

Statement of Mr. Ammar YASSIN, Deputy Minister of Transport, Palestine, at the 176th Session of the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), 13 – 16 November 2018

Status:

- The Palestinian Ministry of Transportation is formally responsible for the regulation of the importation of vehicles and mobile construction machinery and their spare parts
- The Paris Protocol signed in 1994 between the P.L.O. and the Israeli side regulates vehicle importation, allowing Palestinians to import private vehicles of no more than three years old.
- Nowadays, 27 brands of new (zero-kilometer) private vehicles are imported to Palestine
- The same Protocol prohibits importation of used buses, trucks, tractors, allowing only the importation of new (zero kilometers) vehicles of that kind
- Palestine applies European technical standards and specifications. As a result, all vehicles imported into Palestine must comply with all technical and environmental standards applied in the European Union.
- Moreover, Palestine imports 12,000 tons of vehicle spare parts annually. Imported spare parts must be manufactured by ISO - certified manufacturers and they must be tested by international accredited technical institutions.

Efforts:

- The EuroMed Transport Support Project following the request of Palestine is currently reviewing the Palestinian Sectoral Strategic Plan for transport 2017-2022, with focus on road transport of goods and general road transport legislation along the UN and EU respective Regulations and best practices and soon will be in the position to provide recommendations on the way forward.
- The Ministry's internal team has completed the first draft of the revision of the Palestinian Traffic Law, issued 2000. The new Traffic Law is currently being discussed with the aim to be harmonized with the relevant international best practices.
- The MOT increased the number of its Road Safety Patrols from 3 to 13, which are equipped with necessary equipment.

Remaining Challenges:

- Domestic movement of goods and people, within the West Bank, is heavily controlled by Israel Authorities through a system of check-points, road-blocks and other barriers.
- Moreover, the engagement of Palestinian vehicles in transport outside the West Bank territory is not possible, save of a few exceptions.
- Palestine does not enjoy territorial sovereignty and does not control its own borders, while there is no territorial continuity between West-Bank and Gaza Strip and no direct connection by any mode of transport.
- All these are negatively affecting the daily life of Palestinian population and severely damage its economy

We wish and hope, that this conflict situation with our neighbors will soon come into an end and that Palestine Transport of vehicles and people will become normal and free as in every other country in the world