



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Improving Global Road Safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets

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Conclusions and recommendations

The seminar was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and co-hosted by the Government of the Republic of Belarus, as part of the project "Improving Global Road Safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets" funded by the United Nations Development Account.

The seminar was opened by Mr. Anatoly Kuleshov, acting Minister of Interior, Mr. Antonius Broek, United Nations Resident Coordinator and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative, and Mrs. Eva Molnar, Director of Transport Division in the UNECE, in the presence of Deputy Ministers of Health, Transport and Education from Belarus and the Deputy Minister of Health of Ukraine. The event benefitted of an outstanding organization and took place in a cooperative atmosphere of mutual respect.

They learned about the encouraging developments that have taken place in Belarus as a consequence of enforcing holistic approach in road safety, about comprehensive programmes and policies that are implemented or planned in Russian Federation, complex programme in road safety-related health area (post-crash intervention) in Ukraine, developments in road safety legislation and practices in the Republic of Moldova, as well as statistical information on road safety in Armenia.

The participants listened with interest and appreciated information given by speakers about interventions and road safety practices that brought significant reductions in road traffic casualties. In particular they appreciated the cases of Spain, Poland, France, Great Britain and Australia as countries where setting targets proved to be an effective means to assess the road safety problem and a motivation to solve it. The participants were of the opinion that these examples of good road safety

practice are valid sources of inspiration for them in adopting national road safety targets and/or prioritizing steps towards achieving targets by 2015.

The participants also appreciated the good practices and information communicated by representatives of the United Nations Agencies (United Nations regional commissions- Economic Commission for Europe, Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, World Health Organization), and international governmental (European Commission, Commonwealth of Independent States) or non- governmental organizations (International Road Transport Union, International Road Federation, Global Road Safety Partnership, FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society) programmes (International Road Assessment Program) as well as road safety related private entities (ERTICO, Belarusian Auto Moto Touring Club).

The participants welcomed the encouraging positive developments but recognized that road traffic casualties are still dramatically affecting their countries and road safety is not anymore just a transport issue, but it is a health, social, financial and economic hazard, negatively impacting on the global development.

Considering road safety as a problem which can only be solved through collective efforts and cooperation at all levels, the participants agreed on the following

Recommendations:

1. The lessons learned during the seminar, especially about road safety initiatives and practices that can help Governments to set and achieve road safety targets at relatively low cost and within a short time frame, should be disseminated to the other government authorities involved in road safety in the countries participating in the seminar (Ministries of Interior, Transport, Health and Education).
2. Quantifying the road safety problem through good national statistics and research is an essential first step in establishing campaigns to improve road safety. Countries should therefore adopt/improve methodology for data collection and set-up/improve the existing national computerised databases on road crashes. To this end, UNECE Glossary and database on road traffic accidents would be an appropriate basis.
3. Governments have a primary role to play in creating safe road traffic conditions through legislation, enforcement and education and they also need to optimise their expenditures. Reducing the number of road casualties leads to reduced costs for the Governments and the society. It is recommended to countries that have not set road safety targets yet, to begin to analyze and model data in order to produce evidence-based casualty reduction targets. In addition, data should be collected in order to have indicators in terms of different road safety problems or groups of road users (for example, separate targets for drinking and driving, use of seatbelts and child

restraints and wearing of helmets). When setting targets, effectiveness should prevail on any other consideration, to the maximum extent possible.

4. Political will and commitment are key in improving road safety and these are needed to secure funds and address properly the main priorities in road safety, such as improving the infrastructure, education and enforcement which are high-cost measures.

5. International cooperation and knowledge-sharing in road safety should be further strengthened taking into account the needs of low and middle income countries; to this end, as a first step, a number of advisory missions should be conducted after the seminar upon request of countries in order to assess their road safety problems and help them develop targets in a bilateral setting.

6. It is recommended that Governments actively participate in the decision-making process concerning the UN Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals, 1968, which takes place in the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1). This would also provide for an appropriate forum where individual member countries learn from each other's experience and are able to compare their progress in achieving the targets with other countries in the region.

7. The results of the seminar should be included in the final report of the project, which should be communicated to the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety to be held in Moscow, Russian Federation, 19-20 November 2009, and further promoted as guidelines to be followed by countries in all the United Nations Regional Commissions' geographical areas.

The participants were invited to participate in the Road Safety Round Table organized by the UNECE on 23 September 2009 with the title "Are We Victims of Development Success?"

The participants expressed their gratitude to the UNECE for having organized the seminar and the Government of Belarus for warmly co-hosting it, as well as to speakers for having shared their experience and provided for possible solutions to improve road safety.

The proceedings of the seminar, including the list of participants, will be published on the UNECE website at www.unece.org.