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Strategic questions of a sectoral nature: Road safety

Review of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe recent road safety activities

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Inland Transport Committee adopted the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Plan for the Decade of Action (ECE/TRANS/2012/4 and Corrs. 1 and 2) at its 74th session in 2012. The UNECE Plan is directly aligned with the United Nations Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety and aims to achieve UNECE's overall road safety goals by addressing priority areas of work, as well as implementing continuous and future actions for each goal in and beyond its geographical area. This document provides a summary of the UNECE's road safety activities in 2013 and also highlights other key United Nations related developments in road safety, such as the latest road safety resolution adopted by the General Assembly (A/RES/66/260) and the latest Secretary-General's report on improving global road safety (A/68/368).

The Committee is invited to consider the progress achieved in road safety in 2013, regionally and globally, by UNECE through the provision of secretariat support to the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) and other technical assistance and capacity-building activities.

I. UNECE's recent road safety activities

A. Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1)

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1), serviced by UNECE, is the only inter-governmental permanent body in the United Nations system focussed on improving road traffic safety. It typically meets twice a year in Geneva. In 2013, it also met for a special session on 5–6 December in New Delhi, India, following an inaugural “Europe-Asia Road Safety Forum” on 4 December 2013.

2. In 2013, WP.1 reviewed and worked through amendment proposals to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic with a view to maintaining consistency between the convention and other international legal instruments, such as those developed by the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29). These included proposals related to lighting and light-signalling as well as a definition of “Driver Assistance Systems”. WP.1 also considered a proposal to amend the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals to include variable message signs. WP.1 also discussed issues related to the mutual recognition of driving permits, a safe system approach, multidisciplinary crash investigations and distracted driving.

3. Starting in 2014, WP.1 will oversee the work of two new Groups of Experts, the Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals, and on Improving Safety at Level Crossings. The mandate of the Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals is to review and to suggest ways to facilitate better comprehension of road signs and a more effective implementation of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals and the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals. The mandate of the Group of Experts on Improving Safety at Level Crossings is take stock of available data on Safety at Level Crossings to describe, assess and better understand the safety issues at a road/rail interface as well as to develop a multidisciplinary strategic plan aimed at reducing the risk of death and/or injury at level crossings.

B. United Nations legal instruments

4. The harmonization of international standards in the area of road traffic safety has continued. In 2013, the number of contracting parties to the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic was unchanged at 95. The number of contracting parties to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic, on the other hand, increased by two (Turkey and Qatar) and reached 72. The European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR) had 51 contracting parties.

5. Under the administration and responsibility of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted to/or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions, and the 1998 Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and/or used on Wheeled Vehicles, had 48 and 33 contracting parties respectively, covering most of the countries with a major automotive industry. The number of contracting parties to the 1997 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections remained unchanged, at 12.

6. WP.29 has recently adopted a considerable number of technical modifications to UN vehicle Regulations to increase their safety performance. Some examples include: (i)

provisions for reducing the blind spot on the passenger side of heavy duty vehicles and improving driver visibility of other road users were incorporated in the text of existing regulations; (ii) improved overturning test procedures to reduce the risk of child ejection from child restraint systems, (iii) new provisions for the snow test for some categories of tyres, (iv) performance requirements for Advanced Emergency Braking Systems (AEBS) for vehicle categories below eight tons, (v) new requirements for service doors, windows and emergency exits and safety requirements in specific designed areas for prams or pushchairs in urban buses.

7. In 2013, WP.29 adopted four new UN vehicle regulations including one UN Global Technical Regulation (GTR) on hydrogen and fuel cell vehicles addressing passenger vehicles safety and three main systems: (i) fuel system integrity, (ii) electrical safety and (iii) hydrogen storage systems. A second UN GTR on the protection against pole side impacts, which will significantly improve the safety of a motor vehicles' occupants in the event of an impact against pole size objects (i.e. telegraph poles, signposts and trees). This last UN GTR – which is the first harmonized, international vehicle safety legislation addressing this issue - introduces requirements on lateral crash tests simulating this type of accident before vehicles are put on the market. It is expected that manufacturers would react by installing wider side airbags in order to increase passenger safety, among other things. The new UN GTR also introduces improvements in the protection of drivers' and passengers' heads. It will complement UN Regulation No. 95 on the protection of passengers against car to car lateral collision, by addressing brain and spinal cord injuries more directly. It has the potential to prevent a high number of fatalities and serious injuries occurring in pole side impacts worldwide. A detailed list of activities of the WP.29 is contained in the annex to this document.

8. The European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) now has 48 Contracting Parties. The UNECE has issued a Road Map on how to set up the administrative structures for implementation of ADR (ECE/TRANS/WP.15/217, annex IV). The UNECE secretariat has also published a 2013 consolidated edition of ADR which takes account of all amendments up to 1 January 2013.

C. United Nations Global Road Safety Week, 6–12 May 2013

9. In May 2013, the UNECE commemorated the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week (proclaimed by General Assembly resolution A/RES/64/255) with the secretariat's partners in the Palais des Nations with the organization of four key events and a number of supporting side events. The details of these events are provided below.

10. In addition, in Italy, UNECE partnered with the Italian Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, ASTM-SIAS, QN-II Giorno and leStrade, to publicize the Global Road Safety Week in a widely distributed local newspaper and magazine and to distribute 230,000 specially commissioned bookmarks at local schools and motorway toll booths along approximately 1,300 km of motorways in Lombardia, Piemonte, Liguria, Valle d'Aosta, Emilia Romagna and Toscana (http://www.unece.org/trans/roadsafe/2nd_grs_week/programme.html).

1. Regional Perspectives on Drinking and Driving Symposium

11. To mark the launch of the UN Global Road Safety Week in Geneva, Switzerland, UNECE and the International Center for Alcohol Policies partnered to organize a symposium on “Regional Perspectives on Drinking and Driving”. Experts from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East presented and discussed from their regional perspectives the main issues influencing alcohol-related accidents involving vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. The lesser explored topic of drunken VRUs was

also canvassed in addition to that of drunken drivers. The symposium concluded with a poster signing ceremony during which attendees had the opportunity to express a personal commitment to improving road safety by autographing a large, custom-made “We don’t drink and drive” poster.

2. Scouting for Global Road Safety

12. In parallel with the symposium, UNECE partnered with the World Organization of the Scout Movement, Scouting Ireland and the Hellenic Road Safety Institute “Panos Mylonas” to give 50 young leaders from its global Rover Scouts Programme the opportunity to participate in an interactive lecture by Professor Claes Tingvall, one of the creators of the “Vision Zero” concept. The Rover Scouts were empowered to develop, and present at the end of the session, their plans to modernize the pedestrian related aspects of the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic from a young person’s perspective.

3. International Level Crossing Awareness Day 2013 roundtable

13. Now on its fifth year, the International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) is spearheaded by the International Union of Railways (UIC) with the support of the railway community around the world and a growing number of road sector organizations to raise awareness among road users and pedestrians of the risks at level crossings and to change their behaviour to “act safely at level crossings”.

14. The highlight of ILCAD 2013 was a press conference followed by two roundtable discussions on the three E’s of safe level crossings – education, engineering and enforcement. National experts and advocates from Estonia, Greece, India, Italy, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland debated and discussed how behaviour at level crossings could be positively changed, and how infrastructure and enforcement could reinforce and facilitate safe behaviour. The event concluded with a poster signing ceremony affirming participants’ commitment to safe level crossing behaviour as well as the opening of the ILCAD exhibition featuring the top entries from the third UIC international children’s drawing contest on safety at level crossings.

4. Discussion forum on insurance and road safety

15. Victim rights and insurance are also important road safety issues, particularly in an international context. UNECE in co-operation with the Council of Bureaux (COB) organized an insurance and road safety session. COB is the key organization that administers the Green card system by handling and settling claims arising from accidents caused by visiting motorists. This event tackled insurance-related questions and proposed solutions on how to cross roads more safely. There was also a demonstration of top of the line testing equipment for driver fatigue.

D. Other advocacy and capacity building activities

16. The 18th session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing (PWG-TBC) was organized on 2–3 May 2013 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The session was hosted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport. The seven SPECA PWG-TBC member countries are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The group focuses on developing new, and extending existing road and rail networks in the region. They also focus on implementing the Programme of Action resulting from the Almaty Declaration of Land-Locked and Transit Developing Countries.

17. During this session, the PWG-TBC again invited more SPECA countries to take actions to respond to the Decade of Action for Road Safety and to embrace the UN work undertaken at global and regional levels and to report, if possible in writing, on decisions and actions taken in this respect to the UNECE and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The PWG-TBC was also invited to ensure the collection of quality road safety data so as to facilitate the regular monitoring of progress in improving road safety at the national and regional levels. It also encouraged one of its member countries to volunteer to host a road safety awareness conference where other SPECA countries could take part and exchange best practices.

18. Following on the success of the symposium on regional perspectives on drinking and driving during the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week, the UNECE and the International Center for Alcohol Policies jointly launched an e-book in September 2013 during the 66th session of WP.1. The e-book comprises the complete findings first presented in preliminary form at the symposium on the main issues influencing alcohol-related accidents involving vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and the Middle East. (http://www.unece.org/trans/roadsafe/ebook_launch.html)

19. On 4 December 2013, the UNECE organized an inaugural "Europe - Asia Road Safety Forum" in New Delhi, India, followed by a two-day 67th session of WP.1. The event was organized in partnership with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India, the Institute of Road Traffic Education and the International Road Transport Union, and in collaboration with ESCAP.

II. United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/260

20. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the latest road safety resolution (A/RES/66/260) on 23 May 2012. Sponsored by the Russian Federation, and co-sponsored by some 80 countries, this latest UN resolution, called on UN member States to implement road safety activities relating to each of the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action, namely, road safety management, safer roads and mobility, safer vehicles, safer road users and post-crash. (<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/roadsafe/docs/A-RES-66-260e.pdf>)

21. It is very likely that the Government of the Russian Federation will table another road safety resolution in 2014. The UNECE will co-ordinate responses from the other UN regional commissions and thus contribute to the drafting of the proposed resolution.

III. Secretary-General's report on improving global road safety

22. Every two years, the Secretary-General submits a report on improving road safety. The most recent report by the Secretary-General was released in September 2013 (A/68/368). The report – to which UNECE significantly contributed – provides an update on the status of the implementation of the recommendations contained in General Assembly resolutions of the past five years, including the pursuit of objectives of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety. (http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2013/wp1/Improving_Global_Road_Safety_2013_en.pdf)

Annex

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Plan to implement the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020)

Introduction

1. This annex is an abstract of WP.29 activities from ECE/TRANS/2012/4, introduced at the March 2012 session of the Inland Transport Committee, in which UNECE presents its Action Plan for the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011–2020). This Plan is directly aligned with the UN Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011–2020), and aims to achieve the overall road safety goals of the UNECE by addressing priority areas of work as well as implementing continuous and future actions for each goal in its geographical area and beyond. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure progress is being made towards meeting the objectives and that performance indicators are reached.
2. Accordingly, this annex contains the progress of the activities for monitoring and evaluation of WP.29 actions in the framework of the Decade of Action since its launch (11 May 2011). According to the outcome of the March 2012 session of WP.29, it will be distributed and updated for consideration and comments to WP.29 at its annual November session for the length of the decade (see ECE/TRANS/WP.29/1095, para. 97)
3. It is based on WP.29-161-10 distributed during the 161st session of WP.29.

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
Accession of United Nations Road Safety Conventions and Agreements	Monitoring the implementation of the United Nations Road Safety Conventions and Agreements: 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and /or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions (50 CPs); 1998 Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and / or be used on Wheeled Vehicles, (33 CPs); 1997 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections (12 CPs);	Will develop implementation indicators for the United Nations Road Safety Conventions and Agreements.	WP.1, WP.29, SC.1, WP.15	2011–2020	Number of new CPs to the United Nations Road Safety Conventions and Agreements and number of United Nations Regulations/United Nations GTRs adopted on national basis by countries CPs to any Agreement

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
	On 23 June 2011 adopted of a new UN Rule on roadworthiness (UN Rule No. 2). The adoption of this UN Rule will be relevant for road traffic safety.	Will be extended the scope of UN Rule Nos. 1 and 2 to cover vehicles of categories M ₁ , N ₁ and O ₁ making the Agreement more useful for emerging economies and for those countries not having a periodical technical inspection (PTI) system.	WP.29	2011-2020	Number of new CPs acceding the Agreement and/or applying the UN Rules applied by 12 CPs
	Raised awareness and technical assistance for accession.	Will enhance national and regional capacity building workshops and consultations to facilitate new accessions	WP.1, WP.29, SC.1, WP.15	continuous	Number of new CPs to the United Nations Road Safety Conventions and UN Agreements; Consistency between the United Nations Road Safety Conventions and Agreements, and the regional and national laws.

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
Objective 2: Protect Road Users					
Protecting Vulnerable Road Users	Adopted on 14 March 2012 the new UN Regulation on pedestrian safety	Will adopt new biofidelic test tools in the UN Regulation and UN GTR to design vehicles to be more pedestrian friendly.	WP.29	2011-2020	Number of CPs applying the United Nations Regulations
	Commissioned a discussion paper highlighting the benefits of the correct use of helmets and their specific construction (Regulation No. 22) for full head coverage to minimize impact in case of an accident.	Ongoing	WP. 29	2012	Number of new countries applying UN Regulation No. 22.
	Paid special attention to safe mobility and elderly road users by adopting provisions in United Nations Regulation No. 16 for safety-belts load limiters to reduce risk of thorax rib fracture injury.		WP.29	2011–2020	Number of increased CPs applying Regulation No. 16 (46 CPs)

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
Objective 3: Make Vehicles Safer					
Encourage member States to apply and promulgate motor vehicle safety Regulations as developed by the World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) of the United Nations	With the adoption of [2] UN GTRs and 3 UN Regulations the total number is 132 United Nations Regulations and [14] United Nations GTRs	Will develop new United Nations Regulations, United Nations GTRs and amendments on vehicle safety	WP.29	2012–2013	Number of CPs applying United Nations Regulations.
	Adopted on 14 March 2012 the new UN Regulation on Light Emitting Diode (LED). Through this new UN Regulation active safety (lighting vehicle system) will be more efficient and responsive in road traffic.	Will handover LED technologies to all vehicle lighting and light-signalling system	WP.29	2012–2020	Number of CPs applying United Nations Regulations.
	Adopted on 17 November 2011 a new UN GTR on motorcycle controls, tell-tales and indicators. Through this new UN GTR motorcycle controls, tell-tales and indicators will be more efficient and responsive in road traffic at global level.	Will hand over the requirements of the UN GTR into corresponding UN Regulation.	WP.29	2011-2020	Number of CPs applying United Nations Regulations
	Adopted in 2012, 95 amendments to UN Regulations to update them to the technical progress	Will continue to update the UN Regulations to the technical progress	WP.29	2012	46 CPs applying the amendments to the UN Regulations
	Adopted 4 amendments to UN GTRs to update them to the technical progress	Will continue to update the UN GTRs to the technical progress	WP.29	2012	Number of CPs applying United Nations Regulations.

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
	Participation of the secretariat at the workshop on regulatory cooperation between members of the WTO Committee for the elimination to technical barriers to trade (TBT). On 9 November 2011. Countries participating were encouraged to apply the regulations developed by WP.29 and to accede to the 1958 and 1998 Agreements.	Monitor the follow-up of the participation of the secretariat to WTO Committee for the elimination of technical barriers	WP.29	2011–2020	Number of new CPs applying United Nations Regulations.
Actions from Regional Economic Integration Organizations (REIO)/ CPs to replace regional legislations with United Nations Regulations/United Nations GTRs	Commission Regulation (EU) No. 407/2011 of 27 April 2011 includes 62 UN Regulations into Annex IV to Regulation (EC) No. 661/2009, concerning type-approval requirements for the general safety of motor vehicles, which lists the United Nations Regulations that apply on a compulsory basis.	Monitor the follow-up of the entry into force of the EU Regulation	WP.29	2011–2020	Number of new Directives replaced by United Nations Regulations. (Around 54 Directives replaced)
Passive and Active Safety	Drafted and Adopted United Nations Regulations and United Nations Global Technical Regulations on: child restraints systems, whiplash injury prevention, frontal/lateral/rear crash protection, safety-belts and their anchorages, protection against electric shocks in electric and hybrid vehicles.	Will extend the scope of the existing UN Regulation on battery electric vehicle safety to mopeds/motorcycles (L category). Will finalize a UN GTR on Electric Vehicle safety	WP.29	2014	Number of CPs applying the UN Regulations and UN GTR

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
	UN Regulations passed on Passive Safety (crash worthiness), Safety belts: 1970, Protective helmets: 1972, Child Restraint Systems (CRS): 1981, Frontal and lateral crash tests: 1995, Pedestrian safety: 2008, Hybrid and Electric safety: 2010	Will amend current United Nations Regulation and United Nations GTR on head restraints to introduce new provisions to reduce whiplash injuries.	WP.29	2013	Number of CPs applying the United Nations Regulation.
	Adopted a new UN Regulation on Child Restraint Systems on 15 November 2012 introducing new provisions on lateral impact and anti-rotation movements.	Will extend the scope of this regulation to non-integral Child Restraint Systems ("Universal Booster" or "Specific to vehicle Booster").	WP.29	2014	Number of CPs applying the new United Nations Regulation.
	Adopted on 27 June 2013 new UN GTR on safety of hybrid/hydrogen vehicles.	Will amend current UN GTR to address the performance requirements of containers of any kind (i.e. liquefied hydrogen, cryo-compressed hydrogen (CCH ₂)) and harmonized types of crash tests (rear, front and lateral). Will draft a corresponding UN Regulation.	WP.29	2014	Number of CPs applying the new United Nations Regulation.
		Will develop amendments to the United Nations Regulation on frontal collision with particular attention on protecting older occupants, female occupants and also focus on optimizing vehicles' structural interaction to improve self-protection	WP.29	2014	Still pending endorsement of this activity of GRSP and WP.29 – Amendments adopted.

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
		and partner protection.			
	[Adopted a new UN GTR on Pole Side impact]	Will establish new UN Regulation on: Pole side impact (2014-2015), Harmonization of dummies (2014), Crash compatibility (2015).	WP.29	2012–2015	Number of CPs applying the United Nations Regulations and UN GTR.
	Article I. Adopted in March 2013 the mandatory fitment of Advanced Emergency Braking System for Coaches and Trucks	Will continue to update the UN Regulations to the technical progress	WP.29	2012-2013	Number of CPs applying the United Nations Regulations
	Article II. Adopted in June 2013 the mandatory fitment of AEBS for mini buses and delivery vans	Will continue to update the UN Regulations to the technical progress, a review clause is added into the UN Regulation	WP.29	2013-2020	Number of CPs applying the United Nations Regulations
Quiet Road Transport Vehicles (QRTV)	Article III. Drafted a first set of guidelines to be adopted on technical aspects QRTV of (inserted into the R.E.3).	Will adopt new United Nations GTR to ensure electric and hybrid vehicles audibility.	WP.29	2012–2013	Number of countries applying the United Nations Regulation.

<i>Areas</i>	<i>UNECE past and present actions</i>	<i>UNECE future actions</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Performance indicators</i>
Objective 5: Make Technologies Work for Safer Mobility					
Innovation – ITS	Developed an ITS Strategy (Road Map).	Will promote ITS solutions to increase Road Safety	Secretariat, WP.1, SC.1, WP.5, WP.15, WP.24, WP.29	2011–2020	Published ITS Strategy Package: Background Paper, Strategic Note, Road Map. The ITS Road Map is implemented.
-	Updated existing regulations and create new ones to boost ITS solutions for Vehicle Safety.	Will conduct capacity-building workshops.	WP.29	2011–2020	Number of capacity-building workshops conducted.
-	Addressed issues related to ADAS systems through cooperation of WP.1 and WP.29.	Will conduct workshops to address issues and will make recommendations.	WP.1, WP.29	2011–2015	Amendment to 1968 Convention on Road Traffic.