - (a) Infrastructure makes road users behave in a prudent way, it saves lives and moderates injuries. Safe infrastructure is the responsibility of the Government. It costs money, but it benefits everyone, so it is cost-effective.
 - (b) However, low-income countries do not have funds to build safe roads which makes bad road safety inextricably linked to poverty. Good infrastructure standards are useful but guidelines would be needed on how to “improvise” and innovate without spending too much money, e.g. when modifying old infrastructure parts (intersections). Simple solutions such as barriers separating the traffic senses proved to be effective ways to reduce road accidents.
 - (c) At the same time, crash barriers - that routinely save the lives of car occupants but can cause traumatic death and injury to bikers - account for up to one in every six rider road deaths, and can multiply by five the severity of injury. In collisions with crash barriers, bikers are 15 times more likely to be killed than car occupants. Across Europe, 16 per cent of all road fatalities are motorcyclists. In terms of rider fatalities per billion kilometres travelled, Norway has the lowest number at 30 per billion km, whereas in Greece, this figure is well above at 29 per cent. A report “Barriers to Change” issued by EuroRAP in December 2008 contains more information on this topic and solutions are provided in a guidance document prepared by (IHIE) at http://www.eurorap.org/news_item?search=y&ID=200.
 - (d) Separation of vulnerable road users (bicycles) in build-up areas is not always possible; road is a shared space and the needs of every user must be taken into account.

¹ All the presentations can be downloaded at http://www.unece.org/trans/events/2009/wp1_roundtable09.html.

- (e) Roads should be built in such a way as to induce safer behaviour. While building roads, Governments need to redesign them to prevent road users from speeding. Sceptical opinions were also expressed: in most accidents, drivers would speed even though roads had been redesigned.
- (f) A web-based system is available at <http://www.irap.net/> based on the experience of International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP). It is especially interesting for low and middle income countries, as it contains 40-50 key engineering interventions to improve road safety.
- (g) Currently road safety is not a condition for World Bank loans, but it may become one in the future.

4. The second theme, safer vehicles and related inspections, was presented by the representative of the International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee. Israel, Norway, Sweden and United States of America also shared their experience in this matter. The delegates mentioned in their interventions the following major issues:

- (a) In some countries, specific studies have been undertaken which lead to higher frequency in vehicle inspections, but
- (b) In the majority of countries, no direct relation was established between periodic inspection of passenger cars and a reduction in road traffic accidents, at national or international levels. One of the possible reasons may be that “real-life”, comprehensive studies are expensive to undertake: immediately after a crash, the first thing is to assist the injured and clear the site for normal traffic.
- (c) Certain Governments introduced scrapping schemes for older vehicles as safety of a vehicle decreases over time. It is safer and often cheaper to buy a new vehicle, than to maintain an old one.
- (d) It was the general agreement that initial and periodic technical inspections, based on mandatory standards, remain an important component of road traffic safety and a matter of good governance.

5. The third topic, improved behaviour, was introduced by the representative of Donald McNamara & Company, United States of America. Delegates from France, Italy, Ukraine, Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) and Global Transport Knowledge Partnership (gTKP) also shared their experience in this matter with the audience. During the discussion that followed, the delegates mentioned in their interventions the following major issues:

- (a) New traffic control technology and drivers being informed about these controls led in Italy to a reduction of 50 per cent in casualties on roads where the technology is installed and to an improvement in drivers' behaviour.
- (b) Training of drivers is important but positive effects can also be obtained with simple information tools. In France, which is an important transit country, it was noted that every year, in July and August, there was a high increase in road traffic crashes involving foreign holidaymakers. It was decided that they ought to be

informed through flyers and panels when entering the country about some of the basic traffic rules that may differ from those in their country of origin.

- (c) According to GRSP, all measures should be taken to stop kinetic energy killing humans. In the case of a crash, the police need to determine what was due to a breach of the law and what was due to a hazard. Wearing seatbelts and modifying speed would be the proof that people understood the hazard. Management of road safety in a standardized approach is important and necessary; in this context, the work of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to help the world develop a common standard for road safety management is of outstanding importance.

6. In the United Kingdom great importance is attached to the rehabilitation of offenders through various schemes and courses. Recidivism substantially decreases for those who followed such refresher courses:

- (a) National Driver Improvement Schemes are available as an alternative to prosecution throughout the United Kingdom and are run by local authority road safety departments or by private companies who act as service providers for their respective police authorities. These schemes apply to persons involved in a road traffic incident and where evidence collated by the Police indicates that they had been "driving without due care and attention, or driving without reasonable consideration to other road users."
- (b) Following the success of the National Driver Improvement Scheme, the Department for Transport (DfT) decided that education may be more effective than punishment in helping to reduce the number of casualties on British roads. The National Speed Awareness Scheme (NSAS) was developed and introduced in response to this initiative. NSAS Courses meet national criteria and specification. The National Speed Awareness Service allows Police Authorities to divert low-end speeding drivers and motorcycle riders to these educational courses instead of prosecution under the Fixed Penalty System.
- (c) Drink Drive Rehabilitation Courses: since 1 January 2000, Courts throughout England, Wales and Scotland have had an extra sentencing option for drink/drive offenders. If a driver is convicted of an offence involving drinking and driving, the magistrate, or sheriff in Scotland, may offer him the opportunity of attending a rehabilitation course. Completion of a course, each of which is approved by the Government, will entitle him to a reduction of up to a quarter in the period of disqualification.

7. The final topic, global traffic code, was introduced by the representative of Institute of Road Traffic Education in New Delhi. Delegates from France, Israel, Italy, Switzerland, International Road Federation (IRF), Laser Europe and Road Safety Institute Panos Mylonas (IOAS) also shared their experience in this matter with the audience.

8. During the discussion that followed, the delegates mentioned in their interventions the following major issues:

- (a) The creation of a decent transportation system takes a long time and is a shared responsibility. Enforcement must be preceded by education and infrastructure; all three are, basically, obligations of Governments but if the civil society does not take charge of certain issues, nothing would happen.
- (b) Regarding harmonization of the traffic codes at the international level, although it represents a desideratum, the general opinion was that harmonization has its limits. There is a huge road safety divide between developed countries and some developing ones, explained partly by the order of priorities: the primary concern to people in poor countries may not be road traffic safety, but to earn means for living. It is, in a way, a paradox, as it is well-known that road crashes contribute to increasing poverty in poor countries: the cost of these accidents represents 1.3 per cent of the world GDP, which amounts to some US\$ 2-3 billion a day.
- (c) While harmonization of rules seems easier to achieve, based on international legal instruments, it would be extremely difficult to achieve harmonized enforcement at international level. Even in developed countries with a good road safety performance enforcement of traffic code's rules may be difficult, particularly in federal States. While the road traffic rules are the same throughout the country, the control and sanction system may differ from one territorial administrative unit to the other. Some units may have fixed equipment for the control of speed, others have mobile, the frequency of controls and the level of fines may be different.
- (d) Each country has its own established culture and rules and it is well-known that to change culture takes time. The first step is always the most difficult and should therefore be simple: it was suggested that low-income largely populated countries could start by separating parts of road for pedestrians and for vehicles. The idea of establishing a road safety training institution (college or other) that may assist to create in the long term a culture of road safety would worth considering

9. The main conclusions of the participants in the round table can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Improving road traffic safety is also a matter of good governance;
- (b) Road traffic safety ought to be included in planning and financing of road infrastructure projects;
- (c) Ongoing active research in road safety and risk management ought to be continued and results widely disseminated;
- (d) There is a global need for experts' knowledge and certain basic standards in each of the areas: infrastructure, vehicle, behaviour and traffic rules;
- (e) The reasons for road crashes and fatalities need to be more deeply analysed, hence this requires improved databases;
- (f) A stronger participation of citizens is needed for improving road safety situation but funding is necessary at all levels for education/communication campaigns;

- (g) There is a need for better risk perception and risk management; in this sense, it would help if each country better informs foreigners that use its roads about basic differences in traffic rules;
- (h) Investigation of violations of rules and crashes needs to be more profound; in this context, it is important to find opportunities to re-educate offending drivers;
- (i) United Nations Conventions ought to be globally spread, keeping in mind that global harmonization needs to respect local specificities and diversity.

10. The final message from the Round Table was that people have the general right to live with dignity. This includes the right to an improved road safety.
