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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety
Fifty-ninth session
Geneva, 22-24 March 2010
Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

Consistency between the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968, and the vehicle technical regulations

(Note by the secretariat)

At its 58th session in September 2009, the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) discussed at length the issue of ensuring consistency between the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (1968) and the vehicle technical regulations on the basis of the Agreement of 20 March 1958 concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts. WP.1 decided to send a letter signed by the Chairwoman to WP.29 in order to:

(a) Invite WP.29 to examine and draft a list of all technical inconsistencies between the Convention and the technical regulations;

(b) Express its concern, as a group, that the rapid development of new technologies and their fast adoption as regulations may have an impact on the driver being at all time in full control of his vehicle as per articles 8 and 13 of the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968.

The letter is included in the present document as Annex 1.

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REGISTRO UFFICIALE - USCITA
Prot: 0002112-12/01/2010

Rome, 12th January 2010

Dear Mr. Gauvin,

At its 58th session in September 2009, the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) discussed at length the issue of ensuring consistency between the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (1968) and the vehicle technical regulations on the basis of the Agreement of 20 March 1958 concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions of Approval and Reciprocal Recognition of Approval for Motor Vehicle Equipment and Parts.

The WP.1 agreed that an adjustment of the Convention was necessary to reflect the positive effect of technical progress, especially when this progress leads to increased safety. Nevertheless, the WP 1 is also concerned about some important topics, and I have been asked , as the Chairperson, to share with you and implicitly with the Working Party you are chairing the concerns as they came out of the main conclusions of the debate that took place on this subject within the WP.1.

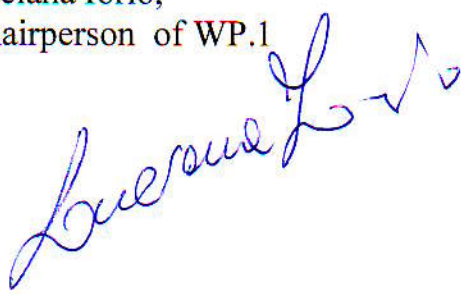
WP.1 is very concerned, as a dedicated road safety group, that the rapid development of new technologies and their fast adoption as regulations may have an impact on "the driver being at all time in full control of his vehicle" as per articles 8 and 13 of the Convention on Road Traffic, 1968.
Indeed, it should also be clearly identified where to set the dividing line between a driver's full control of the vehicle and the moment he relinquishes this control to technical devices. At what point does technology take decisions instead of the driver?

The Working Party 1 was of the opinion that a clear distinction between devices that assist the driver and those acting on his/her behalf should be made , and that in any case the driver should always be able to decide if he/she wants to let the device act.
Such a distinction- in the future amendments- cannot be made by WP.1 alone (lack of technical skills) but together with WP.29.
The same synergy has been asked when speaking about technical inconsistencies between the Convention and the technical regulations: WP.1 could not identify all of them in the entire text of the Convention, because of the same lack of skills.

We therefore invite WP.29 to kindly examine the issue and draft a list of all technical inconsistencies between the Convention and the technical regulations, ideally for consideration by WP.1 at its 60th session (27-30 September 2010).

In conclusions, in order to join the effort and the intent for an updated and effective regulation to make mobility safer , and in consideration that the WP.1 is the competent body to set the principles for road traffic safety, which include minimum compulsory technical conditions for vehicles to be accepted in international traffic, it is a strongly felt wish of Group I chair for the future that WP.29 considers also the expertise and the competence of WP.1 before adopting the new technical regulations

Looking forward to hearing from you, I remain
Yours sincerely
Luciana Iorio,
Chairperson of WP.1



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