

Intervention by Yves VAN DER STRAATEN – OICA Secretary General

Vehicle manufacturers are actively developing the automation systems of the future. There are great hopes that automation will strongly contribute to improved road safety. After all, 90 to 95 % of road accidents are due to human error and reducing or even eliminating this can therefore only be positive.

But for this, the number of automated vehicles on the road needs to be sufficiently large; and this will take time.

Automated vehicles, just like any other vehicle, need to be certified one way or another to be allowed on the road. But automation adds an additional complexity because it is so to speak the driving skills of the vehicle that need to be assessed in addition to all other classical requirements. We therefore need a new way of thinking to verify the safety of automation.

The International Organisation of Vehicle Manufacturers OICA has started making proposals in that sense to WP.29 and its working group GRVA, combining testing on test track with testing on public roads plus simulations and audits.

We also need maximum harmonisation of requirements and test protocols. Otherwise, we would end up with multiplication of developments and very high costs and this contradicts mass introduction.

Automation and digitalisation each need the proper infrastructure (digital and physical), in terms of radio and radar frequencies, road qualities, etc. Therefore, huge investments may be needed.

Finally, there is the Highway Code in the various countries, since they may need to be adapted. WP1 is currently reviewing the Geneva and the Vienna Conventions and here as well, OICA is contributing at its best.

In conclusion, it is therefore most likely premature to hope that automation will solve the road safety issues quickly and globally. It will be a long process, with the introduction being gradual, starting with well-developed markets, before spreading to others.

We need a good cooperation with the various authorities and we hope that WP29 will be able to solve the certification issues and WP1 the road traffic issues that I just mentioned.

Thank you for your attention.