

THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
ACCESSION TO THE UN ECE WP.29 1958 AND 1998 AGREEMENTS

Transmitted by the representative of the Republic of South Africa

Over the past ten years, in one form or other, South Africa has been attending UN/ECE WP.29 meetings, and since 1996, has been participating as an official South African delegation. It is therefore with pride that we can confirm that South Africa became officially a contracting party to both the 1958 and 1998 Agreements on the 17th June 2001. This, we consider to be a unique occasion as it may be the first time that a country has acceded to both Agreements simultaneously.

Most of our domestic standards are based on, or taken directly from the ECE Regulations, therefore it is a natural progression that we will in time bring the level of these requirements into line with the latest series of amendments.

Our homologation process is also not unlike the type approval system of Europe, therefore, by long standing tradition we consider ourselves to be more in line with the procedures of the 1958 Agreement, than perhaps those of other options.

Having given consideration to the 1998 Agreement, South Africa is excited by the challenges of global harmonisation, and the efforts of member countries to expand the membership of WP.29, by building bridges that will encourage all countries to participate in the efforts of consumer protection, through one common forum.

Whilst South Africa is moving forward in matters of road safety and environmental protection, we cannot lose sight of our commitments to the Southern African Developing Community (SADC), and will therefore continue to work with our neighbours in the development of requirements that will improve the quality of life for all people. We believe that there must be affordable transport for all, and we must find ways to address this, whilst not losing sight of our commitment to both environmental protection, and the safety of the road user.

We believe that whilst WP.29 is a technical forum, the developed countries must not lose sight of the fact that those less fortunate have a long way to go to catch up with the high level of sophistication which has been built up over many years, and that within the spirit of the Global Agreement, ways must be found to address the requirements of those who have been, and continue to be economically disadvantaged.

South Africa is totally committed to WP.29, and will now become involved in the work of all GR committees. We are currently selecting suitable people to represent us at these forums; people that we believe will add value to the process of improvement.

We will from time to time report to WP.29 on our progress in the adoption of various regulations, our activities in contributing to the safety of the road user, and environmental developments, including the adoption of exhaust emission regulations.
