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Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Seventy-third session

Geneva, 1–3 March 2011

Item 10 (k) of the provisional agenda

Issues that need consideration and require decisions

by the Committee: Fuel standards

Progress report on market fuel quality

Note by the secretariat

1. The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) set up in 2008 an informal group to develop technical specifications for market fuel quality taking into account the emission control technologies of vehicles in 2008. In June 2010, the discussion on the market fuel quality parameters was close to an agreement for a first step. The experts from the International Petroleum Industry Environment Conservation Association (IPIECA) and the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA) were requested to conclude, at a further joint meeting, (i) on the final list of parameters for Euro 2 to Euro 4 emissions levels, (ii) to set up draft recommendations including an explanatory text for the use of the recommendation and (iii) to submit it to WP.29 for consideration at its November 2010 session. Regarding a possible extension of the mandate of the informal group on Fuel Quality (FQ), it was recommended to reconsider this issue at the next session of the Working Party on Pollution and Energy (GRPE) in January 2011, depending on the final proposal by IPIECA/OICA. In this respect, were invited all experts to think about their preference on a possible extension of the informal group's mandate (e.g. inclusion of market fuel quality parameters for gaseous fuels, biofuels, etc.)

2. In November 2010, the Chair of GRPE reported on the lack of an agreement between the oil industry and the automobile manufacturers on the development of recommendations for market fuel quality. As the mandate of the informal group on Fuel Quality ended on November 2010, the World Forum agreed to take a decision, at its next session in March 2011, on the eventual continuation of the work in this area, on the basis of further information to be provided by GRPE. Until March 2011, OICA and IPIECA agreed to continue doing the necessary efforts to reach an agreement with the oil industry about its cooperation on the development of market fuel quality standards. It was noted that without the cooperation of the oil industry it will hardly be possible the development of such standards.

3. During the session of GRPE in January 2011, OICA presented, with the support of IPIECA, a final outcome on some of the parameters for Euro 2 to Euro 4 emissions levels agreed for the time being. It was agreed to prepare these guidelines as a new annex to the Consolidated Resolution on the Construction of Vehicles (R.E.3). Nevertheless, IPIECA underlined his position not to support an extension or renewal of the mandate of the informal group on FQ and that the members of his organization opposed go further in the process. Following the discussion, GRPE agreed that there is no need to extend the mandate of the informal group on FQ and that the subject will be further discussed within next session of GRPE in June 2011. The Chairman of GRPE mentioned that he will report on the current situation regarding this issue in the next session of WP.29 in March 2011.
