



PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement

by

Mr. Christian Friis Bach

United Nations Under-Secretary-General

Executive Secretary

of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

at

**Ensuring Better Air Quality and Reduced Climate Emissions through Cleaner Used
Vehicles**

20 February 2017

10:00 a.m.

Salle XII

Palais des Nations

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Colleagues,

- Transport is key to provide access to work, health, education and other public services. It also provides access to markets and supply chains for business. As such it is essential for achieving social progress including poverty alleviation and, ultimately, sustainable development.
 - At the same time, transport is currently highly dependent on oil: for example, 95 per cent of all kilometers travelled (both passenger and freight) in the European Union (EU) are powered by oil derived fuels. This dependency has two critically important negative impacts:
 - Air pollution which place significant burdens on human health and the environment.
 - Climate change: Currently about one quarter of all energy related CO₂ emissions originate from transport. And it is estimated that this will increase to one-third by 2050, growing faster than any other sector.
 - The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and its subsidiary body, the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) have done extensive work on technologies reducing the harmful effects of both diesel and petrol engines. The Euro VI (heavy-duty) limits for particulate matter are 95 per cent more stringent than those of Euro I. Similar achievements have been reached in relation to petrol engines where a reduction of gaseous emissions levels has been more than 90 per cent since the beginning of the UNECE regulatory work in this area. The same emission levels apply to vehicles powered by gaseous fuelled engines.
 - But not only new vehicles are covered by our Vehicle Conventions. We apply similar stringent requirements to vehicles in use too, namely via the regime of Periodic Technical Inspections under the 1997 Agreement. The Rule No. 1 under this Agreement is dedicated to the control of the environmental behavior of vehicles on our roads.
 - Our partner, UN Environment (UNEP), is very active in this area too, by supporting a shift to cleaner and more efficient vehicles. Let me name just a few examples:
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- the Global Fuel Economy Initiative,
 - eMob – promoting electric mobility, and
 - the Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) supporting countries in introducing cleaner vehicles standards, which includes introducing policies to promote the import of cleaner used vehicles.
 - As I have said before, mobility is needed to gain access to all the basic elements for our life, being it access to education, being it access to medical treatment, being it access to market for purchasing the basic elements to survive.
 - All these elements and many more are elements covered by the Agenda 2030 with its defined Sustainable Development Goals. Just let me name a few of them
 - SDG 3 with not only target 3.6 on road safety but also target 3.9 related to air pollution
 - SDG 11 with its target 11.2 on access to safe and affordable transport for all
 - SDG 13 with its target 13.3 on climate change mitigation
 - When we focus on used vehicles and their impact on environment we see the need of urgent action, especially when we look on the situation in low- and middle-income countries. Yes there are a lot of individual activities ongoing but without a common approach at international level we will not have the possibility to gain the most effective solution.
 - Such an international approach needs to cover all the member States not only the countries where these un-clean and sometimes unsafe second hand vehicles are shipped to but also the high-income countries, the countries of origin of these vehicles. There we need solidarity between countries and sharing of the burden as we have to protect our environment. And bad air quality or contaminated water in rivers does not stop at borders. At the end, it will affect all of us.
 - If the high income countries do not take over their part of responsibility, but leave everything to the countries where the used vehicles will end up, these countries will not only suffer from the environmental impact but if they set measures to mitigate this problem at national basis this will be an additional burden to the most vulnerable ones, the citizens of the low income countries!
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I underline the shared responsibility to address emissions from road vehicles and wish you a fruitful discussion on the possible solutions.
