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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION
(4-7 April 2000)**

PART A OF THE REPORT

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety held its thirty-fourth session in Geneva from 4-7 April 2000 under the chairmanship of Mr. B. Perisset (Switzerland). Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Austria; Belgium; Belarus; Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; Germany; Hungary; Israel; Italy; Latvia; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; and Ukraine. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) were represented. The following non-governmental organizations were also represented: Confédération Internationale des Associations d'Experts et Conseils (CIDADEC); European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR); Federation of European Motorcyclists' Associations (FEMA); International Touring Alliance/International Automobile Federation (AIT & FIA); International Federation of Motorcyclists (FIM); International Federation of Pedestrians (FIP); International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA); International Road Federation (IRF); International Road Transport Union (IRU); and Prévention Routière Internationale (PRI). The European Cyclists' Federation (ECF) participated as an observer.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. The Director of the ECE Transport Division, Mr. José Capel Ferrer, congratulated the new Chairman, Mr. Bernard Perisset, on his election and wished him success. He stressed that the major contribution the Working Party could make to the improvement of road safety was through the amendment of the existing ECE legal instruments dealt with by the Working Party. In this connection, he noted that there were many countries from outside Europe which were Parties to the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals of 1949 or 1968, and invited the Working Party to consider the possibility of those countries participating in the work of WP.1. The Director also invited Governments and organizations to take an active part in the Third Road Safety Week in the UN/ECE Region, 1-7 May 2000 and described the activities which the secretariat had undertaken to promote the Week including the establishment of a dedicated web site and the issuance of press releases, newsletters, a brochure, postcard and poster - all in three language versions. He invited member countries to use these materials to promote their own national road safety campaigns.

3. Mr. Capel Ferrer also referred to the issue of safety in tunnels and informed the Working Party of the decision of the Inland Transport Committee to convene an Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group of Experts on Safety in Tunnels, the first meeting of which will be held on 10-11 July 2000. He invited WP.1 delegates to take part in this work or to follow it closely.

4. He also informed the Working Party that the administrative procedures for recruiting a new Secretary of the Working Party were advanced and hoped that the selected candidate would be in place in time for the Working Party's thirty-fifth session in October 2000. In the meantime, in order to secure the continuity of professional services to the road sector, a request has been submitted for the retention in service of Mr. Jerzy Witkowski, the present Secretary of WP.1, due to retire on 30 April 2000, for three months.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/68.

5. The agenda was adopted without change.

AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1968 CONVENTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM

(a) Questionnaire on the implementation of the Vienna Conventions and the 1971 European Agreements

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1998/18 and Adds.1-3; TRANS/WP.1/2000/16.

6. The Working Party reviewed the additional responses to the questionnaire as contained in documents TRANS/WP.1/1999/18/Add.3 and the analysis and recommendations of the small

group (Israel, Netherlands, Russian Federation under the chairmanship of Israel) resulting from the questionnaire (TRANS/WP.1/2000/16).

7. The Working Party thanked the small group for its work and endorsed the following conclusions: the Vienna Conventions and the European Agreements are the basis for national road traffic legislation for all member States; the time needed for implementation differs from 1 or 2 years to 6 or 7 years; problems with implementation are partly due to the national division of responsibilities and partly due to the lack of precise terminology/definitions or difficulties in linking terminology with nationally used terminology; no Governments consider it necessary to elaborate and adopt new conventions but the majority consider it necessary to introduce amendments or additions to the 1968 Conventions and 1971 European Agreements periodically; most countries prefer a frequency of 5 years for introducing amendments to the Conventions but some prefer 10 years; and a Working Group of Legal Experts (of WP.1 member States) should be established to review amendment proposals before discussion and adoption by WP.1.

(b) Documents transmitted by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/4; TRANS/WP.1/2000/5; TRANS/WP.1/2000/10; TRANS/WP.1/2000/11; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/13; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.140 and Add. 1-7.

8. Recalling its in-depth discussions at its thirty-second and thirty-third sessions, the Working Party continued its consideration of this item based on a document transmitted by the Ad hoc Group of Legal Experts on the Vienna Conventions (ECE/TRANS/2000/5).

9. The Working Party discussed proposals to amend the Convention on Road Traffic by adding definitions of “cycle track” and “cycle lane”, inserting a new subparagraph 1 (c) to Article 11, inserting a new subparagraph 12, amending Article 16.1 (b) and 16.2, inserting a new Article 21 bis, amending the last sentence of Article 23.1, amending Article 23.6, amending Article 27.4 and amending Article 41. For the European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Traffic, the Working Party discussed amendments to Annex, paragraph 18 (ad Article 23 of the Convention) and Annex, paragraph 20 (ad Article 27 of the Convention). For the Convention on Road Signs and Signals, the Working Party discussed proposals to add definitions of “cycle track” and “cycle lane” and amend Article 26 bis, paragraph 1.

10. The Working Party requested the Ad hoc Legal Expert Group to have a final reading of these proposals and to include them in a consolidated document of all amendment proposals for the Vienna Conventions and European Agreements supplementing them to be considered by the Working Party at its thirty-fifth session. It was later decided that the Ad hoc Legal Expert Group will meet in Bern on 3 and 4 July 2000.

11. The Working Party also considered a proposal to amend Article 11.1 (c) of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic made by the Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) (TRANS/WP.1/2000/10) which would authorize solo motorcycles to pass stationary vehicles or vehicles moving at a low speed on the side which corresponds to the direction of the traffic

provided that sufficient space is available. The Working Party did not agree to support this proposal.

12. The Working Party considered proposals made by Poland to amend the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals regarding the sign indicating the beginning of a built-up area and the use of blue markings to indicate a limitation on the duration of parking (TRANS/WP.1/2000/11). The Working Party expressed its support in principle for the former proposal but had some doubts regarding the latter. It asked the Ad hoc Legal Group of Experts on the Vienna Conventions to examine these proposals at its next meeting and to include them in the consolidated document to be discussed at the Working Party's thirty-fifth session in October 2000.

13. The Working Party considered the proposal made in the provisional agenda to modify the 1968 Vienna Conventions and the European Agreements supplementing them by changing all references to "he" to "he/she" and "his" to "his/her". The Working Party agreed that while such an exercise was desirable, it would require a large investment of time and could not be considered at present when there were issues of substance to be examined.

14. The Working Party recalled that, at its thirty-second session (April 1999), it had considered a proposal by the delegate of Germany regarding signing for roundabouts and had agreed to add the following text at the end of Article 18.4 a of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic: "unless a roundabout is indicated by sign D,3 together with the sign B,1 or B,2, in which case the driver in the roundabout has priority". The Working Party requested the Ad hoc Legal Group to include that proposal in a consolidated document to be prepared for its thirty-fifth session.

15. The Working Party was informed that it had received a request (Informal document No.3) to discuss proposals transmitted by ECMT for amendments to the Convention on Road Traffic of 1968 as amended by the European Agreement of 1971 regarding behaviour at pedestrian crossings (TRANS/WP.1/1998/4). The Working Party recalled that it had previously discussed this issue at its thirty-first session but decided, since there had been recent developments regarding pedestrian crossings in some ECE member countries, to reopen discussion on this subject at its next session using as a basis TRANS/WP.1/1998/4.

16. The Working Party examined a document TRANS/WP.1/2000/18 transmitted by the Russian Federation pointing out that in paragraph 12 of the annex to the European Agreement supplementing the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic, the figure "4" should be replaced with the figure "6". The Working Party asked the Ad hoc Legal Group to add this correction to the consolidated document and made a call to all its member Governments to send any other corrections to the secretariat so that they could also be transmitted for consideration by the Ad hoc Legal Group.

(c) International driving permits

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1999/6 and Add.1 and 2.

17. The Working Party took note of the additional information for the roster of associations authorized to issue IDPs received from Bulgaria, France, Israel, Norway, Republic of Moldova and the United Kingdom (TRANS/WP.1/1999/6/Add.2).

18. The Working Party also noted that it had already discussed under item 2(b) a proposal to amend Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic requiring the holder of an IDP, when asked, to present a domestic driving permit together with the IDP.

19. The Working Party discussed the proposal made by the Russian Federation to amend the model of the IDP contained in Annex 7 to the Convention on Road Traffic and agreed that this issue should be considered by a small group on licences (Bulgaria, France, Israel, Luxembourg, Russian Federation, Spain and IMMA under the chairmanship of the Russian Federation).

20. The Working Party also requested the small group to make proposals on the action to be taken to implement the decision to phase out the IDP, including definition of transition periods and consultation of Contracting Parties to the relevant Conventions, and proposals regarding the elaboration of a new legal instrument on the mutual recognition of IDPs.

(d) Definition of mopeds and motorcycles

21. The Working Party recalled that, at its thirty-third session, it had established a small group to prepare proposals for further work on the different categories and definitions of mopeds and motorcycles. The Working Party requested the small group (Belgium, Israel, Italy and IMMA under the chairmanship of Belgium) to submit such proposals in time for the Working Party's session in October. It also recommended that the document to be prepared should cover quadricycles since the Vienna Convention and EU legislation differed widely on this issue.

REVISION OF THE 1975 AGREEMENT ON MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ISSUE AND VALIDITY OF DRIVING PERMITS (APC)

22. The Working Party recalled the decision taken at its thirty-second session to discontinue consideration of the APC until the views of Contracting Parties were known.

REVISION OF THE CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC (R.E.1) AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS (R.E.2)

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/294/Rev.5; TRANS/SC.1/295/Rev.3; TRANS/WP.1/2000/3; TRANS/WP.1/1999/31.

Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1)

23. The Working Party considered a proposal by the International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee (CITA) to revise annex 2 of R.E.1 on periodic inspection of vehicles - checks to be carried out (TRANS/WP.1/2000/3). Recognizing the new proposed annex 2 as important for road safety, the Working Party, however, considered the content too technical for WP.1 to take a decision independently on it and asked for advice in this regard from WP.29. The Working Party discussed the possibility of including column 1 of the document in R.E.1 and the remaining parts in R.E.3 on the construction of motor vehicles.

24. The Working Party was informed that the sixty-second session of the Inland Transport Committee had adopted the change in name of WP.29 from the Working Party on the Construction of Motor Vehicles to the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) to reflect the increasingly global scope of that group. The Working Party was further informed that WP.29 had requested comments from Governments on the CITA proposal, which would be considered at its one-hundred-and-twenty-first session on 4-7 July 2000 (TRANS/WP.29/689, para. 38). The Working Party asked the secretariat to inform it at its thirty-fifth session of any decision taken by WP.29 in this regard.

25. The Working Party was informed about the status of the 1997 Agreement on Technical Inspections. The Working Party noted that, whilst the Agreement had been concluded on 13 November 1997, only the Russian Federation, Estonia, Netherlands and Romania were Contracting Parties. It also noted the Inland Transport Committee's decision to invite the remaining 20 signatories to expedite ratification procedures in their countries in order to ensure the entry into force of the Agreement and its application (Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Ukraine).

(a) Pedestrians

Documentation: Informal document No. 1.

26. The Working Party considered an Informal document which contained a draft proposal for chapter six of the new structure proposed for the Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1) on the safety of pedestrians. The Working Party thanked the small group (Hungary, Netherlands, FEVR, FIP, under the chairmanship of Netherlands) and the Swiss pedestrian organization Fussverkehr Schweiz for preparing the draft. It reviewed the draft and provided its comments on some specific items. In conclusion, it found that, while it was a good basis for further work, the draft was too long, and should also be redrafted to be consistent with the style of R.E.1. The Working Party therefore asked the small group, in coordination with Fussverkehr Schweiz and the International Federation of Pedestrians to prepare a new draft document for consideration at its thirty-fifth session.

27. The Working Party invited its members to submit any additional comments in writing to the secretariat by the end of April at the latest so that they could be forwarded to Fussverkehr Schweiz for inclusion in the new draft.

(b) Assistance to victims of road accidents

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/12; TRANS/WP.1/2000/9; TRANS/WP.1/2000/1.

28. The Working Party thanked the small group (France, Israel, IFRC, FEVR under the chairmanship of France) for the new draft on assistance to victims of road accidents (TRANS/WP.1/2000/12) which incorporated modifications proposed by the Working Party at its thirty-third session. It reviewed sections A, B, C, and D of the text and provided its comments and suggestions on how to modify those sections. It decided that any further suggestions should be provided in writing within three weeks to the secretariat which would forward them to the small group. The small group was requested to prepare a new draft to be approved by the thirty-fifth session which would become chapter 10 in the new structure of R.E.1.

29. The Working Party also considered document TRANS/WP.1/2000/9 transmitted by FEVR which proposed that the Working Party continue its work on assistance to victims of road accidents, including the issue of a disclaimer for nurses and doctors to give emergency medical assistance while waiting for the arrival of official medical staff at the site of a road accident. In this regard, the Working Party recalled its previous decision not to pursue the issue of a disclaimer which it felt was not within its competence.

(c) Safety in tunnels

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/8; TRANS/2000/13.

30. The Working Party noted that, in accordance with a recommendation of the Working Party on Road Transport (TRANS/SC.1/365, paras. 16-19 and annex 4), and modifications introduced to it by the delegate of France in TRANS/2000/13, the Inland Transport Committee had endorsed the proposal to establish a multi-disciplinary group of experts on safety in tunnels which would first concentrate its work on road tunnels and continue later with safety issues in other tunnels. The Committee had requested the secretariat to contact Committee members requesting them to designate national focal points to participate in the work of the multi-disciplinary group. It had also recommended that the multi-disciplinary group of experts should not be too large, and that it should come up with specific recommendations on how to include the necessary provisions on safety in tunnels into the legal instruments dealt with by ITC subsidiary bodies (ECE/TRANS/133, paras. 43-44).

31. The Working Party was informed that the secretariat had sent a letter to ITC members requesting nominations of focal points by 31 March 2000. Ten replies had been received so far. The first meeting of the group will be held on 10 and 11 July 2000 in Geneva.

32. The Working Party was informed that the proposed terms of reference of the multi-disciplinary group were contained in TRANS/2000/13 and that information on safety in tunnels was contained in TRANS/WP.1/2000/8 provided by Belgium, Bulgaria and the IRU.

Consolidated Resolution on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.2)

(d) Speed control humps

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/6; TRANS/WP.1/1999/19.

33. The delegate of Denmark introduced the new draft of the provisions on signing for speed control humps prepared by Denmark, Israel and the Russian Federation (TRANS/WP.1/2000/6).

34. The Working Party thanked the small group for its work and approved the new text with the following amendments:

- in the first sentence of the section Road marking at humps, the word “should” to be replaced by “may”; and

- in the first sentence of the section Vertical marking at humps, the word “should” to be replaced by “may be used”.

35. The Working Party endorsed the proposal of the small group to include the new provisions in a new chapter 3 of R.E.2.

(e) Road works signing

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/7; TRANS/WP.1/1999/17.

36. The Working Party agreed that the written modifications proposed by Denmark and the Russian Federation in TRANS/WP.1/2000/7 should be incorporated to the extent possible in a new draft of the recommendations for road works signing and safety to be prepared by the secretariat. The Working Party decided to consider the new draft at its thirty-fifth session and invited members to submit additional written comments to the secretariat within the deadline for documentation.

(f) Signs for vehicles carrying dangerous goods

37. The Working Party considered a proposal submitted by the Working Party on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (WP.15) to amend R.E.2 concerning the use and meaning of signs for vehicles carrying dangerous goods. The proposal was required as a result of the restructuring of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), which no longer referred to “item numbers”, “letters” or “marginals”.

38. The Working Party adopted the amendments to paragraph 1.11 of R.E.2 reproduced below:

Paragraph 1.11 (a)

- (i) Replace “goods listed in any class” by “dangerous goods defined in Article 1 (b)”.
- (ii) Replace “marginal 10 500 of ADR” by “the provisions of ADR for marking”.

Paragraph 1.11 (b)

- (i) Replace “of class 2 - items with letters (b), (bt), (c) and (ct)” by “of class 2 classified as flammable”.
- (ii) Replace “of class 3 - items 1 to 28” by “of class 3, except those of packing group III”.
- (iii) Replace “of class 4.1 items 31 to 50” by “of class 4.1 classified as self-reactive”.
- (iv) Replace “marginal 10 500 of ADR” by “the provisions of ADR concerning marking”.

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PART B OF THE REPORT

FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

39. The Working Party was informed of developments in the follow-up process to the Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment and the London Conference on Environment and Health. In particular, information was provided about the meeting of focal points, lead actors and other experts of the Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment held in Geneva on 7-9 February 2000 and about the preparation of an inventory of agreements and legal instruments relevant to transport, environment and health. Complete up-to-date information on transport and environment activities can be obtained from the website at the address: <http://www.unece.org/poja>.

PREPARATION OF THE THIRD ROAD SAFETY WEEK IN THE ECE REGION

40. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat of the progress made in preparation for the Third Road Safety Week in the UN/ECE region, 1-7 May 2000 (Third RSW). This included the preparation, printing and dissemination of promotional materials, e.g. a special website (<http://www.unece.org/trans/roadsafe>), brochure, poster, and postcard - all issued in three languages: English, French and Russian. These materials were made available at the meeting. The secretariat had also issued two press releases and two newsletters. A further press release and newsletters would be issued before the Week. A special display regarding the Third Road Safety Week had been arranged at Door 6 at the Palais des Nations.

41. Upon the request of the delegate of Spain, the Working Party asked the secretariat to explore whether the brochure could be translated and published in Spanish with the purpose of making the Third RSW publicity available in Latin America through its presentation at the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) Conference "Road Safety in Iberoamerica - a Challenge for the Third Millennium" in Lima later this year.

42. The delegates of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Israel, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain and Switzerland, informed the Working Party about their national activities under way or to be implemented under the framework of the Third Road Safety Week. Romania and the Russian Federation displayed samples of the promotional materials and souvenir items issued for their national campaigns.

43. The following non-governmental organizations also informed the Working Party about their activities for the Third Road Safety Week: FEVR, FEM, IFP, IRU and PRI.

44. The Working Party decided to evaluate the results of the Third Road Safety Week at its thirty-fifth or thirty-sixth session.

COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

(a) National road safety requirements

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/1 and Add.1-2; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/2 and Add.1-2/Corr.1; TRANS/SC.1/1997/5 and Add.1-7.

45. The Working Party was informed that the latest information on national road traffic safety requirements appears in TRANS/SC.1/1997/5 and Add.1-7, on national legal instruments in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/1 and Add.1-2 and on national methods of training and follow-up for categories A and B driving licences in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/2 and Add.1 and Add.2/Corr.1.

(b) Exchange of experiences in the field of road safety

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/2; TRANS/WP.1/2000/13.

46. The Working Party took note of a document transmitted by the Government of Spain on new legislation which made it compulsory for motor vehicles to be equipped with two warning triangles (TRANS/WP.1/2000/2) and from Romania about modifications to road traffic regulations (TRANS/WP.1/2000/13). Information was also provided by the delegate of Turkey on a traffic safety project and by the delegate of Bulgaria on the introduction of a new penalty point system. The delegate of Norway informed the Working Party that legislation had been introduced on 15 March in Norway banning the use in motor vehicles of all but hands-free mobile phones. Norway had also introduced the possibility for cities to charge motorists for using studded tyres and had introduced lower speed limits in cities on days which were more susceptible to pollution.

47. The Working Party invited Governments to continue submitting to the secretariat written information about changes in national legislation or recent developments in road traffic safety.

APPLICATION OF INFORMATICS IN ROAD SAFETY

48. The Working Party recalled that, at its thirty-third session, it had requested the Governments of Germany and the Netherlands to prepare a paper on how the Working Party should work in the area of informatics and road safety in the future. The Working Party noted that unforeseen circumstances had prevented the preparation of that paper and requested that the paper be prepared for the thirty-fifth or thirty-sixth session.

49. The representative of the International Road Federation (IRF) informed the Working Party about a COST (European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research) study on Drivers' Visual Information Overload and suggested that the study might also point to areas in which the Conventions needed to be amended.

CONSIDERATION OF THE POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO THE WORK ON A UNITED NATIONS LONG-TERM STRATEGY ON ROAD SAFETY

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/3/Rev.1; TRANS/WP.1/1999/5 and Add.1.

50. At its thirty-second and thirty-third sessions, the Working Party had taken note of responses to a letter sent to international governmental and non-governmental organizations explaining the purpose of the Long-Term Strategy and inviting them to explore ways of possible cooperation with WP.1 on road safety issues (TRANS/WP.1/1999/5 and Add.1).

51. As a first step in the Long-Term Strategy, the Working Party felt that it was essential to secure effective cooperation with other Working Parties such as WP.15 and WP.29.

52. Next, the Working Party had to decide how to position itself in the domain of global cooperation on road safety issues. Cooperation with other parties concerned such as the World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO) and other UN regional commissions was discussed. It was recalled that the Working Party and the secretariat had already offered to contribute to the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) through the provision of advisory assistance regarding legal instruments.

53. In this connection, it was noted that the Vienna Conventions are truly international instruments and their provisions are used even by countries which are not Contracting Parties to them. It was also suggested that WP.1 might consider the possibility of participation in its meetings by Contracting Parties to the Conventions from outside the ECE region.

54. The Working Party decided to continue consideration of this item in light of the above-mentioned views at its thirty-fifth session.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ECE BODIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

55. The Working Party was informed by the representative of GRSP about further progress in the Partnership's activities which were now moving from the conceptual and organizational stage to operational activities, e.g. national road safety projects sponsored and implemented by GRSP. One of them was a national project to be launched at a road safety conference in the middle of the year in Poland. Projects in Hungary, Romania and other regions were being developed. WP.1 was also informed that more private, government and non-governmental organizations were taking an interest in GRSP.

FUTURE WORK

- (a) Consideration of the issues dealt with by the ECMT Group on Road Traffic, Signs and Signals, transmitted to ECE for follow-up

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/13; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.140 and Adds.1-7.

56. The Working Party had before it the findings of the small group set up to examine the documents transmitted by the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/13) together with the original documents from ECMT (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.140 and Add.1-7).

57. The Working Party noted the importance of addressing the issue of the use of mobile telephones in cars and noted verbal information in this regard provided by the delegates of Israel, Romania, Spain and Switzerland. The Working Party decided that, before proceeding with this issue, it had to have information on the progress made by other organizations in this field. It was recommended that this issue be taken up at the Working Party's thirty-fifth session.

58. With regard to the siting of traffic signs, the Working Party decided to establish a small group to make proposals regarding methods of work, objectives and a timetable for future work in this area. The small group would be composed of the delegates of the Czech Republic, Israel and Switzerland under the chairmanship of Israel. Other delegates were invited to inform the secretariat if they wanted to be part of that small group.

59. The Working Party decided to consider these two issues under agenda item 2 at its thirty-fifth session.

(b) Copyright of signs and signals

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1999/25.

60. Since no further comments had been received, the Working Party decided to suspend its discussion of this issue.

(c) Other issues

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/14.

61. The Working Party took note of Informal document No.2 containing a request from the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) for international recognition of the vehicle licence plates and registration certificates issued by UNMIK in the framework of the basic civilian functions entrusted to it by the United Nations Security Council. Noting the recommendation of the sixty-second session of the Inland Transport Committee to consider favourably such a request (ECE/TRANS/133, para. 116), members agreed to bring this issue to the attention of their national road transport authorities.

62. Under this item, the Working Party also considered a note prepared by the secretariat on the safety of skateboarders, in-line skaters, roller skaters, etc. (TRANS/WP.1/2000/14). The delegate of the Netherlands spoke of a study undertaken in his country which showed that this group did not pose a particular danger to road safety.

63. The Working Party felt that this was a growing issue which could not be ignored. It decided, however, that more information was required and asked its members to make relevant national information available to the secretariat so that a document could be prepared for the next WP.1 session.

ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/12.

64. At its thirty-third session, the Working Party had taken note of the request for assistance received from the Government of Tajikistan (TRANS/WP.1/1999/12) and had requested the secretariat to contact the authorities in Tajikistan to clarify whether there were any specific additional requests for assistance in the field of road safety. The secretariat had written to the Government of Tajikistan requesting additional information but had so far received no response.

65. The Working Party decided to remove this issue from the agenda and to reactivate it if and when required.

OTHER BUSINESS

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/2000/17.

66. The attention of French-speaking delegations was drawn to the fact that on WP.1 documents the name of the Working Party is given as “Groupe de travail de la sécurité de la circulation” without any mention of “routière”. This title had been logical when the Working Party reported to the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) through the Principal Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1). However, now that WP.1 reported directly to the ITC, it might be considered necessary to change the French name of the Working Party for the sake of clarity to “Groupe de travail de la sécurité de la circulation routière” or “Groupe de travail de la sécurité routière”.

67. It was decided, however, in the absence of a delegate from France and in order to avoid the possibility of confusion with the ECMT group of the same name, to postpone consideration of this question until the next WP.1 session when the views of the French delegate might be sought.

68. At its thirty-third session, the Working Party had decided that the work of the small groups established to look into selected issues should be coordinated by the Vice-Chairmen of the Working Party and that this role should be active even between the semi-annual sessions. In this regard, it requested the Vice-Chairmen to make a proposal in a short document on the modalities for such coordination. The proposal by the Vice-Chairmen was contained in TRANS/WP.1/2000/17.

69. With reference to the role of the Vice-Chairmen, it was decided that they should be members of small groups and should assist their work but that the responsibility for the quality and timeliness of the work of the small groups should remain with the Chairmen of those groups.

70. Also under this agenda item, the delegate of Belgium, in connection with the issue of safety of pedestrians, referred to the provisions of paragraph 5 of Article 20 Rules applicable to pedestrians of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic regarding which side of the carriageway pedestrians should use when there is no sidewalk, and suggested that perhaps an amendment of the Convention might be required.

71. The Working Party requested the delegate of Belgium to send a note on this issue to the secretariat so that a document could be prepared for the next session under item 2 of the agenda.

72. The Working Party was informed that its thirty-fifth session is scheduled to be held from 3-6 October 2000, and that the deadline for the submission of documentation for the thirty-fifth session is 23 June 2000. A technical visit to Fribourg will be organized on the afternoon and evening of Thursday 5 October.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

73. As agreed by the Working Party at its thirtieth session, Part A of the report concerning decisions taken by the Working Party at its thirty-fourth session under agenda items relating to legislative work was adopted on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. Part B of the report, reflecting in a concise form the discussion held on other agenda items, was prepared by the secretariat after the session in consultation with the Chairman.
