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HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT  
HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Third session  
Amsterdam, 22–23 January 2009

**REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND  
ENVIRONMENT ON ITS THIRD SESSION**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment was held on 22 and 23 January 2009 in Amsterdam under the auspices of the Pan-European Programme on Transport, Health and Environment (THE PEP), a joint programme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe). The meeting was hosted by the Government of the Netherlands.

### A. Attendance

2. The Third High-level Meeting was attended by delegates from 36 member States of UNECE and WHO/Europe: Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uzbekistan. Representatives of the European Commission also participated.

3. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented: the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the International Transport Forum (ITF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

4. The following non-governmental organizations were represented: the European Cyclists Federation (ECF), the European Federation for Transport and Environment, the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), the International Association of Public Transport (UITP), the International Road Federation (IRF) and the Kazakh Business Council for Sustainable Development (KBCSD). Two youth representatives from the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) participated.

5. Observers represented the following organizations and private companies: Environment and Health Team (Hulpverlening Gelderland Midden), the Environmental Risk and Health Unit (VITO) of the University of Hasselt Transportation Institute, Greenwheels, Het Nieuwe Rijden, Knoll Kommunikation, the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, OTB Research Institute of Delft University of Technology and Provincie Gelderland, and the online journal *Strategy & Innovation*.

6. A list of participants, meeting documentation, presentations and official statements made available to the secretariat can be found on THE PEP website (<http://www.thepep.org/en/hlm/hl3.htm>).

## **B. Organization of work**

7. The meeting considered and adopted the Amsterdam Declaration available on the above website in English, French and Russian (EUR/09/5086385/5).

8. Two side-events were held. The first was organized by the Pollution Reduction Options Network (PRONET) on the topic, “Environmentally-friendly and health-promoting mobility for all European citizens?” The second was organized by the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) on the topic “Better urban transport for healthy living”. An exhibition featured scientific posters, vehicle technology, brochures, leaflets and publications, as well as selected drawings from a design competition on transport, health and environment carried out at the International School of Geneva (La Chataigneraie), Founex, Switzerland. The drawings were also featured in the main background publications prepared for the meeting.

## **I. OPENING OF THE MEETING, ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

### **A. Election of Officers**

9. The Third High-level Meeting elected Vadim Donchenko (Russian Federation) as its Chairperson. It elected three Co-Chairpersons representing the three sectors: Michèlle Blom, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the Netherlands; Eddy Engelsman, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, the Netherlands; and Hugo von Meijenfeldt, Ministry of Environment, the Netherlands. Clive Needle, Director, EuroHealth Net, served as overall facilitator.

### **B. Welcome addresses**

10. The meeting was opened with welcome addresses by Siebe Riedstra, Director-General, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the Netherlands, Nata Menabde, WHO Deputy Regional Director for Europe, and Paolo Garonna, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECE.

11. Mr. Riedstra stressed the importance, in the light of the global economic crisis and climate change, of holding a high-level meeting comprising the three sectors. He noted the effects of air pollution from transport on human health as well as progress made in the region with respect to lead-free fuels. He stressed that the current economic climate created opportunities for effective cross-sectoral collaboration and for promoting efficient transportation systems with reliable traffic information.

12. Dr. Menabe expressed her gratitude to the organizers for bringing together representatives of the three sectors and sharing their perspectives. She stressed the importance of transport in our daily lives, noting road traffic accidents accounted for the majority of fatalities among youth and that each of us lives nine months less because of air pollution effects on our health.

13. Mr. Garonna expressed his gratitude to the Netherlands for its leadership and vision. He cited THE PEP as a flagship programme of UNECE, noting that its emphasis on urban sustainability supported the notion of cities as centres of culture and vitality, while recognizing the positive contribution of transport.

### **C. Adoption of the agenda**

14. The Chairperson introduced the agenda, which was adopted without modification (ECE/AC.21/2009/1 - EUR/09/5086385/1).

## **II. TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT CHALLENGES FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN REGION**

### **A. Making THE (transport, health and environment) link: transport choices for our health, environment and prosperity**

15. An animated film prepared by the delegation of the Netherlands was shown featuring challenges in sustainable transport in the region.

16. The representative of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine delivered a keynote speech. His speech highlighted common pathways linking transport, climate change and physical inactivity.

17. Two high-level representatives of member States of the Czech Republic and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia provided information on the challenges facing their countries, underlining the impacts on environment and health. A background report prepared by a

consultant and agreed upon by THE PEP Steering Committee served as a basis for discussion (*Transport, Health and Environment: Trends and Developments in the UNECE-WHO Pan-European Region* (1997–2007), ECE/AC.21/3).

## **B. THE PEP: past achievements and a vision for THE future**

18. A panel discussion was held involving chairpersons who had serviced THE PEP Steering Committee since its inception in 2002. The panel considered achievements and a future vision for THE PEP. The panellists included representatives of the following: the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, Belgium; the State Scientific and Research Institute of Road Transport, Russian Federation; the Department for Transport, United Kingdom; the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources, Georgia and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Austria.

19. The chairpersons underlined the need for Governments to renew their support for THE PEP process and to reaffirm the value of establishing networks among key stakeholders to share best practice across the three sectors. A brochure on THE PEP achievements and good practice in sustainable transport in member States served as a basis for discussion (*The Pan-European Programme on Transport, Health and Environment: Evaluation and Progress Made*, ECE/AC.21/2).

## **C. How sustainable is transport in the pan-European region today?**

20. A panel discussion addressed this question, comprised of representatives of government, civil society and the private sector as follows: a youth delegate representing the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE); the Kazakh Business Council for Sustainable Development (KBCSD); the European Federation for Transport and Environment and the European Cyclists Federation (ECF).

# **III. LINKING TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT KNOWLEDGE**

## **A. Lessons learned in transport, health and environment**

21. The Director of the British National Obesity Observatory gave a keynote speech in which he evoked the experiences gained in the seven years since the creation of THE PEP. He emphasized the need for innovative urban actions to reduce emissions, including technical solutions such as hybrid cars and the importance of bringing a health perspective to appraisals of transport infrastructure planning and interventions.

## **B. Working together for sustainable and healthy transport**

22. Delegations shared experiences of good practice and case studies in integrating the three sectors to attain a more sustainable transport system; these highlighted problems encountered and results achieved. A brochure on integrated approaches to policymaking served as a basis for discussion (*Working Together for Sustainable and Healthy Transport: Guidance on Supportive Institutional Conditions for Policy Integration of Transport, Health and Environment*, ECE/AC.21/1).

23. The President of the Federal Public Service Agency on Health, Food and Chain Safety and Environment, Belgium presented the main elements of the above-mentioned brochure (ECE/AC.21/1) published on the basis of earlier work by Belgium and Germany.

24. A representative of the European Commission (Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection) presented the strategy of the European Union regarding the integration of transport, health and environment. This included the development of community actions to combat obesity, to encourage physical activity, to make healthy foods an option for the consumer and to develop the evidence base to support policymaking in these areas. The strategy also included White Papers on sports and on counteracting obesity, guidelines on physical activity, new rules on food labelling, restrictions on advertising to children, as well as the Green Paper *Towards a new culture for urban mobility* with an action paper expected by end-2009.

## **C. Experiences and good practices from the European region**

25. Delegations presented experiences and good practices, including key learning points on previous workshops held under THE PEP on sustainable and healthy urban transport in Cyprus (2003), Moscow (2004), Tbilisi (2006), Telč, Czech Republic (2007) and Chisinau (2008). A representative of the Ministry of Environment of the Czech Republic announced that a subsequent workshop would be held on 24 and 25 September 2009 in Pruhonice (Prague) on the topic of safe and healthy walking and cycling in urban areas.

26. The representative of the Dutch National Institute for Health and Environment (RIVM), presented THE PEP Toolbox. The Toolbox aimed to share best practice in implementing measures for healthy transport. It provided access to tools such as HEAT for cycling and other interactive tools to assess the health and environmental impacts of transport and to evaluate the costs and benefits of transport interventions. Following the meeting, the Toolbox would be

integrated with THE PEP Clearing House to allow electronic access to case studies of good practice and academic research.

27. A representative of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management presented a project on sensitive areas, carried out in collaboration with Hungary and Slovakia. The project elaborated five modules and implemented them in practice, focusing on local transport and small business. A brochure on the project was available in English, German, Hungarian and Slovak.

28. A representative of the German Ministry of the Environment and Conservation, Agriculture and Consumer Protection of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia presented the transport-related aspects of the work conducted under PRONET. PRONET had developed case studies from regional experiences in implementing sustainable transport with a focus on air pollution. It also supported THE PEP work on guidance and practical approaches to the economic valuation of transport-related health effects.

29. The Director of the Portuguese Environment Agency reported on a sustainable mobility project that included three pillars: (a) the Steering Committee on Environmental Transport; (b) a network of 15 resource centres that aim to provide support to municipalities; and (c) the municipalities themselves.

30. A representative of the Swiss Federal Office of Transport, Federal Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication presented evidence of intersectoral cooperation in Switzerland. This cooperation amounted to over 20 years' experience in environmental impact assessments, for example on Alpine tunnels, and had as its objective the reduction of heavy goods transport.

31. A representative of Greece noted the importance of encouraging changes in driving behaviour, such as eco-driving techniques.

#### **D. Introduction to the Amsterdam Declaration**

32. The Chairman introduced the draft Amsterdam Declaration: Making THE (transport, health and environment) link: transport choices for our health, environment and prosperity (EUR/09/5086385/5). The draft Declaration had been prepared for adoption by the Third High-Level Meeting by the Extended Bureau of the Steering Committee in consultation with member States. A debate from the floor followed, covering strategies, policies and measures to attain the proposed pan-European goals.



#### **IV. TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY CHOICES**

33. Statements from representatives of Austria and the Republic of Moldova were delivered on the subject of policy choices in transport, health and environment and the future of THE PEP. Representatives of Bulgaria, Georgia and the Netherlands participated in the debate that followed addressing the question, “How do we make the right policy choices?”

#### **V. MAKING THE FUTURE**

34. A debate with the representative of was held reflecting key international perspectives on the question, “How can we best ensure synergy on an international, national and subnational level to promote integration of transport, health and environment?” Participants in the debate included representatives of the following: United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) Regional Office for Europe; European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); International Transport Forum (ITF); International Road federation (IRF); International Organisation of Public Transport (UITP); and Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL).

35. Delegations discussed the way forward for THE PEP, including how to ensure engaged participation and sufficient support for its future activities.

#### **VI. AMSTERDAM DECLARATION**

36. The Third High-level Meeting considered and adopted the Amsterdam Declaration (EUR/09/5086385/5). The Declaration included a preamble and four priority goals: (a) to contribute to sustainable economic development and stimulate job creation through investment in environment- and health-friendly transport; (b) to manage sustainable mobility and promote a more efficient transport system; (c) to reduce emissions of transport-related greenhouse gases, air pollutants and noise; and (d) to promote policies and actions conducive to healthy and safe modes of transport.

37. The Declaration also included elements for a future workplan covering the period 2009–2014, mechanisms for the future implementation of THE PEP at national and international level, and guidance on THE PEP institutional framework. A detailed list of project proposals to implement the workplan would be submitted to THE PEP Steering Committee for its consideration at its seventh meeting, to be held on 22 and 23 October 2009 in Geneva.

#### **VII. CONCLUSIONS AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

38. Concluding remarks were made by: Hugo von Meijenfeldt, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Environment, the Netherlands; Christina von Schweinichen, Deputy Director, Environment, Housing and Land Management Division, UNECE; Martin Magold, Chief, Sustainable Transport Section, Transport Division, UNECE; and Francesca Racioppi, Acting Head of Office, European Centre for Environment and Health, WHO/Europe.

## Annex I

### AMSTERDAM DECLARATION

#### **Making THE Link: Transport choices for our health, environment and prosperity**

**We, the Ministers and representatives of Member States** of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in the European Region, attending the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment on 22 and 23 January 2009 in Amsterdam,

Aware of the challenges posed by the current global financial crisis that require a proactive and integrated policy approach, and recognizing the significant role of investment in environment- and health-friendly transport in the creation of new economic and employment opportunities,

Underlining the fact that investment in environment- and health-friendly transport helps to reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, thereby promoting healthier societies and contributing to the achievement of global commitments to mitigate the negative effects of climate change,

Welcoming the progress that has been achieved in the European Region on the integration of transport, health and environment policies, in particular through **the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)**, launched in 2002 on the basis of the UNECE Vienna Declaration on Transport and Environment (1997) and the WHO London Charter on Transport, Environment and Health (1999), and its activities at international level, as well as through initiatives of Member States.

#### **THE PEP Priority Goals**

1. **Agree** to intensify our work aimed at achieving safe, efficient, environment- and health-friendly transport in order to reverse unsustainable trends and to contribute to meeting global responsibilities;
2. **Convinced** that THE PEP, with its integrated policy approach, should be used as an instrument to stimulate investment in energy-efficient and low-emission vehicles and transport technologies, environment- and health-friendly modes of transport and infrastructure, such as for public transport, cycling and walking, as well as accessibility and mobility management;
3. **Commit** ourselves to adopting integrated policies towards the attainment of four pan-European priority goals:

**Priority Goal 1: to contribute to sustainable economic development and stimulate job creation through investment in environment- and health-friendly transport**

by directing investment towards the development of transport infrastructure that promotes safety, environment and health and has the highest job creation potential, including rail and light rail; clean and efficient public transport, efficient intermodal connections; safety measures in road transport; and infrastructure for active and environmentally friendly transport.

**Priority Goal 2: to manage sustainable mobility and promote a more efficient transport system**

by promoting mobility management schemes for businesses, schools, leisure activities, communities and cities, raising awareness of mobility choices by improving the coordination between land use and transport planning and promoting the use of information technology.

**Priority Goal 3: to reduce emissions of transport-related greenhouse gases, air pollutants and noise**

by supporting a shift in the vehicle fleet towards zero- or low-emission vehicles and fuels based on renewable energy; promoting a shift towards clean transport modes and fostering electric mobility as well as eco-driving.

**Priority Goal 4: to promote policies and actions conducive to healthy and safe modes of transport**

by designing and modernizing urban areas and human settlements to improve the conditions for safe and physically active mobility, including infrastructure for walking and cycling, and efficient and accessible public transport, particularly focused on vulnerable groups such as children and persons with reduced mobility.

**Making THE Link: THE PEP work plan (2009-2014)**

4. **UNDERTAKE** to strengthen THE PEP as an inspiring, innovative and effective platform, building bridges that make the Transport, Health and Environment Link (THE Link), in particular by:

- (a) integrating policies on transport, health and environment;
- (b) exchanging knowledge on research, policies and good practices;
- (c) setting the global agenda in supporting environment- and health-friendly transport and achievement of THE PEP priority goals;
- (d) supporting the implementation of local actions on transport choices for our health, environment and prosperity;
- (e) strengthening cooperation within and among countries, including among local levels of government, research institutes, nongovernmental organizations, international financial

institutions and other stakeholders, taking particular account of the needs of interested countries in eastern Europe, the Caucasus, central Asia and south-eastern Europe.

5. **Commit** ourselves to work towards achievement of THE PEP priority goals using THE PEP work plan (2009–2014) (see Annex), focusing on the following measures:
- (a) developing a platform to attract and support investment in environment- and health-friendly transport;
  - (b) building capacity for the integration of transport, health and environment policy;
  - (c) sharing and disseminating good practice, in line with THE PEP priority goals;
  - (d) facilitating the implementation of actions at local, national and regional levels;
  - (e) supporting international advocacy and cooperation projects to promote best practice in sustainable urban transport;
  - (f) enhancing monitoring and reporting mechanisms for implementation of the THE PEP priority goals and work plan.

### **THE PEP Implementation Mechanisms**

6. **Agree** to achieve THE PEP priority goals by means of national transport, health and environment action plans (NTHEAPs):

NTHEAPs could be developed and implemented by making use of existing mechanisms, plans and programmes in the field of transport, health and environment or by building on national processes across the three sectors; countries should develop initiatives and strategies that best suit the needs of their citizens and the capabilities of their administrations, taking account of different socioeconomic situations; in doing so, they should address transport-related health and environmental impacts and increase transport efficiency, as well as set targets and timetables for implementation; THE PEP Steering Committee, in cooperation with THE PEP secretariat, should develop guidance to assist in the formulation of NTHEAPs.

7. **Also agree** to facilitate communication and exchange of experiences among interested countries, by launching THE PEP “relay race” (or “*staffette*”), as a voluntary mechanism:

the “relay race” will foster the commitment of countries and stimulate action, political leadership and international cooperation; participating countries will demonstrate how to put THE PEP into practice through the implementation of integrated policies and projects at national and local levels and will share successful experiences with participating countries through collaboration and joint activities; interested countries, in cooperation with THE PEP secretariat, should develop practical arrangements for the organization of a first “relay race”.

8. **Decide** to further strengthen the effectiveness of THE PEP by establishing THE PEP Partnership to support the implementation of THE PEP work plan. This Partnership will make expertise available to countries for:

- (a) the development and implementation of NTHEAPs;

- (b) the strengthening of capacity for the integration of transport, health and environment policies;
- (c) the exchange of knowledge and expertise between countries.

Specific proposals for the establishment and functioning of THE PEP Partnership will be prepared by interested countries and other stakeholders in cooperation with THE PEP secretariat.

### **THE PEP Institutional Framework**

9. **Underline** the need to strengthen collaboration between THE PEP and the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) in order to stimulate synergies between these international processes, in particular by contributing to the achievement of the CEHAPE regional priority goals;

10. **Undertake** to allocate the necessary financial and/or in-kind resources to ensure implementation of THE PEP work plan and its implementation mechanisms through a system of voluntary contributions, thus guaranteeing the sustainability of the mandated activities; THE PEP Steering Committee, in cooperation with THE PEP secretariat, should prepare appropriate proposals;

11. **Confirm** the role and mandate of THE PEP Steering Committee and its Bureau, and request them to develop proposals and make necessary arrangements to refine and adjust THE PEP work plan in line with newly arising needs and opportunities, as well as to establish the newly agreed implementation mechanisms (i.e., NTHEAPS, THE PEP Partnership and the "relay race");

12. **Request** UNECE and the WHO Regional Office for Europe to continue to provide secretariat services to THE PEP and **commit ourselves** to continue supporting them in this endeavour;

13. **Agree** to monitor, through the Steering Committee at its annual sessions, progress in the implementation of THE PEP work plan, as well as of the newly established implementation mechanisms described above;

14. **Recognize** that the question of a Framework Convention on Transport, Environment and Health has not yet been resolved and that further exploratory work should be considered, for example, in the light of newly emerging issues;

15. **Decide** to convene a fourth high-level meeting no later than 2014, to review and report on progress achieved in the implementation of THE PEP work plan, to renew or modify THE PEP priority goals and to plan future activities.

## **Annex II**

### **THE PEP work plan (2009–2014) to support national action and international cooperation**

- 1. Develop a platform to attract and support investments in environment- and health-friendly transport**
  - (a) develop and disseminate the evidence to demonstrate the economic soundness of investments in environment- and health-friendly transport;
  - (b) carry out advocacy activities with the broader community of stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations;
  - (c) establish partnerships with international financial institutions towards the development of agreed criteria to guide investments in environment- and health-friendly transport.
  
- 2. Build capacity for better integration of transport, health and environment policy**
  - (a) support twinning programmes between administrations in countries in western and eastern Europe, the Caucasus, central Asia and south-eastern Europe in transport, health and environment, including the exchange of experts and civil servants, to provide opportunities for cross-fertilization and capacity-building;
  - (b) support the development of training packages and capacity-building events (e.g. summer schools, grants, scholarships, distance learning systems) aimed at civil servants and experts from different sectors and countries, to provide opportunities to develop a common understanding of challenges, solutions, and opportunities and means for policy integration and intersectoral collaboration.
  
- 3. Share and disseminate good practice in environment- and health-friendly transport**
  - (a) maintain, further develop and disseminate THE PEP Clearing House and THE PEP Toolbox;
  - (b) organize workshops for information sharing and the exchange of good practice on sustainable urban transport, drawing lessons from the outcomes of the Cyprus, Moscow, Tbilisi, Telč and Chisinau workshops;
  - (c) support the development of better information systems to produce improved transport, health and environment statistics for the Region, including on road traffic accidents, urban air quality, noise-emission and exposure data, and spatial information on transport and land-use planning.
  
- 4. Facilitate the implementation of activities at local, national and regional levels**

- (a) develop, refine and assist in the implementation of tools to support environment and health impact assessments of transport policies, and quantify the economic costs of transport-related health effects;
- (b) provide technical assistance to interested countries for the development and/or adaptation and implementation of national transport, health and environment action plans;
- (c) provide technical assistance to interested countries with economies in transition in eastern Europe, the Caucasus, central Asia and south-eastern Europe in developing projects and identifying funding opportunities in order to attain more environment- and health-friendly and safer transport systems.

**5. Support international advocacy and cooperation projects to promote best practice and an integrated approach to policy-making in transport, health and environment**

- (a) explore the potential to use THE PEP as a model for other regions on sharing experience and good practice, when requested, possibly beginning with urban Asia, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, Bangkok and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, focusing on sustainable urban transport, with particular attention on urban air quality, noise, congestion and accidents;
- (b) strengthen collaboration with the European Commission, international financial institutions, and other international fora, as well as nongovernmental organizations and the private sector, towards achieving THE PEP priority goals;
- (c) further strengthen collaboration with other pan-European processes relevant to THE PEP and actively contribute to the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe and its implementation.

**6. Enhance monitoring and reporting mechanisms for implementation**

- (a) support the development of a mechanism for monitoring of and reporting on progress achieved at national and international levels in implementing the commitments made at the Third High-level Meeting;
- (b) develop a mechanism to allow countries to monitor and report on the implementation of THE PEP work plan;
- (c) monitor trends and developments on pan-European and global levels, in particular by investigating emerging issues in transport, health and environment.

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