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Item 4

Informal Document 2022/14

## **Inland Transport Committee Report**

## **Report by the Chair of the Inland Transport Committee**

### **I. Achievements over the past twelve months**

#### **A. Introduction**

1. The former Chair of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC), Mr Kristof Schockaert (Belgium), last reported to the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) on 17 May 2021 following the eighty-third annual session of ITC (Geneva, 23-26 February 2021) (full report) and on 5 March 2021 on ITC business-critical decisions requiring EXCOM approval, following the eighty-third annual session of ITC (23-26 February 2021).

2. The period since the last Chair's full report to EXCOM in May 2021, was marked by historic achievements (see section on ECOSOC endorsement of revised ITC TOR) and several challenges due to the continued disruptive impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and a progressive return to normal operations based on several innovations and accomplishments in support of member States efforts to achieve swift and sustained recovery. This report will offer a succinct account of the above developments.

3. Faced with an unprecedented situation as of March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the liquidity crisis and the Strategic Heritage Plan (SHP), ECE continued to limit meeting activities especially in the first half of 2021. These measures are outlined in ECE/TRANS/2022/4. This had a negative impact on the transport subprogramme, which heavily relies on meetings and documents to facilitate intergovernmental negotiations and perform its regulatory functions through the implementation of its Programme of Work. As a result, although the subprogramme delivered in full its planned meetings, including in informal setting, only 69 per cent of those meetings were implemented with full interpretation services in 2021. To achieve this level of implementation, staff of the Sustainable Transport Division, extraordinarily, supported with technical moderation functions meetings with interpretation in the final 4 months of 2021. These impacts are described in more detail in ECE/TRANS/2022/4.

4. Despite these difficulties, in 2021, the secretariat serviced 20 Working Parties, 11 Administrative Committees and nine Groups of Experts for amending, acceding to and implementing the existing 59 UN conventions/agreements on inland transport administered by ECE, and forging new conventions/agreements, protocols and resolutions. The conventions/agreements cover safety, vehicle regulations, transport of dangerous goods and perishable foodstuffs, environmental performance, cross-border facilitation as well as transboundary infrastructure networks to provide regulatory support for countries to implement SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 16.

5. To achieve that, the ITC Bureau with the support of the secretariat continued to provide intersessional support that was fully aligned with the "business continuity" adjustment measures, including special procedures, that were put in place by EXCOM, in order to ensure that the enduring work of the Committee continues to positively impact the daily lives of people around the world.

#### **B. 84<sup>th</sup> annual session of the Inland Transport Committee that marked its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

6. The eighty-fourth session of ITC (hybrid, 22-25 February 2022) marked its seventy-fifth Anniversary and was opened with the Anniversary Ministerial on "Seventy-five years of ITC: connecting countries and driving sustainable mobility". This Ministerial Segment was opened by H.E. Mr. Georges Gilkinet, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mobility of Belgium (ITC Chairing country) and saw the participation of Transport ministers from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. Keynote speeches by H.E.

Ms. Simonetta Sommaruga, former President of the Swiss Confederation and Head (Minister), Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication of Switzerland (hosting country); H.E. Mr. Mohammed Abdeljalil, Minister of transport and logistics of Morocco; and H.E. Mr. Juan Edghill, Minister of Public Infrastructure of the Republic of Guyana. There were 550 participants from more 92 countries, including 49 non-ECE ones, and the heads and high-level representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as well as key inland transport stakeholders. The main highlights of the High-level Policy Segment (see ECE/TRANS/316/Add.1, Annex IV) included:

(a) The adoption at the end of the Ministerial Segment of the ITC Ministerial Resolution, “Ushering in a decade of delivery for sustainable inland transport and sustainable development.” by Ministers and Heads of Delegations of countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Middle East (ECE/TRANS/316, Annexes I and II).

(b) The official launch of the Anniversary publication “75 Years of Inland Transport Committee – 75 Documents that Changed the World of Transport”.

(c) The Global Road Safety Film Festival organized on 21 and 22 February 2022 in conjunction with the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ITC by the Laser International Foundation, together with the United Nations Road Safety Fund and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE/TRANS/316/Add.1, Annex V).

(d) A high-level side event on Used Cars for Africa organized on 21 February 2022 by UNECE and UNEP (ECE/TRANS/316/Add.1, Annex VI).

(e) A high-level side event on Automation, Connectivity and E-mobility organized on 23 February 2022 by UNECE together with Austria (ECE/TRANS/316/Add.1, Annex VII).

(f) A high-level side event Euro-Asian transport links organized on 24 February 2022 by UNECE together with the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan (ECE/TRANS/316/Add.1, Annex VIII).

(g) A high-level ITC Roundtable on “On the road to sustained and full recovery: post-Covid-19 initiative for inland transport and the role of the Committee” organized on 25 February 2022 (ECE/TRANS/316/Add.1, Annex X).

7. The Committee adopted the main decisions (as contained in ECE/TRANS/316 and Informal document ITC (2022) No.5/Rev. 5). The most relevant for EXCOM are:

(a) Decision 4 welcoming the progress achieved during 2021 by the ITC Working Parties in implementing the ITC Strategy until 2030, as well as inviting Working Parties to seize opportunities and address risks as relevant in the development of the legal instruments under the purview of ITC.

(b) Decision 11 expressing appreciation to the secretariat for its extraordinary efforts and achievements in adjusting the Committee’s methods of work to ensure business continuity and for the provision of unplanned critical services to its core constituents.

(d) Decision 12 requesting the ITC Chair to convey in his report to EXCOM, the urgency and high stakes of the return to the normal provision of services.

(e) Decisions 14-16 adopting the revised Terms of Reference of WP.6, WP.24 and SC.3 respectively.

(f) Decisions 17 and 18 approving the establishment of two new Groups of Experts.

(g) Decision 20 adopting the draft programme of work of the Transport Subprogramme for 2022.

(h) Decision 25 adjourning agenda items 7 and 8 on elections and requesting the secretariat to consult with member States to find consensus and organize a special session of the Committee for elections as soon as possible.

(i) Decisions 8-10, on Road Safety, reiterating the Committee's concern for the limited progress globally in meeting the Sustainable Development Goal targets on road safety as well as those of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety and fully supporting an enhanced role for ECE's comprehensive contribution to the global efforts, with the adoption of the "ITC Recommendations for Enhancing National Road Safety Systems", as well as the support of the United Nations Road Safety Fund and the Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety.

(j) Decision 34 recognizing the urgency of stronger actions against climate change and requesting the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to prepare a comprehensive paper with climate change-related activities and action-oriented options for the Committee and Working Parties for consideration at the Committee's eighty-fifth plenary session.

(k) Decision 51 welcoming the interest of the Government of Brazil to become a full WP.1 participant with voting rights and agreeing to its request.

## **C. Highlights of achievements in 2021 and 2022**

### **1. ECOSOC endorsement of the Revised Terms of Inland Transport Committee**

8. The draft resolution of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) entitled "Revised terms of reference of the Inland Transport Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe", (document E/2022/L.4) was adopted on Wednesday, 16 February 2022 as ECOSOC resolution 2022/2. The revised ITC Terms of Reference (TOR) can be found in ECE/TRANS/316/Add.2 (in A/C/E/F/R/S).

9. With the endorsement of its revised TOR by ECOSOC, ITC is recognized as a United Nations centre providing a comprehensive platform for consideration of all aspects of inland transport development and cooperation, with special attention to interregional and intraregional regulatory governance through the United Nations transport conventions and other means.

10. Under the revised TOR, ITC membership includes:

- States members of the Economic Commission for Europe, which participate in the Committee sessions as full members with voting rights.
- Non-member States, which have the right to participate as full members in the segments of the Committee session that deal with legal instruments to which they are contracting parties and remain in a consultative capacity in other parts.

11. Following the entry into force of the revised ITC TOR on 16 February 2022, the ITC Rules of Procedure, as contained in ECE/TRANS/294, annex III, also entered into force.

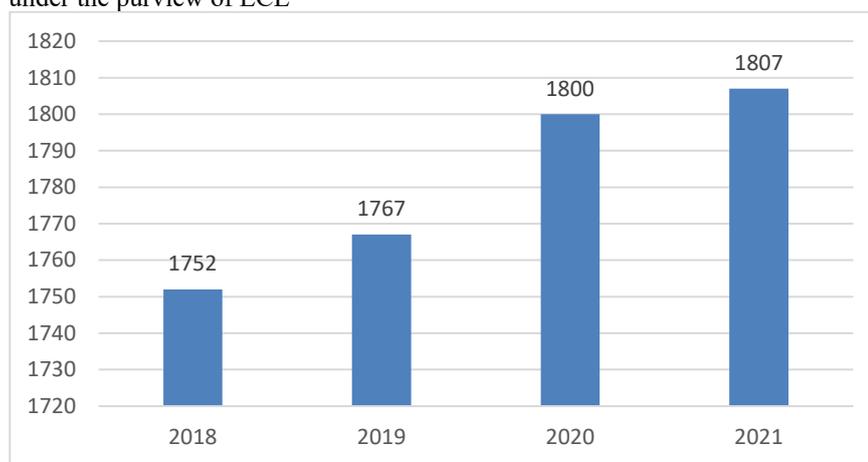
12. The Chair and the Committee thanked all involved delegations, as well as the Chair of the Commission, Executive Secretary and Chef de Cabinet for their tireless efforts that helped successfully conclude the endorsement of the revised Terms of Reference of ITC by ECOSOC in a timely way that coincided with the Committee's seventy-fifth anniversary.

## 2. Regulatory governance and new accessions

13. The number of contracting parties increased to 1,807 with seven new contracting parties to 18 legal instruments in 2021<sup>1</sup> (ECE/TRANS/2022/12). Despite the positive trend, as can be seen in figure 2 below, the rate of accessions remained low compared to the need for a universally harmonized inland transport system.

14. Ethiopia became the 151<sup>st</sup> UN Member State to accede under at least one of the legal instruments under the purview of ITC.

Figure 1: Number of Contracting Parties to the United Nations Inland Transport Conventions under the purview of ECE



15. The most important regulatory achievements are listed below. For a full report, please see the 2021 annual report of the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/2022/27).

### *Border Crossing Facilitation*

16. In the field of border crossing facilitation, the main event of 2021 was, undoubtedly, the entry into force of a package of amendment proposals, introducing the computerized TIR procedure, known as the eTIR procedure, in the legal text of the TIR Convention, 1975 and, in particular new Annex 11. It happened on 25 May 2021. The eTIR procedure further secures the TIR system, making it more efficient, competitive and allowing paperless and contactless border crossing operations, which are more important than ever since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. By keeping drivers and customs officers safe, eTIR is an important tool to ensure that borders remain open.

17. At its 158th session (October 2021), WP.30 welcomed a complete set of conceptual, functional and technical eTIR specifications, version 4.3. WP.30 decided to transmit the eTIR specifications to the, newly established, Technical Implementation Body (TIB) and, ultimately, the Administrative Committee for the TIR Convention (AC.2) for adoption by the countries bound by Annex 11.

18. Another important development for the future of the TIR Convention was the entry into force, on 1 June 2021, of an amendment to Annex 6 of the Convention, introducing new Explanatory Note 0.49. This Explanatory Note grants operators greater facilities within the context of the TIR Convention, such as, but not limited to, the possibility to become

<sup>1</sup> **Ethiopia** (1968 Convention on Road Traffic); **Estonia** (1949 Convention on Road Traffic); **Georgia** (1993 Protocol amending ADR); **Iran (Islamic Republic of)** (ATP Agreement); **Kyrgyzstan** (1970 AETR Agreement); **Turkmenistan 2 legal instruments** (1972 Customs Convention on Containers; 1994 Convention on Customs Treatment of Pool Containers Used in International Transport).

authorized consignee or consignor, under the application of a set of strict requirements, prescribed the competent authorities.

### *Vehicle Regulations*

19. Following the establishment of the Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles (GRVA), WP.29 and its subsidiary bodies worked according to the Framework Document on Automated/Autonomous Vehicles (ECE/TRANS/WP.29/2019/34/Rev.2). This document, which was endorsed by ITC at its eighty-second session, has guided the work on automated vehicles. This work, led by Co-Chairs from America, Asia and Europe is aimed to be suitable for the countries under the regime of type approval and the countries under the regime of self-certification. These activities form a novel initiative aimed at harmonizing globally automated vehicles regulations and creating a more productive environment for innovation. In 2021, the highlights produced under the Framework Document include the first iteration of the New Assessment/Test Method for Automated Driving (NATM) – Master Document as well as the draft recommendations for automotive cyber security and software update.

20. These highlights noted above follow the achievements in 2020 with the adoption of a first set of UN Regulations for automated vehicles which entered into force on 22 January 2021. These new UN Regulations not only covered the UN Regulation No. 157 on Automated Lane Keeping System (ALKS) – the first level 3 vehicle automation application, with a narrow Operational Design Domain, but also forward-looking UN Regulations Nos. 155 and 156 on Cyber Security and on Over the Air Software Updates respectively. UN Regulation No. 157 was amended since its adoption to include provisions for the approval of heavy vehicles equipped with ALKS. Further developments are in discussion to increase the maximal speed of operation as well as the inclusion of lane change provisions.

21. Two new UN Regulations entered into force in 2021 aiming at the protection of vulnerable road users:

(a) UN Regulation No. 158 on devices for Reversing Motion and motor vehicles with regard to the driver's awareness of vulnerable road users behind vehicles; and,

(b) UN Regulation No. 159 on the Moving Off Information System for the Detection of Pedestrians and Cyclists.

22. WP. 29 adopted at the March 2021 session the following four new UN Regulations, which; entered into force on 30 September 2021:

(a) UN Regulation No. 160 on Event Data Recorder.

(b) UN Regulation No. 161 on Devices against Unauthorized Use.

(c) UN Regulation No. 162 on Immobilizers; and,

(d) UN Regulation No. 163 on Vehicle Alarm Systems.

23. Existing UN Regulations were updated by 134 amendments, which adapt the regulations to the most recent technological innovations and introduce more stringent limits aimed at increasing both the safety and environmental performance of vehicles.

24. In 2021, WP.29 concluded several years of work on amendments to UN Global Technical Regulations No. 4 (Test procedure for compression-ignition (C.I.) engines and positive-ignition (P.I.) engines fuelled with natural gas (NG) or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) regarding the emission of pollutants (WHDC)) and one Mutual Resolution on Panoramic Sunroof Glazing. These were adopted during 2021. This will adapt the UN GTRs

to the most recent technological innovations and introduce more stringent requirements aimed at increasing both the safety and environmental performance of vehicles.

#### *Transport of Dangerous Goods*

25. In 2021, international legal instruments regulating air, maritime and land transport of dangerous goods that were updated following the transposition of the provisions contained in the Model Regulations (21st revised edition) and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (8th revised edition) prepared by ECE secretariat in 2020 entered into force or may be applied on a voluntary basis as from 1 January 2021. For inland transport, the provisions of the 2021 edition of ADR, RID and ADN which were adopted by the relevant intergovernmental bodies in 2020, ensure alignment with those in the twentieth revised edition of the Model Regulations and entered into force on 1 January 2021. They became mandatory for the international transport of dangerous goods by road, rail and inland waterways between the contracting parties to these agreements (52 for ADR, 45 for RID and 18 for ADN) and for domestic traffic in the territories of all EU Member States

26. The ADN Safety and Administrative Committees adopted, at their thirty-seventh and twenty-fifth sessions in January 2021, respectively, as well as at their thirty-eighth and twenty-sixth sessions in August 2021, respectively, a first set of proposals of amendments for entry into force on 1 January 2023 including amendments intended to harmonize ADN provisions with those of ADR and RID.

27. Following the endorsement by the ECOSOC Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals of the recommendations made by its two sub-committees, the secretariat prepared, for worldwide implementation and use, new consolidated revised editions of the Model Regulations (Rev.22) and the GHS (Rev.9) as well as an amendment to the 7th revised edition of the Manual of Tests and Criteria.

#### *Road Traffic Safety*

28. The Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) adopted an important amendment proposal which, when it enters into force, is expected to facilitate automated driving for contracting parties to the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic.

#### *Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs*

29. The Working Party on Transport of Perishable Foodstuffs (WP.11) supported in 2021 the implementation and updating of the Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used for such Carriage (ATP). The Islamic Republic of Iran acceded to ATP in 2021, bringing the total number of Contracting Parties to 51. WP.11 adopted provisions to define a procedure for the replacement of fluorinated gases for other refrigerants with lower Global Warming Potential (GWP), that might emerge in the near future, facilitating the reduction of emission and combating climate change. In 2021, the ECE secretariat prepared a revised consolidated edition of the ATP agreement, that will enter into force in 2022 to take account of accepted amendments during 2019-2020.

#### *Road Transport*

30. The Working Party on Road Transport (SC.1) decided to establish a formal group of experts on the operationalization of the eCMR procedure for two years. The group will discuss and if possible agree on the requirements of article 5 of the Additional Protocol to CMR including the objective/scope, the high level architecture, and the conceptual specifications for a future environment that would support the conclusion and exchange of electronic consignment notes in accordance with the provisions of CMR and its Additional Protocol. Such work would also include an impact assessment of possible implementation scenarios of a future eCMR environment.

### *Rail Transport*

31. The European Agreement on Main and International Railway Lines (AGC) is being updated to facilitate the use by member States and generate more accessions. A guide has been prepared for member States which will make accession and implementation of the agreement easier.

32. Following the establishment of the Group of Experts on International Railway Passenger Hubs in 2021, experts started work in developing a framework and potential legal agreement on these hubs. The group's aim is to further facilitate access to the railways and shifting long distance passenger journeys from other modes.

33. Significant progress was made in the work of the Trans European Railway Project (TER). The TER developed a strategy for the coming years as well as initiated several key studies aimed at modernizing the activities of the Project through an assessment of technical parameters and the preparation of a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool to support the development of freight flows within the region.

### *Intermodal Transport*

34. The Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) continued its work to update the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) and the Protocol to the AGTC. In its efforts to further strengthen the frameworks for intermodal transport, WP.24 agreed to establish the monitoring mechanism for the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC) lines and related installations vis-à-vis their technical parameters by creating the AGTC inventory in GIS environment. This mechanism should be in place by October 2023 by which time data on the AGTC lines and their existing parameters should be pooled into ECE GIS environment

### *Inland Water Transport*

35. The Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) adopted two amendments:

(a) Amendment No. 4 to the third revision of the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of E Waterway Network (the Blue Book) with the updated information on waterways of Belgium, Czechia, Germany and Slovakia, and

(b) Amendments to the Inventory of most important bottlenecks and missing links in the E Waterway Network (resolution No. 49, revision 2).

Additionally, SC.3 and its subsidiary bodies in 2021 delivered the following outputs:

(a) The adoption of the sixth revision of the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI) as resolution No. 102.

(b) As a part of its work on ensuring safety of inland navigation SC.3 adopted amendment No. 3 to the Recommendations on Harmonized Europe-Wide Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels (Resolution No. 61, revision 2), which updates to appendix 1, List of European inland waterways divided geographically into zones 1, 2 and 3 and other modifications, as its resolution No. 103.

(c) In order to reduce and prevent pollution from inland vessels, SC.3 adopted amendment No. 1 to the list of reception facilities for transfer of waste generated on board vessels on European inland waterways (appendix to the annex to resolution No. 21, revision 2).

### 3. Policy dialogue, capacity building and analytical activities

#### *Road Safety*

36. Despite strong and consistent efforts by Member States, the international community was not able to achieve by 2020 the target 3.6 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals on road safety to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.

37. The Inland Transport Committee at its eighty-fourth session (22-25 February 2022) reiterated its concern for the limited progress globally, welcomed the launch in 2021 of the “Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030” (Global Plan) and expressed its satisfaction for the seamless integration in the Global Plan of the core United Nations Road Safety Conventions under the purview of the Committee, as well as the “ITC Recommendations for Enhancing National Road Safety Systems” (ITC Recommendations). In line with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 74/299 on “Improving global road safety” ECE partnered with WHO and its sister United Nations Regional Commissions to develop the Global Plan.

38. Furthermore, noting the completion of the ECE Road Safety Action Plan in 2020, following the end of the first Decade of Action for Road Safety, the Committee requested the secretariat to develop a revised ECE Road Safety Action Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, for consideration and possible adoption by the Committee at its eighty-fifth session.

#### *THE PEP*

39. The fifth High-level meeting on Transport, Health and Environment was held 17-19 May 2021. It brought together over 800 participants and 46 Ministers and Deputy-Ministers to agree on how member States can make transport greener and healthier. Member States adopted the Vienna Declaration setting out a clear plan of action on working towards a better transport system for the future including, as annexes, the Cycling Promotion Master Plan, Recommendations for Green and Healthy Sustainable Transport (a report on the task force established in 2020, referred to in the ITC Report of 2020), and Guidelines on Eco-Driving. A number of policy documents and studies were prepared in support of this work.

40. At the subsequent Steering Committee meeting in October 2021, member States started the implementation of the Vienna Declaration with the agreement to start work on the development of a strategy for THE PEP and a review of potential legal instruments to develop for the programme.

#### *Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group on Transport Responses to COVID-19 Crisis*

41. In response to the tasks assigned to WP.5 by ITC at its eighty-second and eighty-third sessions two additional sessions of Informal Multidisciplinary Advisory Group (IMAG) were held in June and September 2021 resulting in a revised and finetuned set of recommendations at three levels:

- (a) At international transport regulatory level
- (b) At the level of existing international legal instruments
- (c) At the level of continued sectoral and inter-sectoral dialogue on pandemic preparedness.

#### *Promoting Euro-Asian connectivity*

42. At the eighty-third session of the Committee (February 2021), the Governments of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Turkey, and Ukraine expressed their interest to provide

feedback on and contribute towards the development of a corridor management mechanism on EATL route 3. Following discussions by WP.5 at its thirty-fourth session, the initiative has in the meantime been launched and a progress reported will be delivered at the next session of the Working Party in September 2022.

43. As part of the WP.5 thirty-fourth session (September 2021), the secretariat organized a discussion on interregional connectivity which benefited from the participation of representatives from all five United Nations regional commissions (ECE, ECA, ESCAP, ECLAC and ESCWA) as well as the following member States of the United Nations: Azerbaijan, Egypt, Turkey, Russian Federation and Paraguay. Presentations focused on national and region-specific efforts to establish stronger interregional transport connectivity.

#### *International Transport Infrastructure Observatory*

44. The International Transport Infrastructure Observatory (ITIO), was launched at the eighty-fourth session of ITC (22-25 February 2022). ITIO, funded through the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in the framework of an extrabudgetary project, offers a multi-stakeholder, web-based platform which hosts data on a large variety of transport infrastructure networks and nodes across different modes including road, rail, inland waterways, ports, airports, intermodal terminals, logistics centres and border crossing points. Core ITIO user categories include Governments, Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), Regional Cooperation Organizations (RCOs), and the broader public.

#### *Urban mobility*

45. On 17 September 2021, a Workshop on Green Urban Transport was organized as part of the WP.5 cluster of work on "sustainable urban mobility, public transport, and cycling". The workshop which was co-organized by the ECE Sustainable Transport Division and the Urban Development, Housing and Land Management section at the ECE secretariat drew upon policy recommendations put forward in the ECE Nexus publication entitled "People-Smart Sustainable Cities – Sustainable and Smart Cities for All Ages" (April 2021).

#### *Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators*

46. The thirty-fourth session of WP.5 in September 2021 featured the launch of a set of 215 Sustainable Inland Transport Connectivity Indicators (SITCIN) which have been developed in the framework of a United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project entitled "Sustainable transport connectivity and implementation of transport related Sustainable Development Goals in selected landlocked and transit/bridging countries" implemented by ECE in cooperation with ESCWA and ECLAC.

47. In order to promote the use of the SITCIN assessment and make it as user-friendly and accessible as possible, an automated SITCIN user and data collection platform as well as an interactive e-learning course were launched during the eighty-fourth session of ITC (22-25 February 2022).

#### *Transport Statistics*

48. A publication, "Road Accident Statistics in Europe and North America" was developed for release in early 2022. The publication compiles data on road traffic accidents across countries in a comparable way. In addition to top-level comparisons, specific inferences can be made due to the data breakdown of number of persons killed by category of road user, type of accident, age group and sex. These data are crucial for understanding road safety trends in countries across the ECE region, and directly measure Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.6.1 on halving the number of road traffic fatalities by 2030.

49. Additionally, with COVID-19 continuing to cause disruption to transport networks, there was member State interest in improving transport statistics in the short-term, rather than

wait for the results of traditional surveys on an annual basis. WP.6 helped countries to integrate new data sources into their statistical production; two webinars were arranged together with the International Transport Forum on new data sources, and the WP.6 session in June covered further examples of how countries can mainstream big data sources into official statistics production, considering issues relating to cost, timeliness, completeness and quality.

#### *Adaptation of transport to climate change*

50. The Group of Experts on Assessment of Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation for Inland Transport supported the organization of an international conference held in Moscow in November 2021 - Assessment of Climate Change Impacts: Deployment of New Technologies and Materials for Maintaining Design Road Characteristics During Adaptation of Transport Infrastructure to Climate Change.

#### *ITC Capacity Development Plan*

51. The ITC Capacity Development Plan was presented and adopted at the 82<sup>nd</sup> session of the Inland Transport Committee. Due to COVID-19, the Sustainable Transport Division was only able to focus on demand driven remote capacity development activities. Activities under the Plan include:

- ECE in cooperation with the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (MoESD) organized a workshop “The 1958 Agreement – a road map for implementation” on United Nations legal instruments and technical regulations on safe vehicles (Tbilisi, Georgia, May 2019).
- ECE in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Transport of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MCT) on capacity development were streamlined on road safety assistance. Activities were initiated with sub-regional capacity building event (Sarajevo, March 2020) organized in cooperation with MCT and UNDP BiH.
- At the request of Turkmenistan, ECE organized two capacity development events (online, April and May 2020) which resulted in successful accession of Turkmenistan to six United Nations legal instruments. In 2021, cooperation continued with Turkmen transport stakeholders on the accession and efficient implementation of two vehicle-related United Nations legal instruments - the 1958 and 1997 Agreement (October 2021), including advice on initial steps in implementation.
- In 2021 Turkmenistan requested capacity development to strengthen capacity of national specialist in road transport and border crossing facilitation. ECE responded with policy dialogue (March 2021) in which the Secretariat presented the aim and benefits of acceding to the eTIR international system, how to efficiently implement agreements and initial steps to join the system. With support of RPTC, Armenia initiated activities to connect national system with eTIR international system in the fourth quarter of 2021.
- The ECE-led Regional Dialogue facilitated an inclusive discussion and coordinated actions and plans on harmonization of international inland transport procedures to enhance connectivity in the SPECA region, especially during COVID-19 pandemics. During 25th (online, October 2020) and 26th (online, November 2021) sessions of the SPECA Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and Connectivity (WG-STTC) ECE advised SPECA countries on transport connectivity, regional cooperation in infrastructure development, and border crossing facilitation.

52. A full report on the implementation of the ITC Capacity Development Plan can be found in ECE/TRANS/2022/2021.

## II. Major activities planned for 2022 and beyond

53. Going forward, during 2022 and beyond, the highest priority for the Committee is the operationalization of the Committee's revised Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure that entered into force on 16 February 2022, the continued implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030 and the continued modernization and geographical expansion of its normative work. Furthermore, the completion of the adjourned agenda items from the Committee's eighty-fourth session is a top priority for the secretariat.

54. At the time of the preparation of this report, the geographical scope of contracting parties to legal instruments under the purview of the Committee includes **151 out of 193 United Nations Member States** (78 per cent) with the accession of Ethiopia in 2021, 2 Permanent Observers (Holy See and Palestine) and one non-State Contracting Party (European Union).

## III. Any proposed change to the subsidiary structure of the Committee

55. EXCOM is invited to endorse the following ITC Decisions requiring its approval on:

(a) The mandate and terms of reference of the Group of Experts on the operationalization of the e-CMR procedure, as contained in Annex IV of document ECE/TRANS/2022/6 and reflected in decisions contained in ECE/TRANS/2022/L.1; for the period 2022–2023;

(b) The mandate and terms of reference of the Group of Experts on cycling infrastructure as contained in Annex V of document ECE/TRANS/2022/6 and reflected in decisions contained in ECE/TRANS/2022/L.1 for the period 2022–2024.

(c) the adoption of the 2022 Programme of Work of the transport subprogramme, as contained in ECE/TRANS/2022/8 and reflected in decisions contained in ECE/TRANS/2022/L.1.

## IV. Follow-up to the 2021 session of the Economic Commission for Europe

56. Through its normative and policy work, as well as its analytical and capacity-building activities, the transport subprogramme contributes considerably to key aspects of the regional and global economy by creating the desired “loop” that optimizes the use of resources in a circular economy. All four pillars of the Inland Transport Committee Strategy until 2030, adopted by the Committee at its eighty-second session (ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2), include elements of the circular economy and help to accelerate the transition to sustainable inland transport.

57. The Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies will continue their normative, capacity building and analytical work on circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources, especially in the areas of vehicles regulations, transport infrastructure, transport of dangerous waste, and developing new practices in a sharing economy.

## V. Intersectoral activities: new activities and/or progress in existing intersectoral activities

58. The 5th Ministerial High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (5HLM) was held virtually on 17 and 18 May 2021, complemented by the Vienna

Declaration. High-level meetings at the ministerial level are normally convened every five years and are the governing body of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), that is administered jointly by the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO-Europe), and the Environment and Sustainable Transport Divisions of ECE.

## VI. Technical cooperation activities

59. In line with the ITC Capacity Development Action Plan (2020-2025), several capacity development activities took place in the SPECA region. Due to COVID-19, the Sustainable Transport Division was able to focus mostly on demand driven remote capacity development activities.

60. For a comprehensive presentation of the subprogramme's broader capacity building and technical assistance work, see the 2021 annual report of the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/2022/17).

## VII. Cooperation with other organizations

61. Since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the secretariat, with the support of the other regional commissions and the private sector, maintains the Observatory on Border Crossing Status due to COVID-19<sup>2</sup>, with information from almost all United Nations Member States, providing daily updates on the status of inland transport border crossings. Updated information is collected and provided for 174 United Nations Member States. The Observatory is officially supported by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), World Customs Organization (WCO), International Transport Forum (ITF), International Road Transport Union (IRU), Federation Internationale de l'automobile (FIA), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and International Union of Railways (UIC). The secretariat, in collaboration with IRU also published a flyer on how TIR keeps borders open in the age of COVID-19<sup>3</sup>.

62. The collaboration between ECE and the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy has created an important new coalition for raising awareness for road safety and also for the role of ITC in this respect. This cooperation has also led to new or reconfirmed partnerships, especially within the United Nations system, the United Nations country teams and UNDP. ECE provides the secretariat for the Special Envoy.

63. In carrying out its activities and the work programme in transport, the Division cooperates and coordinates work with all the key international organizations of inland transport, transport of dangerous goods and vehicle regulations. Among them the most frequent interactions and joint activities throughout the past year were with: European Union, UN Regional Commissions, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), United Nations Office for the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN OHRLLS), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other UN departments and agencies, multilateral development banks, especially the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the International Transport Forum, Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), ICAO,

<sup>2</sup> [unece.org/transport/border-crossing-facilitation](https://unece.org/transport/border-crossing-facilitation)

<sup>3</sup> [unece.org/DAM/trans/bcf/news/documents/TIR\\_during\\_COVID-19.pdf](https://unece.org/DAM/trans/bcf/news/documents/TIR_during_COVID-19.pdf)

IAEA, IMO, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Union of Railways (UIC), IRU, International Road Federation (IRF), River Commissions in Europe (i.e. Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), Danube Commission, International Sava River Basin Commission, Mosel Commission), OTIF, Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), International Rail Transport Committee (CIT), World Road Association (PIARC), World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC), WHO, European River-Sea-Transport Union (ERSTU), European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), European Federation of Inland Ports (EFIP), International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA), European Boating Association (EBA), UNITAR. The Division contributes to the Sustainable Mobility for All (SuM4All) initiative, pursued by the World Bank and several key partners and as a member of the Steering Committee of the initiative.