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Report of the Inland Transport Committee on its eighty-fifth session

Addendum

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Annex I

High-level segment on "Actions of the inland transport sector to join the global fight against climate change"

(Salle XIX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, 21 February 2023)

I. Introduction

1. Transport ministers and high-level delegations with more than 430 participants from 84 countries and the heads of relevant inland transport organizations gathered in person for the high-level segment on “Actions of the inland transport sector to join the global fight against climate change” (21 February 2023, Geneva) to reflect on the unique assets of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), highlighting its value added and underlining its future potential in curbing greenhouse gas emissions trends from inland transport in a disaster-hit global economy due to the impacts of climate change regionally and globally.

II. Opening

2. H.E. Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), opened the 85th session of the ECE ITC, the first session of the ITC to be held under its revised terms of reference endorsed by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in February 2022. This change has opened ITC’s membership to contracting parties from beyond the ECE region, thus transforming ITC into a more open and inclusive body. After a year of multiple crises that has challenged our international system and strained national and international institutions, we stand at a crossroads for the future of the planet and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Transport and mobility play a critical role for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Globally, CO₂ emitted from the transport sector accounts for 23 per cent of global energy-related CO₂ emissions. Within the transport sector, more than 71 per cent of CO₂ emissions stem from inland transport. The ITC, a unique inter-governmental body specialized in inland transport, can help tackle climate change and contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals. In her closing words, the Executive Secretary acknowledged the logo of the 85th ITC session, which shows a clock ticking just before the twelfth hour and emphasized that it is time to act now.

3. H.E. Mr. Junhua Li, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), expressed his appreciation for the impact ITC has had over the last 76 years and as custodian of 59 United Nations conventions, with 152 of 193 UN Member States participating as contracting parties. Effective transport reinforces connectivity at all levels, facilitating the integration of economies, improving social equity, enhancing rural-urban linkages and building resilience. But transport systems are most effective when they are environmentally sustainable. Sustainable transport has been identified as one of the key enablers of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) and the Paris Agreement. Yet, transport is the sector with the lowest share of renewable energy use with more than 95% of transport energy still coming from petroleum products. Transport must further respond to the questions of equality and challenges that women and persons with disabilities face. The Under-Secretary-General closed his remarks by calling for using this unique moment in time to highlight the concrete solutions of sustainable transport, as a crucial enabler of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

4. Mr. Yuwei Li, Director of the Sustainable Transport Division at ECE, highlighted the new global mandate of ITC and emphasized the success of ITC in ensuring safety and developing connectivity over the past 76 years. Under the 2030 Agenda, transport related environmental issues must receive more attention in our agenda with the transport sector accounting for almost a quarter of global energy related CO₂ emissions. ITC has been working on addressing the negative impact of transport on the environment and climate

change, and these topics will become a third pillar of ITC and its relevant subsidiary bodies to work towards. The historic approval of ITC's revised terms of reference by ECOSOC on 16 February 2022 grants ITC a specialized role as a regional and global UN centre for all aspects of inland transport including regulatory work and other means. Keeping in mind regional and global challenges and solutions, ITC's subsidiary bodies have to assess their terms of reference to perform these two roles and achieve this transformation for all of ITC. ITC will continue to provide the best services to the 56 ECE member States and the other 96 UN Member States that are contracting parties to at least one of the 59 UN legal instruments under the purview of ITC to make the transport systems safer and more efficient, resilient, inclusive and sustainable.

5. The opening of the 85th annual session of ITC concluded with an award presentation for 75 years of partnership between ECE and the International Road Transport Union (IRU). H.E. Mr. Umberto de Pretto, Secretary General of IRU, expressed his gratitude for ECE's partnership and joint accomplishments over the past 75 years, such as the TIR system, the UN's longest public-private partnership (PPP). After showing a short video on the history of IRU, H.E. Mr. Umberto de Pretto presented ECE's Executive Secretary, H.E. Ms. Olga Algayerova, with a commemorative plaque in recognition of 75 years of continuous public-private partnership of ECE and IRU.

III. Keynote speeches

6. H.E. Mr. Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation of the United States of America, started his keynote speech by underlining that fighting climate change and expanding economic opportunity in the context of transportation can be realized through continued partnership of the international community. Pointing out the impact the Russian Federation's war in Ukraine has had on Ukrainian transportation systems, the Secretary stressed that good infrastructure is foundational to the stability of economies and democracies. Every economic decision is also a decision about our climate, and every climate investment carries real economic benefit. For example, the new fuel efficiency standards announced by the United States last year will not only serve to reduce emissions, but also accelerate the electric vehicle revolution and help create a new generation of auto manufacturing jobs. Meeting climate commitments requires working together with partners around the world and learning from another. The United States have embraced a "safe system" approach to traffic safety through the National Roadway Safety Strategy which is modelled after many of the strategies pioneered by international counterparts. The Secretary closed his speech by underlining that global challenges are best faced together as allies, united by shared values and commitments.

7. H.E. Mr. Andreas Carlson, Minister for Infrastructure of Sweden, started his keynote speech by emphasizing that climate change is the greatest challenge of our time. With transportation being one of the largest sources of CO₂ emissions globally, major transformations must be made in the inland transport sector in order to fulfil our commitments under the Paris Agreement and the SDGs. The European Union (EU) has set ambitious climate goals and is putting in place the regulatory framework for achieving them. The focus of the Swedish presidency will be on negotiations for the transport files within the Fit for 55 package, namely ReFuel EU Aviation, FuelEU Maritime and the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation. The Minister underlined that electrification is key for an accelerated green transition of the transport sector beyond 2030, especially for inland transport. The development and deployment of new technologies to eliminate dependency on fossil fuels is underway and brings enormous opportunities for economic growth. The Minister also called upon the Russian Federation to stop the war against Ukraine immediately and emphasized the heavy impact the war has had on inland transport in the ECE region. The Minister closed his keynote speech by stressing that the green transition is a collective responsibility requiring national, regional and international cooperation.

8. Hon. General (Dr.) V.K. Singh, Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways of India, started his keynote speech by commending ITC for becoming an international forum for leaders from UN Member States to come together to discuss and develop tools for strengthening inland transport and economic cooperation. India is working towards the development of a sustainable, efficient and safe transport infrastructure network that will

accelerate regional connectivity and inclusive socio-economic growth along with environmentally friendly, accessible and citizen-centric mobility. The Minister highlighted India's efforts in achieving emissions reductions through interventions such as promoting the use of alternative fuel, increasing the adoption of electric vehicles and launching the Voluntary Vehicle-Fleet Modernisation Program. The expansion and strengthening of regional connectivity are an integral part of India's economic and diplomatic initiatives. The Minister emphasized that connectivity initiatives must be based on universally recognized international norms, good governance, the rule of law, transparency and equality and be pursued in a manner that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity. He closed his keynote speech by reaffirming India's support for the objective of the session and urging participating member States to advance sustainable transport for all by delivering on commitments, forging new alliances and transforming policies.

9. H.E. Mr. Petterie Taalas, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), started his keynote speech by pointing out that, on a 10-year scale as estimated by the World Economic Forum (WEF), failure of climate change mitigation and adaptation pose the biggest risks to the global economy. The world is on a trajectory for a 2.5 degree increase in temperature, which also means an increase in natural disasters such as dramatic flooding events, storms and heat waves, which have big impacts on economies and transport infrastructure. The Secretary-General emphasized that one of the keys is to improve the early warning services, which currently only half of the UN Member States have. The increase in flooding and droughts also poses a challenge to global food production, which, together with water scarcity, is a problem in view of the growing global population. Sea level rise has doubled in the past 20 years, with a growing component stemming from the melting of the Greenland and Antarctic glaciers. The Arctic is expected to be ice free in summer and early autumn time in 2040. While this would allow for transportation routes through the North Pole, the melting of glaciers also negatively affects transport when it comes to water availability in rivers. The Secretary-General closed his keynote speech by pointing out that there are cheap means for successful mitigation in the transport sector, as prices for batteries and electric vehicles are dropping.

IV. Panel I: Critical partnerships and leaving no-one behind in the climate battle: global challenges and winning formulas for net-zero leaders

10. Panel I was moderated by Mr. Young Tae Kim, Secretary General of the International Transport Forum (ITF).

11. H.E. Mr. Sabri Bachtobji, Ambassador Permanent Representative of Tunisia delivered the speech on behalf of H.E. Mr. Rabie El Majidi, Minister of Transport and Logistics of Tunisia. Tunisia is among the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change. At the same time, the majority of the world's cities are experiencing rapid urban growth that is increasing vulnerabilities to environmental, health, economic and social risks, particularly in countries with low economic capacity and social resilience. Major reforms have been undertaken in Tunisia, particularly in the most energy-intensive and GHG-emitting sectors, including transport and urban planning. Tunisia's goal is to make the transport sector a source of solutions to environmental and inclusion challenges by integrating climate objectives more effectively into public transport policies, including infrastructure planning, development and modernization by promoting rail and multimodal transport. The Ambassador emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation and investments in climate action and implementing early warning and prevention systems and climate resilient transportation systems. He concluded his speech by reiterating Tunisia's confidence in ITC and its role as the appropriate decision-making body, with the legal instruments under ITC's purview remaining indispensable for the development of efficient, harmonized, safe and sustainable transport systems.

12. Hon. Mr. Felix Tapiwa Mhona, Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development of Zimbabwe, started his speech by acknowledging ITC's progressive and balanced leadership. To achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda, we need a concerted approach that leaves no one behind. The Minister suggested that targets

should be set to strengthen resilience and adaptation capacities, integrate climate change strategies into national transport policies, raise awareness about effects of climate change on transport and road safety and help least developed and small island developing states with building their transport strategies and systems. Digital solutions for safe and clean transport models need to be unlocked and internal and external factors such as, inter alia, religion, geographical location, gender and ethnicity need to be considered. Zimbabwe's National Development Strategy 1 (2021-2025) pushes for extensive development of transport infrastructure, systems and services to cater to all communities. Zimbabwe has been hit by natural disasters which have destroyed infrastructure and caused loss and damage. These issues can no longer be ignored. Zimbabwe is developing a National Electric Mobility Policy, a framework towards the adoption, use and disposal of electric vehicles. However, efforts are restricted due to limited capacity and financing. The Minister closed his speech by emphasizing that these issues need to be integrated at ITC.

13. H.E. Mr. Arzybek Kozhoshev, Member of the Board – Minister in charge of Energy and Infrastructure, Eurasian Economic Commission, started his speech by underlining that the effort and annual session of ITC reinforce integration efforts of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). The countries of the EEU are forming their own climate agenda. The first packet of road map measures was approved by heads of state in 2022, aimed at increasing the ability of countries in the EEU to compete and improving the conditions for technological transformation and energy transition. The use of clean, smart transport is one of the priorities of the countries in the EEU. One of the goals is to increase the volume of electrification of railroads. The Commission is working with member States to coordinate the development of infrastructure, financing a new transport corridor project and creating a single common transit market with a network for moving goods, launching e-customs and e-trade and improving information exchange systems. The Minister emphasized the need for harmonizing legislation between member States and aligning them with international standards to simplify and streamline international transit and shipments as well as coordinating activities with international organizations and other stakeholders such as IRU, OSJD and IMO.

14. Mr. Anouar Benazzouz, President, International Road Federation (IRF) started his speech by recognizing ECE's leadership and collaboration over the past seven decades. During this time, IRF has provided guidance for global road sector development by connecting people, ideas and organizations and innovating at large. Climate impacts are already heavily felt in communities around the world. Thus, the leading organizations in the road industry have come together to restate the firm commitment to support the achievement of the goal of the Paris Agreement and achieve net-zero emissions globally by 2050. Together with six other leading organizations from the road sector, the IRF delivered a joint statement called "Road Sector for COP 27" during the transport day at the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Sharm El-Sheikh. Achieving the SDGs depends on efficient multi-modal transport systems and services. Effective road transport, road networks, tunnels and bridges and the associated services are essential to ensure the sustainable mobility of people and goods and to ensure no one is left behind. Regional and local specificities need to be taken into account when drafting pathways for transport decarbonization. While data and new technologies are crucial, they are not enough. We must also invest in developing the institutional capacity and creative financial approaches.

Scheduled high-level interventions from the membership and partners

- H.E. Ambassador Lazăr Comănescu, Secretary General, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization
- Mr. Mirosław Antonowicz, Chairman of OSJD Committee
- Mr. Jan Hoffmann, Head, Trade Logistics Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD
- Mr. Steve Phillips, Secretary General, Conference of European Directors of Roads
- Mr. Ralf Ernst, OSCE Deputy Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities

V. Panel II: Bridging regulators and innovators to bring to scale critical technologies supporting climate change mitigation actions

15. Panel II was moderated by Mr. Antonio Erario, Chair of the ITC World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29).

16. H.E. Mr. Razzaq Ojaimi, Minister of Transport of Iraq, started his speech by emphasizing the importance of adaptation given the magnitude of climate change and its impact on many areas of life. However, adaptation will be difficult for some societies, which is already evident in some island states that are experiencing sea level rise. Iraq's neighbouring countries, in particular the Arab Republic of Syria, are currently suffering from the repercussions of the devastating earthquake that struck Türkiye. In light of this recent crisis and repercussions of climate change in the region, Iraq's government is trying to create a more resilient economy. The Minister underlined that financial resources and investments are required to find convergence between regulators and innovators and expand the scope of technologies that support climate change mitigation measures. He reminded the audience that some of the communities most exposed to climate change are also the least able to adapt and that the wealthiest countries must fulfil their climate finance commitments made under the Paris Agreement. The Minister closed his speech by emphasizing the global need for great investments in infrastructure over the next 15 years, particularly in roads and bridges, as well as warning devices and technologies that combat climate change and support the transition towards a green economy while promoting sustainable development.

17. H.E. Mr. Umberto De Pretto, Secretary General, International Road Transport Union (IRU), emphasized the importance of working more closely with industry in order to achieve sustainable development. In 1996, the IRU developed a charter for sustainable development and had a number of initiatives since then. Recently, the IRU has implemented the Green Compact, which aims to achieve carbon neutrality in the road transport industry until 2050. The Secretary General emphasized that we need solutions that can be implemented now. One solution is the use of modular concepts or eco-vehicles in road transport, which can remove 1/3 of the trucks from the road and reduce CO₂ emissions by 237 million tons annually if 30 per cent of the fleet were to switch to modular concepts. Another solution is to put in place an effective bus and coach system, as buses and coaches are 81% more CO₂ efficient than passenger cars as well as the safest mode of transport. Additionally, with TIR and CMR the UN has instruments available that allow trucks to cross borders very efficiently. However, trucks still have to stop and wait at borders, which affects the economy, social equity and causes more CO₂ emissions. The Secretary General closed his speech by urging delegates to use solutions that are already available to work towards the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

18. Mr. Gerhard Müller, President, International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee (CITA), elaborated on the importance of monitoring whole life compliance of vehicles, regardless of their type, to ensure a high environmental performance. The Periodical Technical Inspection (PTI) is one of the most effective instruments to guarantee this. PTI operators are collecting data about the real consumption of vehicles on a regular basis. This is particularly valuable as real fuel consumption is much higher than what official values determined in a test cycle indicate, especially with hybrid vehicles. This evaluation is also applicable to electric vehicles as batteries age quite fast, which leads to lower range and poorer efficiency. These activities will help with providing a more realistic picture of energy consumption and the GHG emissions of vehicles. However, vehicle inspection operators need to have access to relevant in-vehicle data. Only with this original data in combination with additional tests can the status of a vehicle be meaningfully assessed. Mr. Müller closed by calling on legislators for binding requirements for the car industry to allow vehicle inspection operators to get free access to safety and emission relevant data.

Scheduled high-level interventions from the membership and partners

19. Mr. Dmitry Zverev, State Secretary - Deputy Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation, began by pointing out that the Russian Federation is a member of 33 conventions on transport and values the efforts of countries in the ECE and its secretariat in finding

balanced approaches on development of transport in the region. The Russian Federation is continuing to carry out work in the transport sector, including all the obligations concerning developing infrastructure, accessibility of transport for passengers and the transport of goods. In 2022, the Russian Federation built 415 km of new railway lines. Work has also begun on a government system for electronic documents for road transport and digital innovations for the transport of goods. The Deputy Minister emphasized that the Russian Federation gives great importance to the effect of the transport sector on the environment and human health and is introducing modern technologies and alternative fuels and sources of energy. For example, the Russian Federation runs a leasing program for electric vehicles and vehicles run on natural gas and is examining the use of hydrogen as a fuel. The Deputy Minister underlined that all efforts made by the international community will be in vain if this is not approached in a rational manner. In order to further accelerate the expansion of infrastructure, improve logistics and reduce the negative impact on the environment, we need to ensure that logistical and infrastructure services exist and are on a par with European services. The Deputy Minister pointed out that, as a result of the refusal by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) to provide services to the Russian Federation, equipment certifying centres are needed for the full implementation of European agreements on operations of international transport infrastructure in non-EU countries. He further emphasized that it would be useful to create centres for customs regulations in line with the existing TIR system and the development of approval of innovation technologies aimed at boosting environmentally friendly transport. The Deputy Minister emphasized that the Russian Federation rejects condemnation against the supposed violation of the UN Charter through aggression in Ukraine. He underlined that the Russian Federation only protected the Russian speaking population in Donbas and acted in line with the UN Charter. The Deputy Minister closed his intervention by stating that the Russian Federation supports ITC as a key platform for developing shared approaches and solutions in the area of transport.

20. Mr. Siarhei Dubina, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of Belarus, started his intervention by acknowledging the unique role and contribution of the ITC as a comprehensive UN platform and the source of coordinated international standards and rules for inland transport. Belarus' policies are aimed at achieving the SDGs and the goals of the Paris Agreement as well as reducing adverse impact on the environment and developing sustainable mobility. The Deputy Minister underlined that there are factors that hinder progress, such as the closure of a number of border crossing points by Poland or the suspension of some railroad connections to Belarus by Lithuania. He emphasized that long queues of vehicles at the EU border have negative impacts on the environment and slow down the transport of essential goods. The Deputy Minister further pointed out that ensuring transport safety is problematic, as the JRC is not performing its functions with respect to Belarus and manufacturers are refusing to deliver chips for digital tachograph cards. He stressed that this hinders Belarus' attempts to broadly integrate smart tachographs and obliterates international efforts in this area. The Deputy Minister called for urgently finding a solution and for measures to ensure uninterrupted service and delivery to all parties to the AETR without exception. He stated that, due to this situation, there is an urgent need to create an alternative to the JRC for its work beyond the borders of the EU to ensure safety on the roads. The Deputy Minister closed his intervention by calling on member States to engage in dialogue and pool their efforts to ensure sustainable transport and mobility development across the ECE region.

21. Mr. Javad Hedayati Nikkhan, Director General for Department of Transit and International Transport of Iran, speaking on behalf of Mr. Amani Tehrani, Deputy Minister of Roads and Urban Development of Iran, emphasized that mobility and accessible transport systems play a crucial role in the world for the economy and the quality of life of people. However, the transport sector remains one of the biggest environmental challenges. Dramatically reducing the GHG intensity of fuels and an accelerated transition to low carbon vehicles are amongst the solutions that would significantly reduce emissions and could be achieved at relatively low costs. New and emerging technologies are critical for combating climate change, but we must ensure that they benefit everyone, including the poorest countries. The Director General emphasized that significant investments will be needed to ensure climate resilience of transport infrastructure and called for the acceleration of the deployment of existing solutions such as low or zero carbon vehicles. He stressed that

governments and international bodies must provide regulations, policies and incentives to accelerate the development and deployment of new transport technologies as well as phasing out fossil fuel powered options. Iran is working on low carbon transit systems and sustainable energy sources such as solar and wind. The Director General called for knowledge sharing and technology transfer to tackle climate change and enabling developing countries to do so and closed his intervention by acknowledging the UN's crucial role in this area.

Other scheduled high-level interventions from the membership and partners

- Mr. Kenji Sato, Director of International Policy Planning Division, Road Transport Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan
- Mr. Richard Damm, President Kraftfahrt Bundesamt, Germany
- Mr. Christoph Nolte, Executive Vice President, Dekra SE

VI. Panel III: A bet we can't afford to lose: challenges and opportunities in the nexus of international financial and regulatory support for climate action

22. Panel III was moderated by Ms. Els De Wit, Chair of the ITC Working Party on Transport Trends & Economics (WP.5).

23. H.E. Mr. Anthony Derjacques, Minister for Transport of Seychelles, emphasized how well the theme of the 85th ITC session resonates with the goals of the Seychelles. With the majority of the Seychelle's population living on land less than 5 metres above sea level, climate change effects such as sea level rise, storms and coastal destruction pose an existential threat to the Seychelles and the Seychelles rely on concerted and international help. The Seychelles are striving to transform the country's energy sector to low carbon whilst maintaining a sustainable balance between economic development and respect for the environment. However, measures are limited for a small island developing state. The Minister emphasized that, while the Seychelles bare little responsibility for the global concentration of GHG, the country is most vulnerable to the devastating effects of climate change. With the aid of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Ministry of Transport has launched its first electric mobility project, which focuses on developing green mobility through the establishment of appropriate policy and legislative frameworks and will also support the conversion of the national public transport system's fleet into electric buses. The Ministry is further assessing renewable energy to reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuel, with more than 21 MW of renewable energy already installed around the archipelago.

24. H.E. Mr. Jérôme Bonnafont, Permanent Representative of France to the UN in Geneva, congratulated ECE for its work and efforts on combating climate change before elaborating on the multiple crisis in the world: First, the health crisis, due to which the transport sector faced unprecedented challenges. Second, the consequences of the unacceptable invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which will require the rebuilding of cities and energy sector networks that were systematically targeted and destroyed. The third crisis is climate change. Decarbonization of the transport sector is crucial, and measures to limit emissions and to improve energy efficiency must be proposed. France is very active in developing collective means of transport or so-called soft transport. Long term, we must also encourage the use of low carbon transport and multi-modal transport. The Ambassador emphasized the importance of identifying potential sources of funding, such as private funds or PPPs. Increased resilience of transport infrastructure requires international cooperation, innovation and knowledge sharing, and taking into account the different financial capacities of developing countries and the developed world as well as the different levels of vulnerability of countries.

25. H.E. Mrs. Yevhenia Filipenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN, emphasized that while the inland transport sector must join the global fight against climate change, our region and the entire world is also confronted with the threat of the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which has left up to 30 per cent of transport

infrastructure in Ukraine damaged. The blockage of Ukrainian Black Sea ports by the Russian Federation has severely affected Ukraine's capacity to export agricultural products which has driven global food insecurity. The Ambassador emphasized that despite all the challenges, Ukraine continues to rebuild its territories and restore transportation links with de-occupied cities. The Ambassador called upon ECE and its member States to continue and intensify their efforts to support the projects on Ukraine's recovery, in particular in the transport sector. She emphasized the continuous violation of international law by the Russian Federation and elaborated on the assignment of regional vehicle registration codes by the Russian Federation to temporarily by the Russian Federation occupied Ukrainian regions. The Ambassador emphasized that identical actions had already been taken by the Russian Federation in March 2014 and called out these actions as violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. She urged ECE and its member States to take necessary measures to ensure the non-recognition of Russian vehicle registration plates. The Ambassador closed her speech by emphasizing that, if these violations were left unaddressed and respect for international law and our common norms in principles are not restored, our efforts including in the ITC to mobilize the transport sector to tackle global challenges will remain in vain.

26. Mr. Kris Peeters, Vice-President, European Investment Bank (EIB), emphasized that, in light of the existential threat of climate change, the EIB is no longer backing fossil fuel projects and has set the goal of devoting 50 per cent of investments to climate action and sustainability by 2025. In 2022, this goal was already exceeded with 58 per cent of total EIB lending going to climate action and environmental sustainability. The EIB has also adopted a new Transport Lending Policy that prioritizes green, safe, accessible and efficient sustainable transport systems. Over the past 10 years, the EIB's transport lending has averaged about a fifth of EIB's overall lending. The share of climate finance in these projects, in particular for climate change mitigation, is increasing. The EIB further aims to increase the share of adaptation finance to 15 per cent of EIB's overall climate financing by 2025. The EIB's Vice-President closed by stressing the inextricable link between transport and climate change and the importance of working together to promote green transport systems.

Scheduled high-level interventions from the membership and partners

- Mr. Gennady Bessonov, Secretary General, Coordinating Council on Trans-Siberian Transportation (CCTT)
- Mr. Pranab Kumar Das, Director for Compliance and Facilitation, World Customs Organization
- Mr. Christian Chavanel, Technical Director, UIC

27. The moderator thanked the panellists for their interventions and invited comments from delegates.

28. The Russian Federation made a statement in reply to the speech given by H.E. Mrs. Yevhenia Filipenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN. The Russian Federation criticized Ukraine's use of the panel discussion for presenting accusations against the Russian Federation, and categorically rejected the statement made by Ukraine, including the use of Russian license plates on territory that has entered the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation called upon the participants of the session to refrain from politicized statements and from using the platform of the ITC for anything other than organizing mutual discussion and cooperation.

29. The European Union called upon the Russian Federation to cease its disinformation campaign in international fora.

30. The United States of America emphasized that the Russian government's war against Ukraine was unprovoked and unjustified and constitutes a clear violation of Article 2 of the UN Charter. The United States called upon the Russian government to immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine and withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of the Ukraine, and to refrain from any further unlawful threat or use of force against any UN Member State. The United States condemned the Russian Federation's attacks on critical civilian infrastructure, both energy and transport infrastructure, and rejected the Russian

Federation's claim to the right of individual or collective self-defence as stipulated by Article 51 of the UN Charter. The United States urged others to not just call for respecting the UN Charter and international cooperation, but for defending it by calling out violations of international law. The United States emphasized that they will never recognize any territory the Russian Federation attempts to seize and annex and closed by reiterating that the United States will continue to work with allies and partners to provide support to Ukraine.

31. The United Kingdom emphasized that it continues to stand with partners in condemning the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and the destruction this has caused to civilian infrastructure, including transport networks. The United Kingdom urged the Russian Federation to remove its forces and respect Ukraine's internationally recognized borders.

32. The moderator concluded Panel III.

VII. Closing

33. The meeting was closed with remarks from Ms. Hannie Meesters, Chair of the Inland Transport Committee. The Committee was informed by the Chair about the number of countries that had requested to be added to the list of countries endorsing the Ministerial Declaration "Harnessing the full potential of inland transport solutions in the global fight against climate change". The Committee was also informed that, following requests by some Member States for extension of the deadline, the Declaration would remain open countries interested to join the list of endorsing countries.

Annex II

Report of the High-Level Side Event of the Inland Transport Committee Forum for Road Safety

I. Introduction

1. The high-level side event of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) Forum for Road Safety took place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 21 February 2023 from 13:00 to 13:45 in the margins of the 85th annual session of the ITC. The panel focused on capitalizing on success stories and addressing worrying dynamics in order to achieve the goals under the second Decade of Action.

II. Opening

2. Ms. Julie Abraham, Executive Director, Office of International Transportation and Trade, Office of the Secretary of Transportation, United States of America, moderated the event. She welcomed the participants and gave the floor to H.E. Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

3. H.E. Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE, opened the side event of the Forum for Road Safety by sharing three key messages on road safety with the audience: First, that the empirical record is mixed: While there are success stories of low and middle-income countries achieving their goals under the second Decade of Action for Road Safety, we are witnessing worrying dynamics among countries leading in advancing road safety. Second, the global community together with the UN has never been in a better place to bring about real change. The UN is well placed to step up its support through the UN Road Safety Conventions under its purview and the needed tools and technical recommendations to strengthen countries' national road safety systems. Now, during the second Decade of Action and supported by ITC, the advocacy of the Special Envoy for Road Safety and the UN Road Safety Fund, we are seeing mobilization and change on a local, national and global scale. Third, there is much to be done and no time for complacency. The Executive Secretary closed her speech by emphasizing the importance of the ITC Forum for Road Safety, which provides a platform to discuss progress, remaining challenges and the way forward for the success of the second Decade of Action and the implementation of its Global Plan of Action.

4. Mr. Jean Todt, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety, began his keynote speech by emphasizing the importance of the Road Safety Forum for showcasing that solutions for road safety also directly contribute to addressing transport issues and a range of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The inland transport sector can tackle the road safety and the climate change crisis together, but we must act quickly. By implementing international standards for safe and sustainable inland transport systems throughout Europe and surrounding regions, as well as in the United States, the ITC can set examples and create results that will spread far beyond its purview. 93 per cent of road crash fatalities and injuries still occur in low- to middle-income countries. The Special Envoy highlighted that we must change the mindset of road users, vehicle manufacturers and road transport operators in these most troubled regions to reverse trends and address the dynamics of worsening road safety and correlated poor environmental performance. He closed by underlining that now is the time to work together to revolutionize our approach to safe mobility and sustainability.

III. Panel discussion

5. The moderator, Ms. Julie Abraham, opened the panel discussion by introducing the panellists and emphasizing that, while there was a strong response and progress by many to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on road safety by 2020, we collectively fell short. The pandemic, among other things, further slowed down progress in reducing fatalities

and, in some instances, even led to increases. Ms. Abraham highlighted that the panel session would help with regaining momentum and charting the way forward in order to achieve the goals under the second Decade of Action.

6. H.E. Mr. Andreas Carlson, Minister for Infrastructure of Sweden, started his remarks by highlighting that, in light of over 1.3 million people who die in traffic each year, and road accidents being the leading cause of death for children and young people, now is the time to make good on the commitment to half the fatalities and injuries in traffic by 2030. Sweden has seen a steady reduction in traffic fatalities as a result of three things: First, the Swedish transport system is designed in a way that takes human error into account. Second, the system is designed in close collaboration with stakeholders from the private sector, academia and civil society. Third, vehicle manufacturers are working closely with other stakeholders to use technology to innovate safer and more sustainable vehicles. The Minister urged to stop treating road safety as an isolated issue and acknowledge its connection to the SDGs. He closed by welcoming the initiative to launch the ITC Forum for Road Safety and encouraged all stakeholders to work together and use this platform to make the second Decade of Action a success.

7. Hon. Mr. Felix Tapiwa Mhona, Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development of Zimbabwe, underlined that the road safety crisis is more acute in developing countries, due to reasons such as the race for economic development, insufficient road infrastructure development and disproportionate vehicle population growth. In addition, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, resources for the development of transport infrastructure had to be used for other measures such as the support of livelihoods. Climate change impacts are also becoming more evident, and while adaptation and mitigation measures have been included in Zimbabwe's national policies, they remain a challenge that requires joint remedial action of the international community. The Minister called for lifting the sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe, as they undermine Zimbabwe's efforts of achieving the road safety targets and the SDGs. He highlighted that Zimbabwe has recently undertaken a road safety performance review and is updating the regulatory framework to include international and regional recommendations on road safety management. The Minister emphasized that road traffic accidents are preventable and called on the international community to take action.

8. Mr. Nanda Srinivasan, Associate Administrator for Research and Program Development, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), United States of America, started his remarks by recognizing the urgent goal of preventing road crashes globally. Despite the reductions in driving that occurred alongside the pandemic, the US experienced an increase in traffic fatalities in 2020 and 2021. As a result, the US launched the National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS), which sets a long-term goal of zero fatalities, adopts a safe system approach and identifies priority actions and notable changes to existing practices. The NRSS's objectives are safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds and post-crash care. The Associate Administrator underlined that addressing roadway safety requires a holistic and comprehensive approach, and that collaboration is needed at all levels of government and the American people to shift towards a culture in which roadway deaths are unacceptable and preventable. He closed his speech by emphasizing that the NHTSA is looking forward to continuing the work and engagement with the UN on this matter, in particular with WP.1 and WP.29 of ITC.

9. H.E. Mr. Young Tae Kim, Secretary General, International Transport Forum (ITF), opened his speech by expressing ITF's gratitude for the UN efforts to save lives and concentrate minds with the Decades of Action on Road Safety. The first Decade raised awareness of the road safety crisis and started efforts to build the strategies and institutional framework needed. The second Decade will be crucial, and the Global Plan for Road Safety to 2030 provides a great tool. Trend reversals in road safety only happen when data and evidence drive policy rather than obvious ideas, and this more strategic attitude is being driven by the Safe System Approach, with speed management at its heart. The Secretary General highlighted the surge of fatalities and serious injuries among motorcycle users in many countries as a result of increased motorcycle use and stressed that cooperation is needed on improving safety policy in this area in the second Decade. He closed his remarks by emphasizing that reversing trends is eminently achievable through systematic intervention

based on data and evidence and urged all countries to use the tool of the Safe System Approach and adapt it to their national contexts.

IV. Closing remarks

10. The moderator, Ms. Julie Abraham, thanked the panellists for their insights and wrapped up the side event by stressing that, in order to make steady progress during the second Decade of Action, we must redouble our efforts and act smarter. She highlighted that, as the problems we confront evolve, we must adapt our policies. We must ensure clear communication, gather data consistently, share research, experimentation, data and analysis and learn from the efforts, apparent failures and successes of others. Ms. Abraham emphasized that the ITC Forum for Road Safety will help showcase learnings and accomplishments to the rest of the world, but that it will also serve as a forum for collaboration whose scope matches the scope of the safe system approach underlying Vision Zero. It can further provide opportunities for exchanges between not only political leaders, but also between technical experts. Ms. Abraham closed by emphasizing that, as the experiences of the last couple of years demonstrate, nobody has all the answers, and we must each search for our own combination of answers. The ITC Forum for Road Safety, aided by the ITC Working Parties, will help with finding them.

Annex III

Report of the side event on "Enhancing connectivity and accelerating the transition to climate resilient, low-carbon transport systems in land-locked developing countries"

(Salle XIX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, 22 February 2023)

I. Introduction

1. The side event took place at the Palais des Nations in Geneva on 22 February 2023 from 13:15 to 14:45 in the margins of the 85th annual session of the Inland Transport Committee. It was jointly organized by the Permanent Mission of Turkmenistan to the UN Office at Geneva and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). The side event discussed the importance of transport connectivity and climate change adaptation and mitigation in land-locked developing countries (LLDCs).

II. Opening

2. H.E. Mr. Atageldi Haljanov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan, who moderated the event, welcomed the panellists and participants. He introduced each panellist and proceeded to give his opening remarks. H.E. Mr. Haljanov highlighted the importance of investments in transport infrastructure as the transition to low carbon is more costly than in other sectors and pointed out the lack of maturity of transport systems. He applauded the discussions on sustainable transport in LLDCs that have taken place in Ashgabad and Beijing and underlined the importance of the global sustainable transport conference, which called for addressing the needs of countries in special situations by expanding sustainable transport systems and infrastructure. He further noted the need for close coordination of transport, environmental and health policies.

3. H.E. Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the ECE, joined H.E. Mr. Atageldi Haljanov in welcoming the panellists and participants to the side event. She recognized the challenges LLDCs have been exposed to due to the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to the already existing vulnerabilities that LLDCs are facing. In this regard, she emphasized the importance of international legal instruments for strengthening and advancing transport connectivity, such as the eTIR, and other initiatives such as the development of Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators (SITCIN). The Executive Secretary further highlighted the crucial contribution of the inland transport sector to tackling climate change and underlined the need to decarbonize transport and improve transport resilience not only in the context of health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic, but also climate change and other natural disasters.

III. Panel Discussion

4. The panel discussion was moderated by H.E. Mr. Atageldi Haljanov.
5. Statements were made by:
 - H.E. Mr. Razzaq Ojaimi, Minister of Transport of the Republic of Iraq
 - H.E. Mr. Umberto de Pretto, Secretary General of the International Road Transport Union (IRU)
 - H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)

- Mr. Ersin Esen, Programme Officer and Acting Europe Region Climate Change Subprogramme Coordinator of the Europe Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

6. H.E. Mr. Razzaq Ojaimi highlighted the importance of climate change adaptation. He stressed that some communities might have to relocate to new environments as adaptation might not be possible everywhere, for instance in some island states threatened by sea level rise. He underlined that the government of the Republic of Iraq is trying to create a more resilient economy and emphasized the importance of financial resources and regional investments to expand the scope of technologies that support adaptation measures. In this regard, he called on developed countries to fulfil their commitments made under the Paris Agreement and stressed the importance of international climate finance.

7. H.E. Mr. Umberto de Pretto highlighted the importance of a quick and effective response and coordination across all sectors in the case of a global crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic and emphasized the role that the UN and its instruments can play in this regard by using the example of border crossings and eTIR and eCMR. He elaborated on the transition to low carbon transport and individual responses based on the region and its available resources. Using the example of eco-trucks, he explained the IRU's vision for low carbon transport for 2050 and emphasized the importance of training drivers for making transportation both more efficient and safer. He underlined the value of international conventions such as the TIR Convention and stated that if LLDCs wanted to improve their trade connectivity and become land-linked countries, the implementation of available international instruments is vital.

8. H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima joined the discussion via pre-recorded video message. She emphasized that transport connectivity constraints constitute the main cause of LLDCs' economic and social deprivations. She highlighted the importance of embracing a multistakeholder approach, involving governments, the private sector, developing partners and international organizations. She pointed out three potential solutions which accumulatively can alleviate connectivity constraints: Close collaboration with regional partners, especially transit countries, to improve access to global trade networks and value chains; prudent planning and international support of capital expenditure; and linking debt sustainability and climate finance support to transport connectivity through tailor made arrangements. She emphasized that the commitments to LLDCs must shift from words to actions and that collaboration will enable the achievement of a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.

9. Mr. Ersin Esen approached the topic from an environmental angle by addressing what he called the triple crisis: the climate crisis, pollution, and diversity loss. He emphasized the importance of transport infrastructure to enhance connectivity and pointed out the close association of transport infrastructure assets with negative environmental impacts such as greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity loss and disconnection of ecosystems. He pointed out the possibility to build a more sustainable and resilient transport infrastructure and highlighted good practice examples which have taken into account landscape planning to reduce threats to infrastructure systems, biological resources and socio-economic perspectives. He stressed that environmental concerns need to be integrated into the transport sector and highlighted UNEP's commitment to work with international partners on accelerating these actions and achieving these goals.

IV. Interventions

10. After conclusion of the panel discussion, H.E. Mr. Atageldi Haljanov invited participants to share their thoughts and experiences. Interventions were made by Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, China, Azerbaijan, Belarus, France, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

11. Kazakhstan shared their experience in transforming "land-lockedness" to "land-linkedness" by concluding intergovernmental agreements with more than 40 countries in Europe and Asia as well as acceding to 11 international conventions. The Russian Federation described their efforts in enhancing transport connectivity in the Eurasian region, for example through the Eurasian Agroexpress project. China stated that they appreciate the efforts being

made by all stakeholders. Azerbaijan emphasized the importance of public-private-partnerships (PPPs) and the cooperation of neighbouring countries and requested best practice examples. Belarus pointed out the effect political changes can have on transport infrastructure and collaboration and underlined the importance of enhancing transport resilience and decarbonization. France emphasized the importance of collaboration between countries as well as PPPs and finding new mechanisms to jointly fight climate change. Tajikistan highlighted the negative economic impact COVID-19 has had on land-locked countries and informed participants about the government's plans to enhance transport connectivity and climate change mitigation and adaptation. Kyrgyzstan also shared their achievements in the transport sector and highlighted the importance of decarbonizing transport.

V. Closing Remarks

12. The event concluded with brief closing remarks by the panellists, except for H.E. Mr. Razzaq Ojaimi who had to leave early, as well as H.E. Ms. Olga Algayerova and H.E. Mr. Atageldi Haljanov.

Report of the side event on "Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure"

(Salle XXIV, Palais des Nations, Geneva and online, 22 February 2023)

I. Introduction

1. On Wednesday 22 February 2023 a side event took place entitled "What are the Infrastructure Barriers to Mass Electric Vehicle Adoption?".

2. With transport making up 22% of all energy-related greenhouse gas emissions, it is a crucial sector to decarbonize in order to meet the Paris agreement and limit temperature rises to 1.5°C. Electrification of vehicle fleets is, along with modal shift to less polluting modes, an important tool to align transport with a climate neutral future where the Sustainable Development Goals are achieved. The side event therefore heard from experts on data collection, plug design, communications protocols and grid balancing factors that would enable mass adoption of electric vehicles, with a focus on passenger vehicles.

3. The side event followed on from discussions in September 2022 at the Working Party on transport Trends and Economics (WP.5), which held a workshop on electrification of mobility: challenges and opportunities for transport, energy and spatial planning¹, and tried to answer some of the questions in the ITC formal document entitled "Taking Stock of new Trends Towards Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure" (ECE/TRANS/2023/23).

4. The side event took place in a hybrid format and was moderated by Ms Els de Wit, Chair of WP.5. In addition to the moderator: the panellists were:

- John Wilkins, Chair, UNECE Working Party on Transport Statistics; Deputy Director, Travel and Environment Data and Statistics; Department for Transport, United Kingdom.
- Philippe Vangeel, Secretary-General, European Association for Electromobility (AVERE).
- Alex Schroeder, Chief Technology Officer, Joint Office of Energy and Transportation, United States.
- Jacques Warichet, Power systems transformation analyst, International Energy Agency (IEA).
- Saki Gerassis, Policy and Data Officer; DG MOVE, European Commission.
- Duncan Kay, Vice-Chair, UNECE Working Party on Pollution and Energy; Head of Vehicle Engineering; Department for Transport, United Kingdom.

5. The event was designed to be interactive and informative; as such, no PowerPoint presentations were made and instead the event flowed from questions from the moderator to the panellists, and between the panellists and the audience.

6. The discussion started with Mr Wilkins describing the UK's approach to data collection, and how their work on producing statistics had fed into national policy debates on electric vehicle adoption. Within this, exploring different indicators of how to measure infrastructure coverage was an ongoing conversation between statisticians, policy makers and the media. He noted that recently produced infrastructure statistics in a geospatial format had been combined with tourism data, to highlight areas of the country where chargers may need to be added in the future to facilitate holidays and day trips.

7. The conversation continued with Mr Vangeel describing AVERE's views on harmonisation of communications protocols between electric vehicles and the charging

¹ <https://unece.org/info/Transport/Transport-Trends-and-Economics/events/369914>

networks. He emphasized that interoperability and seamless communications protocols can maximise fast and safe charging, and there may be scope for harmonization of these in the future. He nevertheless underlined the challenge to deal with harmonization of already deployed recharging infrastructure. In addition, while the focus of data collection has been on the public charging side, there is very little private (*home and office) data on charging infrastructure and this needs to be addressed.

8. After this Mr Schroeder described recent legislation in the United States as part of the Inflation Reduction Act, which specifies new standards for infrastructure. These standards have been designed with a customer-first perspective, enabling cross-state charging regardless of the vehicle type, that is reliable and affordable. Their focus is on so-called “level 2” fast chargers that can be used at the side of the road without a significant stop.

9. Mr Warichet of the IEA gave details of their recent publication “Grid Integration of Electric Vehicles: A Manual for Policymakers”. The manual makes key recommendations around four main topics, namely:

- Prepare institutions for the electric mobility transition
- Assess power system impacts
- Deploy measures for grid integration
- Improve planning practices.

10. He highlighted that from a global perspective, additional electricity demand from electric vehicles is not expected to drastically alter the power generation sector. Following a remark from the audience, he added that the situation might look different at local levels, with some grids potentially being over used.

11. Mr Gerassis of DG-MOVE described the European Commission’s forthcoming Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation, and in particular highlighted the plans in the regulation for mandated data collection, standards in charging speeds, and the development of national policy frameworks to roll out sufficient grid infrastructure.

12. Mr Kay discussed the possible role of WP.29 and its subsidiary bodies in providing a regulatory platform to potentially discuss harmonization of both plug designs and communications protocols. This is considered important not only for ECE countries in the present, but on a global basis particularly when thinking about second-hand export markets in low- and middle-income countries.

13. During questions, attendees brought up specificities surrounding charging of heavy goods vehicles, the point that electrification would not solve all issues with private mobility and so better walking, cycling and public transport were needed, and how data can be used effectively to plan future infrastructure. The panel agreed that:

- For consumers to use the network confidently, real-time pricing information, for example through a smartphone app, can be a gamechanger.
- In addition to charging infrastructure data, electricity consumption data of charging points should be a priority for good policy decisions regarding grid integration and emissions impacts of electric vehicles².
- It is not just the availability of data around charging that is important, but its quality and granularity. Location data, type of connector information and the number of points at each station can help users to seamlessly plan charging stops.

14. As follow-up items, the moderator highlighted the following:

- WP.6 will explore harmonised definitions for public charging infrastructure in 2023, with data collection possibly considered in the future.

² The UNECE secretariat reminded of a workshop on “Real-Time Upstream Emissions of Electric Vehicles During Recharge”, held on-line in May 2021 ; <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/events/online-workshop-real-time-upstream-emissions-electric-vehicles-during>

- WP.5 has already agreed to establish a steady workflow on passenger EVs and its charging infrastructure, for example, and as part of its cluster on transport security will also investigate cyber security threats relating to vehicle charging systems. Moreover, WP.5 decided to designate its recurrent Transport Trends and Economics 2022–2023 publication on general trends and developments surrounding EVs and their charging infrastructure.
- WP.29 was requested by the Inland Transport Committee to consider the need for a dedicated workflow on harmonization of technical standards, both software and hardware related to EVs and recharging infrastructure.

15. Given the role of ITC in combatting climate change highlighted during the 85th session, it was agreed that side events such as this can be a valuable tool in both attracting the right policy makers and providing a forum where informal exchange of experiences can take place.

16. The event was attended by 35 participants in the room and 45 participants online, excluding the secretariat. Gender balance was approximately one third female, two thirds male participants.

Statements delivered during the eighty-fifth Annual Session of the Inland Transport Committee for inclusion in the ITC report

I. Agenda item 2

A. Statement from the Russian Federation

The representative of the Russian Federation requested the floor and made the following statement in relation to the Ministerial Declaration “Harnessing the full potential of inland transport solutions in the global fight against climate change”: “Distinguished Chair, we note the important role of the ITC in implementing technological and decisions and also particularly looking at the issue of climate issues. And in this regard, we would like to note that for Russia we do not intent to hinder the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration and we participated in that actively but unfortunately not all of our comments were taken into account. In particular this concerns the preambular paragraphs pp. 2 and pp. 24 with the reference to the UN Charter which do not have any relation to the mandate of the ITC. We are disappointed that the coordinators of the negotiating process did not have the strength to propose sections that were suitable for everybody and also because of the indivisible nature of the UN Charter as a key element of the international legal system. So the selective quoting of the provisions of the UN Charter which is not linked to the Ministerial Declaration devalues the status of the Charter and in this regard the Russian Federation cannot support the approval of the Ministerial Declaration. We would ask the secretariat to reflect this position in the outcome document of the Committee and to take note of this. Thank you very much.”

B. Statement from Belarus

“С сожалением отмечаем политизацию деятельности Комитета по внутреннему транспорту со стороны отдельных государств-членов.

Беларусь такой подход не разделяет и не приемлет.

Включение в текст Министерской декларации не относящихся к мандату Комитета посылов подрывает ценность его работы. Мы все являемся свидетелями того, насколько политизация негативного сказалась и продолжает сказываться на потенциале ЕЭК ООН как глобального кладезя международных стандартов и правил в транспортной сфере.

Призываем государства-члены ЕЭК ООН сосредоточиться на мандате Комитета и сугубо профессиональном сотрудничестве для обеспечения устойчивой мобильности в регионе, его транспортной связанности, безопасности и экологичности транспорта.”

II. Agenda item 7(c)(ii)

Statement from the secretariat

The Director of the ECE Sustainable Transport Division made the following statement: “Thank you, Chair, distinguished delegates. Regarding this proposal by Ukraine, the secretariat would like to make a declaration that “the measures taken by the secretariat to respond to the negative impact of the Russian aggression against the Ukraine to the regional connectivity” was not included in the document ECE/TRANS/2023/18³. The secretariat made a clarification at the meeting, and I would like to include the declaration of the secretariat in the meeting report.”

³ See Appendix to this Annex.

Statement from the United States of America

A representative of the United States made the following statement in response: “I think one way that we can probably all look at this decision is that this is the member States’ interpretation of the contents of that report. So, while we appreciate the secretariat’s opinion, this decision is saying that regardless of what the intent was at the time that this is the effect of what the secretariat did. Thank you”.

Statement from the Russian Federation

A representative of the Russian Federation made the following statement: “The Russian Federation would like to make a statement on the outcome of the vote we’ve just had. The Russian Federation is disappointed with the results of the vote taken. We have consistently objected to the politicization of ITC work because this has a negative impact on the productivity of the Committee. A lack of willingness to include our position even in the form of a short mention indicates that our opponents are not willing to recognize the existing realities and they are fearful of recognizing the impacts on the economies of countries and the efforts of the UNECE overall. Russia will continue to support the Committee’s work overall. Until cooperation at this forum returns to being useful to us, Russia would like to dissociate itself from the decision just taken. Thank you. And we would ask that our statement be included in the report” (for the full statement, see ECE/TRANS/328/Add.1, Annex V). Belarus expressed its support for the statement by the Russian Federation.

III. Agenda item 7(q)

Statement from Belarus

“We would like to reiterate the position of Belarus regarding the further extension of the Administrative Arrangement and consequently the Memorandum of Understanding between the European Commission Services and UNECE of 2009.

The Memorandum of Understanding assigned the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre the responsibility to perform tasks under the AETR for non-EU Contracting Parties.

This time AETR Contracting Parties could not reach agreement on the further extension of the Memorandum of Understanding because of its groundless intentional violations by the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre.

However, some of the EU Member States at the 117th session of the Working Party on Road Transport made an attempt to extend the Memorandum of Understanding by vote.

We would like to particularly bring to the ITC attention three key points related to the Memorandum of Understanding extension.

First. The Memorandum of Understanding concerns the implementation of the AETR by non-EU Contracting Parties to AETR.

Second. The UNECE secretariat extends the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of non-EU AETR Contracting Parties.

Third. The extension of the Memorandum of Understanding has been always preceded by the unanimous agreement of the AETR Contracting Parties.

On this basis Belarus does not recognize the legitimacy of the vote or the associated decision by the Working Party on Road Transport.

Since the Memorandum of Understanding concerns particularly non-EU AETR Contracting Parties, Belarus strongly believes that the extension of the Memorandum of Understanding shall meet interests and needs of all the non-EU AETR Contracting Parties and thus shall be based on and be preceded by agreement of all the AETR Contracting Parties as it was confirmed by the long-term practice.

Any decision taken in violation of such an approach undermines the credibility of the UNECE work in transport field.”

Statement from the Russian Federation

“Madam Chairperson, thank you for having given me the floor. Currently, the Russian Federation has been encountering complications with respect to operationalizing the AETR and today, as a result, we cannot fully participate in the AETR system because we cannot meet the requirements fully. This leads to a threat for the safety of road transport and as a result, given the new cards and the work that we are currently doing. At the 30th session of the Group of Experts, there was a decision on stopping participation of our country in this system due to the war in Ukraine. We would ask the secretariat to carry out an assessment of the effect of the sanctions on road transport in Russia and other countries in Central Asia and we would ask for special provisions to be taken for the Russian Federation. We would also like you to please include a provision on the administrative agreement on the extension of the memorandum between the Research Centre JRC under the administrative memorandum to provide a possibility for the contracting parties to be treated in a way that is not discriminatory against any of them at which point we could continue our work. I would also like to inform you about the carrying out of work by the Russian Federation on certifying a centre similar to the JRC in countries and for countries outside of the European Union. So there’s a request for an amendment and with respect to the proposal made by Portugal, the Russian Federation would support the necessity of continuing work on this document at our next Working Group meeting which will be held in the future. Thank you.”

Statement from the European Commission

“The European Commission services do not recognise the statements made by Belarus and the Russian Federation on this topic over the past few days and months. We strongly reject the claims by the Russian Federation and Belarus that the European Commission services are not complying with their obligations under the AETR or the Administrative Arrangement. We reiterate our full commitment to continue participating in the smooth implementation of AETR and to play our part, as has been the case for more than the past decade by providing digital tachograph services to non-EU AETR Contracting Parties, several of which are free-of-charge. The Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) in October 2022 clearly decided and mandated the Secretariat to sign the tabled Administrative Arrangement.

Due to the expiry of the previous Administrative Arrangement at the end of 2022, the European Commission services are for the moment not in a position to continue providing services to several non-EU parties of the AETR Agreement.

We therefore request that the decision of SC.1 is urgently implemented by the Secretariat.”

Appendix⁴

Impact of the war on regional connectivity

Note by the secretariat

1. For information of the Committee, this document briefly introduces one of the activities by the secretariat to counter the negative impact of the war on regional connectivity.
2. Following a request, received in July 2022, by the Government of Ukraine, which included a list of proposed areas for cooperation / projects mainly concerning the recovery of inland transport infrastructure for the country, the secretariat initiated its technical assistance. The activity was financed by the regular programme of technical cooperation (RPTC) budget in the framework of several sectoral proposals with a focus on Ukraine and the broader impact of the war in the ECE programme countries. The activity title is “*support the enhancement of Ukrainian rail and road transport capacity in order to meet the emerged national and international needs*”.
3. The main objective is to enhance the railway and road transport capacity of Ukraine with Poland and Romania in order to faster and more efficiently handle abruptly surged cargoes from and to Ukraine. The objective will be achieved through the implementation of the following activities:
 - (a) Identify and prepare with the assistance of national rail and road experts a list of infrastructure and rolling stock / resources (wagons, transshipment costs, trained personnel, trucks, flexi tanks etc.) requirements based on the current supply chain needs of the Ukraine (for instance export of grains and import of fuel) that would operationally boost the capacity of railways / road transport to deliver.
 - (b) Organizing “friends of the chair meetings” with the chair of the working party of road transport (SC.1) and the chair of the working party on rail transport (SC.2) to further discuss the list of requirements and prepare concrete action plans / next steps in order to fulfil those requirements.
4. Following the initial discussions with the Government agencies, it was decided that projects on inland waterways and border crossings facilitation would be also included. Practically, the activity is about assessing current challenges and opportunities for immediate improvements / enhancement of Ukraine’s inland transport network (road, rail, inland waterways, port-hinterland connectivity and border crossings) and its connectivity with neighbouring countries considering the extra volumes of cargoes and passengers that needs to be handled following the disruptions/ elimination of air and maritime transport.
5. When the list of projects is finalised by the Government, the secretariat will assist the Government to prioritize those project proposals. Then friends of chairs meetings will be organized by the chairs of the Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1), the Working Party on Rail Transport (SC.2) and the Working Party on Customs Questions Affecting Transport (WP.30) where those project proposals will be presented to the Governments and institutions invited to seek their assistance and contribution.

⁴ Reproduced from [ECE/TRANS/2023/18](#).

Annex VI

Report of the ITC Round Table "Inland transport connectivity and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda – Challenges and opportunities for global economic development"

(Salle XIX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, 22 February 2023)

I. Introduction

1. This roundtable took place on 24 February 2023 from 15:00 to 18:00 and was opened by Mr. Dmitry Mariyasin, Deputy Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). It was set up to explore the multiple crises faced by the inland transport sector and identify a sustainable way forward in overcoming these challenges. The roundtable offered a platform for the exchange of national and international experiences regarding the adaptation of new sourcing patterns and shed light on the many opportunities for building forward better through technological innovation, education, and partnerships. Upon invitation by the ECE secretariat the roundtable was joined by a group of teaching staff and students from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL) enrolled in the “Advanced studies in sustainable resilient value chains” programme and from the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations.

II. Panel I: Defining the impact of consecutive crises on the effectiveness of international transport and supply chains – is backtracking from globalization a sustainable solution?

2. Panel I was moderated by Mr. Dmitry Mariyasin, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNECE. Participants exchanged views on how several consecutive global crises have influenced the effectiveness and functioning of the international transport system so far and whether in the medium and long term this would have a further impact on the geography of trade with implications for global trade and value chains. Participants also discussed the importance of global instruments to improve the resilience of supply chains, including at global, regional, and subregional levels.

3. Presentations were made by:

- Mr. Jan Hoffmann, Head, Trade Logistics Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Mr. Victor Stolzenburg, Economic Research and Statistics Division, World Trade Organization (WTO)
- Ms. Tatiana Rey-Bellet, Director, TIR & Transit, International Road Transport Union (IRU)
- Mr. Roger Albinyana, Managing Director, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMED)

4. Based on WTO data, panellists concluded that global trade had remained remarkably resilient and had outperformed expectations as in many cases economies greatly affected by the war in Ukraine found alternative sources of supply. It was noted that for the longer-term outlook, new WTO simulations show the importance of strengthening the multilateral trading system, with least-developed countries and small island developing States (SIDs) likely to be hardest hit if international cooperation were to break down. Panellists also acknowledged that higher transport costs (i.e. the sustained increase in container freight rates) had fuelled inflation and consumer price levels in particular for computer, electronic and optical products as well as for furniture and other manufactured products. In this regard it was noted that for

the road transport sector previously common transit routes were not carrying the same traffic volumes and that the pandemic and the war in Ukraine had led to an even higher pressure on already congested border crossings. It was noted that these effects were even further exacerbated by an increased truck driver shortage globally with depending on the region up to 18% of truck driver positions unfilled in 2021.

5. At the same time panellists recognized that prices for goods greatly affected by the war in Ukraine (such as wheat, corn, sunflower oil, and fertilizer) had increased less than expected at the beginning of the war, with initial WTO simulations indicating that in the case of cascading export restrictions on food, prices for wheat could have increased by up to 85% in some low-income regions compared to the actual increase of 17%. In conclusion, panellists recognized that the global trading system had proven to be remarkably resilient by allowing countries to flexibly adapt their sourcing patterns. In the road transport sector for instance this had led to a diversification of routes resulting in some cases in time savings of up to 80 per cent. In this regard it was highlighted that flexibility of adapting sourcing patterns does require a truly multilateral approach and that a push to reconsolidate trade may come at a high cost for economies in terms of income and resilience.

6. In terms of next steps, panellists called upon member States to take measures to further decrease the levels of congestion at inland border crossings, including through: Intensifying coordination between relevant agencies and increasing coordinated/joint controls; Removing clearance away from border crossings to inland stations; and Encouraging the use of (e-)TIR and (e-)CMR for the industry to be ready to take any alternative route, using the same tools resulting in higher levels of transport security and facilitation.

III. Panel II: Building forward better – sustainable local and global transport connectivity through technological innovation, education, and partnerships

7. Panel II was moderated by Mr. Roel Janssens, secretary to the Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) and provided a platform featuring senior level private sector representatives and academia to share their perspectives on what can be done better in achieving sustainable local, regional, and global transport connectivity through technological innovation, education, and partnerships.

8. Presentations were made by:

- Mr. Carlos Alvarez Pereira, Vice President, Club of Rome / UNESCO Chair on Global Understanding for Sustainability
- Ms. Elaine Moran, Director of Executive Education SRVC, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL)
- Ms. Carmen Bachmann, Project manager Sustainability, Market and Network Extension, Cargo Souterrain AG, Switzerland
- Mr. Fabio Ferrante, Former Senior Executive Director, Garrett Advancing Motion
- Ms. Sofia Aiche, International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA)

9. Panellists acknowledged the fact that 2022 marked the 50th anniversary of the Club of Rome's landmark report titled 'The Limits to Growth' which for the first time made the case that if growth trends in population, industrialisation, resource use and pollution continued unchanged the carrying capacity of the earth would likely be surpassed in the next one hundred years. At the same time, panellists recognized that logistics systems had developed over time, from a linear system with a horizontal relationship connecting manufacturers, carriers, warehouses, transporters, distributors, and retailers with customers to a value chain that had become global, multi-layered, and much more complex. The important role of education to achieve sustainable and resilient value chains was widely recognised in this regard. The panel also shed light on several promising initiatives and innovative developments aimed at creating more sustainable transport systems. One example

that was elaborated upon was “Cargo sous terrain”, a public-private partnership initiative developed in Switzerland with the aim to move freight transportation, in specific sections of the country, underground, from source to destination, by providing a one-stop shop including the last mile. Implementation of the project is expected to create an underground freight transport and logistics system that is fully automated, interconnected and digitalized and facilitates reliable on-time deliveries, including in the context of city logistics. The many advantages in terms of efficiency of the transport process, health and quality of life and reduced emissions and landscape protection were highlighted.

10. The panel also exchanged views on the future of the automotive industry in terms of decarbonization and automation. It was noted that the automotive industry had so far largely focused on the reduction of tailpipe emissions but that more emphasis would be put on the reduction of material production emissions, since emissions from material production are expected to reach 60% of life-cycle emissions by 2040. The speaker also referred to the fact that hybrid and full electric vehicles currently reached 13% of the market share but that subsidies, improvements in battery technology and sufficient availability of charging points were critical factors to maintain future growth. The panel recognized that zero-carbon vehicle targets could only be achieved with clear material usage and circularity objectives and policies and that policy makers needed to enable technology competition that would result in the best cost and environmentally efficient solution. The panel also recognized that autonomous driving enables Shared Mobility and thus contributes to decarbonization of the transport sector. A final presentation emphasized the role that freight forwarders can play in decarbonisation of the inland transport sector through optimising routes, use of alternative fuels such as hydrogen and electric engines, use of new vehicles and use of new corridors. Reference was made to several ongoing projects being implemented by FIATA association members in Denmark, France, Germany Norway, and Romania. It was noted that among freight forwarders there is a high level of willingness to become greener in their daily activities and comply with the relevant EU regulations and standards. In this regard, the current lack of standardisation of regulations and targets at global level and the high costs that compliance with these regulations entail for SMEs were referred to as limiting factors.

IV. Conclusions

11. In conclusion, the ECE secretariat representative welcomed the many proposals made and emphasized that the Committee had just endorsed a Ministerial Declaration titled “Harnessing the full potential of inland transport solutions in the global fight against climate change” which touched on many of the issues referred to during both panels. The representative invited the representatives of academia and private sector representatives to remain involved in Working Party specific follow up on the proposals made and suggested that several of the issues discussed could be taken up at the forthcoming thirty-sixth Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) taking place in September 2023.
