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Strategic questions of a sectoral nature:

Harmonization of vehicle regulations

Draft Revision 3 to the 1958 Agreement

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document was prepared by the secretariat of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) to inform the Inland Transport Committee (the Committee) about the status of the discussions on the modification of the 1958 Agreement.

In light of the above, the Committee may wish to be informed, at its next session, about the further work progress of WP.29 in the development of the revised Agreement.

I. Background and mandate

1. This document was prepared by the secretariat of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) to inform the Inland Transport Committee (the Committee) about the status of the discussions on the modification of the 1958 Agreement.

2. In 1995, Revision 2 to the 1958 Agreement entered into force and made it possible for regional economic integration organizations set up by countries that are members of the UNECE and also for other countries of the United Nations to adhere to the Agreement. To date, fifty-one countries have become Contracting Party to the 1958 Agreement and apply a number of the 132 UN Regulations annexed to the Agreement. The provisions of these UN Regulations provide the basis of technical requirements necessary for the construction of new vehicles with respect to their safety and environmental performances. Furthermore, the World Forum managed to establish an efficient procedure to continuously adapt these requirements to the technical progress. Therefore, the technical requirements for vehicles, equipment and parts listed in the UN Regulations are considered as one of the highest levels of stringency worldwide.

II. Main objectives of Revision 3 of the 1958 Agreement

3. In March 2011, the World Forum established an informal group to develop the International Whole Vehicle Type Approval (IWVTA) system. The IWVTA system consists in a single type approval covering the whole vehicle. On the basis of a road map, presented by the informal group on IWVTA in November 2011, the World Forum WP.29 agreed on the need to amend the 1958 Agreement. The future amendment should also aim at fostering the broader participation of countries from emerging economies and regional economic integration organizations in the activities of the World Forum and at increasing the number of Contracting Parties to the Agreement.

4. Thus, the main objectives of Revision 3 to the 1958 Agreement consists of:

- (a) inserting new provisions for the IWVTA system,
- (b) allowing the Contracting Parties to apply former versions of UN Regulations annexed to the 1958 Agreement,
- (c) establishing at UNECE an electronic Database for the Exchange of Type Approval documentation (DETA) between all the Contracting Parties to the Agreement,
- (d) allowing a Contracting Party to delegate the right to vote on behalf of another Contracting Party (i.e. proxy voting),
- (e) modifying the voting conditions for the adoption of new UN Regulations or their amendments to existing UN Regulations (i.e. current the two-thirds majority), and
- (f) reviewing and strengthening the current provisions with the aim to improve the functioning and reliability the type approval procedures and the conditions for their mutual recognition (i.e. quality assurance assessment, certification and conformity of production procedures, the tasks, responsibilities and competences of involved parties and aspects related to enforcement such as ensuring market surveillance and safeguard measures).

III. Time schedule

5. The timetable for the completion and entry into force of Revision 3 to the 1958 Agreement is March 2016.

IV. Follow-up

6. The scope of the new IWVTA provisions is limited, in a first step, to passenger cars. The World Forum expected to enlarge, in a further step, the scope to other categories of vehicles. The most recent status of draft Revision 3 to the 1958 Agreement is reflected in ECE/TRANS/WP.29/2014/26, which is listed on the agenda of the World Forum WP.29 for a detailed consideration at its March 2014 session.

7. In light of the above, the Committee may wish to be informed, at its next session, about the further work progress of WP.29 in the development of the revised Agreement.
