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Item 4 (c) of the provisional agenda

Issues that need consideration and require decisions by the Committee:

Road safety

Second United Nations Global Road Safety Week

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. This document provides information about the latest General Assembly resolution on improving global road safety (A/RES/66/260) of 23 May 2012 which calls for implementation of various road safety activities envisaged by the Global Plan of Action of the Decade as well as invites various stakeholders to organize and/or take part in the second UN Global Road Safety Week. The document also provides information about the preparation of activities planned by UNECE secretariat for the second UN Global Road Safety Week (6–12 May 2013).

II. United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/260

2. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the latest road safety resolution (A/RES/66/260) on 23 May 2012. Sponsored by the Russian Federation, and co-sponsored by some 80 countries, this latest UN Resolution on road safety, among others, called on UN Member States to implement road safety activities relating to each of the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action, namely, road safety management, safer roads and mobility, safer vehicles, safer road users and post-crash.

3. Going forward, the UN General Assembly resolution 66/260, among others, also:

(a) requested the World Health Organization and the UN regional commissions, in cooperation with other partners in the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC) and other stakeholders, to continue activities aimed at supporting the implementation of the objectives of the Decade of Action;

(b) requested the World Health Organization and the UN regional commissions to organize activities during the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week, within their resources and with voluntary financing assistance from stakeholders, in collaboration with other members of the UNRSC, to raise global, regional, national and local awareness about road safety issues, with particular attention to vulnerable road users; and

(c) encouraged Member States, civil society and the private sector to participate in the second UN Global Road Safety Week by hosting national and local events.

III. Second United Nations Global Road Safety Week (UNGRSW)

4. The UN General Assembly Resolution requested the theme of the UNGRSW to pay particular attention to vulnerable road users. In this context, the UNECE secretariat prepared an outline of a concept for organizing the second UN Global Road Safety Week. The concept note was presented at the sixty-fourth session of the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) on 24–27 September 2012 (document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2012/7).

5. The document argued that the UN Road Safety Week may feature events and activities that will be open to public participation, as well as specialized events targeting policymakers, governmental and nongovernmental organizations as well as other interested non-governmental stakeholders, for example, representatives of the private sector. However, in order to ensure a comprehensive approach to pedestrian safety that will produce concrete results, the UNECE secretariat proposed a set of considerations on which events and activities could be based. The objectives are:

(a) to raise awareness on the road safety situation globally;

(b) to bring together policymakers, experts and other actors to exchange information and best practices on policies and measures, urban design and infrastructure; and

(c) to develop tools and mechanisms that would enhance road safety via better data collection and involvement of the public.

6. Under the heading of “raising awareness”, streets and roads as living spaces, organization of a short film competition for road safety awareness raising, and pedestrian victims of road crashes were proposed as topic for consideration.

7. Under the “sharing knowledge and best practices” category, cultural differences and road safety, safety of and accessibility to public transport, and safety for handicapped pedestrians were proposed. It is worth noting that the UNECE secretariat has engaged a consultant to write a paper on “cultural differences and road safety”. The paper is now available in draft and the secretariat intends to post it on the UNECE website for comments. The UNECE secretariat invited WP.1 to partner with it in organizing special events in Geneva during that week. The Council of Bureaux (COB) expressed interest in partnering with UNECE secretariat in organizing an event about insurance and victims of road accidents.

8. Finally, under the heading “Developing Road Safety tools and mechanisms”, the UNECE secretariat proposed walkability checks and vehicle buyers’ checklist as possible issues of interest during the UNGRSW.

IV. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe proposed activities for the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week

9. Following the sixty-fourth session of WP.1, the UNECE secretariat has been in discussions with several organizations to plan special events marking the second UN Global Road Safety Week. In addition to the above-noted, tangible interest of the COB, the secretariat has had preliminary consultations with the International Union of Railways (UIC) for creating and launching a short film emphasizing safety at level crossings during the International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD), which in 2013, will take place on 7 May in Geneva (during the second UN Global Road Safety Week). ILCAD was established by the UIC and the railway community, in conjunction with a number of road sector organizations and the UNECE, to raise awareness among road users and pedestrians of the risks at level crossings, and to change their behaviour. The short film, if realized, reflects the UNECE secretariat's efforts to date in collaborating with the UIC to raise awareness of, and to improve, safety at level crossings.
