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Statement

by

**Mr Kire Ilioski, Director, Office of the Executive Secretary
on behalf of
Ms Olga Algayerova**

**United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

**at
Opening of
WMO-ECE meeting**

**29 August 2019
Venue: Jura 6 WMO Building, 9.00 - 17.00**

**Assistant Secretary-General of WMO,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure for me to open together with the WMO ASG -**Wenjian Zhang** this very important meeting, that promises to open the way for long-term and enhanced cooperation and collaboration between our two institutions.

UNECE is one of the five Regional Commissions of the UN. Our 56-strong membership covers countries at different levels of development. One of our goals is to promote the achievement of the SDGs including those on Road Safety and Climate Change, both of which are usually followed by the word “crisis” and occupy central positions in the SDG framework. Tackling them is **a shared priority between our two organizations and one that opens immense opportunities to advance our respective agendas in mutually supportive and synergistic ways**. Which is why we are here today.

UNECE is a multilateral platform that brings together experts from governments, private sector, academia and other stakeholders, who develop technical standards and regulations, legally binding instruments, guidelines, tools and good practices. This convening power is a key strength, with some 200 UNECE intergovernmental bodies leveraging close to 18,000 experts.

Key UNECE products include UN Transport Conventions, multilateral environmental agreements, standards and recommendations on trade facilitation and electronic-business; energy initiatives; international agricultural quality standards etc. Many of these outputs are in wide use worldwide, beyond our region, and may be of direct relevance to WMO’s work. An excellent example is our transport work: the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), which is the highest governing body in ECE on transport matters, performs for inland transport functions equivalent to ICAO and IMO. In fact, **148 of the 193 United Nations Member States**, or 77 per cent, are Contracting Parties to legal instruments on inland transport under the purview of ITC, in addition to 2 Permanent Observers and one non-State Contracting Party. Of these United Nations Member States, 92 (62 per cent) are non-ECE member States. Looking at the status quo where we currently stand, let me highlight a few existing areas of

collaboration:

- **Statistics** has good cooperation and joint work with WMO in our UNECE Forum on Climate Change Statistics
- **Environment** cooperates with WMO on:
 - Integrated Monitoring Initiative (SDG 6), water and climate, water and disasters (Water Convention Secretariat)
 - Task Force on Measurements and Modelling (Air Convention Secretariat), and
 - Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment and the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators and Statistics.
- **Transport** cooperates with WMO on climate change adaptation but in the future there are additional strategic opportunities for collaboration and partnership.
- Energy, urban development and forests remain key areas of joint interest where we wish to further enhance collaboration.

From what we know, it becomes clear that Climate Change is, and will become even more in the future, a critical issue for humanity as a whole and in this regard, based on the above observations that I made, our joint collaboration will contribute tangible benefits towards tackling this global challenge that has come to define our time.

A second and new frontier for collaboration between our two organizations is road safety, a global issue which has rightfully been characterized as a crisis.

We at UNECE have a 360-degree approach to Road Safety and promote safe mobility regionally and globally through: standardization and harmonization of rules, signs and signals for road traffic; regulations for road vehicle construction and rules for periodic inspection; regulations for dangerous goods transport; facilitating the embedding of technology into road safety legal instruments; promoting road safety education for all types of road users through the exchange of best practices; road safety performance reviews and transport statistics. We also provide the secretariats to the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety since 2015 and the United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund since 2018. We are confident that through closer collaboration with you, our joint contribution to curbing the road safety crisis will become more than the sum of our two units.

As a concluding remark, I would like to state that we are currently at a crossroad in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The two crisis – the

Climate Change and Road Safety ones – call for enhanced collaborations globally. I am convinced that today's meeting will mark the beginning of a fruitful partnership that will greatly contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of the 2030 agenda.
