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Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety

Eighty-eighth session

Geneva, 18-22 March 2024

Report of the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety on its eighty-eighth session

I. Attendance

1. The Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) held its eighty-eighth session in Geneva from 18 to 22 March 2024, chaired by Ms. L. Iorio (Italy). Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK) and United States of America.
2. The representatives of non-ECE member States also participated: Algeria, Angola, Brazil, Cameroun, Egypt, India, Lebanon, Japan, Korea Republic of, Lebanon, Morocco, Thailand, and Zimbabwe.
3. The United Nations agencies and the following non-governmental organizations were also represented: European Union, International Telecommunications Union (ITU), American Automotive Policy Council, Amazon.com. Inc, Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), International Motorcycle Manufacturers' Association (IMMA), International Federation of Pedestrians (IFP), International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA), International Road Federation (IRF), Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE), International Road Transport Union (IRU), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), EuroMed Transport Support Project and Politecnico de Milano and Panos Mylonas.
4. Representatives from the academia and Private sector also participated: ANAS-Gruppo, Johns Hopkins University, University of South Carolina (USA), University of Bologna (Italy), Par Ilan University (Israel).

II. Adoption of the Agenda (agenda item 1)

5. The Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) adopted the session's agenda (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/186) and it took note of Informal documents Nos.1 and 4 which contain a tentative timetable for the session and a list of panellists respectively.
6. The Secretariat informed WP.1 that the unauthorized use of images, or any other copyrighted material without prior and appropriate consent of the copyright owner is strictly forbidden and contrary to the rules and regulations of the United Nations. Given this, all

presentations submitted to UNECE in any context must bear an appropriate copyright notice of the author, as follows: “Copyright [date] [author], all rights reserved. For reproduction permission and all other issues, please contact [author email].” In addition, WP.1 participants were informed that: “in submitting presentations or materials, they are representing that they own the rights to all content, text and images therein, that they have the permission of the owner, and/or that the content is licensed under a Creative Commons or public domain license. Any costs arising from unauthorized use of images, text, figures or other material shall be their full responsibility.” WP.1 took note of this information.

7. Mr. N. Srinivasan, Associate Administrator for Research and Program Development, delivered a keynote address on behalf of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the United States Department of Transportation. While the fatality rate for the first nine months of 2023 decreased to 1.25 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles travelled (VMT), down from the projected rate of 1.34 fatalities per 100 million VMT on the corresponding period in 2022, the number of road injuries and deaths in the United States needs to be reduced. To this end, a number of initiatives have been undertaken and/or are ongoing. For example, the first ever National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS), which brings together work done across the US Department of Transportation and puts forth a comprehensive set of actions to significantly reduce serious injuries and deaths on US roads has been introduced; the Safe System Approach is used to ensure integrated focus on all elements: safe road users, safe vehicles, safe roads, safe speeds, and effective post-crash care; the work of the National Center for Statistics and Analysis has been effective in supporting investment decisions to improve road safety. Mr. Srinivasan also noted the importance of having incorporated driver distraction into NRSS. The cost of crashes - where at least one driver was identified as being distracted - resulted in 2019 in over 10,000 fatalities and 1.3 million injuries. It also caused almost \$100 billion in economic costs (representing almost one-third of all crash costs). Finally, he encouraged WP.1 to consult NHTSA flagship publication “Countermeasures That Work” which is intended to be a reference guide for state highway safety offices to help select effective, science-based traffic safety countermeasures (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/book/countermeasures/countermeasures-that-work>). A question-and-answer period ensued. WP.1 thanked Mr. N. Srinivasan for taking the time to attend its session.

III. Activities of interest to the Working Party (agenda item 2)

8. At the last session, WP.1 reviewed and made changes to ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2022/2/Rev.1. At the present session, ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2022/2/Rev.2 was tabled for information and formal adoption only. WP.1 adopted the document.

9. The WP.1 Chair briefed the working party about the February 2024 Inland Transport Committee session (ITC Informal document No.6/Rev.4) and focused on the decisions related to road safety.

10. At the last session, WP.1 started analyzing the revised “ECE Road Safety Action Plan, 2023-2030” (ECE/TRANS/2023/7) and decided to create an informal group to prepare WP.1 contribution. The informal group was tasked with preparing a draft document to be discussed at this session. While Informal document No. 2 has not been finalized, the informal group is expected to continue working on it and present it at the next session. In particular, the informal group will endeavour to incorporate the issue of the long- term burden of “minor and moderate” road traffic injuries (in addition to severe and more life-threatening injuries) into the ECE Road Safety Action Plan.

11. At the last session, on the basis of ITC decision 23 taken in February 2023, WP.1 requested that the Group of Experts on Drafting a new legal instrument on automated vehicles in traffic (LIAV) work on merging Informal document No. 5 (September 2023) and Informal document No.11 (September 2023) as both documents represented different approaches. To this end, the Chair of the Group of Experts on LIAV submitted Informal document No.5 (March 2024). WP.1 decided to continue to work on the terms of reference (TOR) of the Group of Experts on LIAV per Informal document No. 5 (March 2024) at its next session.

12. The secretariat of the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) informed WP.1 about its present and future work by presenting “Global outlook for strengthening national road safety systems”. The UNRSF funding priorities in 2025-2030 include: “Adoption and implementation of laws and standards aligned with UN legal instruments and best practice” and “Unlocking sustainable domestic financing for road safety”.

A High-Level Pledging Forum, in support of replenishing the UNRSF, will be convened at the fourth Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Morocco, 18-20 February 2025. WP.1 participants were invited to consider making pledges.

13. The secretariat to the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety provided an update on his recent activities. In 2023, the Special Envoy travelled to 28 countries; engaged with Ministries of Finance, and United Nations Member States to increase domestic investments in road safety; raised the visibility of the UNRSF resulting in partnerships with 26 Member States and the private sector; launched the second Kofi Annan Road Safety Award in Morocco; and held the 7th United Nations Partnerships meeting for road safety.

14. IRF invited WP.1 delegates to attend “Connecting to Empower Mobility: Roads as Enablers of a Sustainable Future for All”, International Road Federation, World Congress 2024, Istanbul, Turkey, 15-18 October 2024 (for more information see www.irfnet.ch).

15. National delegations and international organizations did not submit any other information in writing on national and international road safety activities and initiatives or on changes to their traffic legislation.

IV. Convention on Road Traffic (1968) (agenda item 3)

A. Driving permits

16. The informal group of experts on driving permits submitted Informal document No.6 which takes into account ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/1 (submitted by ISO at WP.1 request), Informal document No.14 (September 2023) and WP.1 discussion at its last session. To facilitate WP.1 discussion, the secretariat gave a presentation which summarized WP.1 discussions in recent years, challenges, WP.1 decision at its 81st session, and the secretariat’s suggestions to holistically consider relevant issues.

17. Following the United Kingdom’s introduction of Informal document No. 6, WP.1 requested that the informal group of experts submit two working documents for the next session (based on Informal document No.6). The first working document should contain the proposal amendment, and the second should contain background and a summary of the amendments being proposed. It should specify the changes requested by WP.1 at its 81st session and the additional changes suggested by the informal group of experts.

18. The Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) informed WP.1 that it intends to provide an updated list of agencies authorized to issue International Driving Permits (IDPs) on the basis of Informal document No. 2 (March 2023) and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2022/1/Rev.1 at the next session.

19. The Netherlands gave a presentation on “Road safety and driving licences” describing challenges such as vulnerable road users, novice drivers, and impaired drivers. IRTE – in its presentation – pointed out the importance of understanding the road signs in the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals for those requesting the issuance of an international driving permit. The European Driving Schools Association (EFA) and American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) provided information on “European Parliament updates of EU driving licence rules” and the “digital mobile permits” initiative respectively.

20. Following discussion and WP.1 interest on mobile driving licences (mDL), WP.1 asked AAMVA to present, at the next session in September 2024, further details on how to obtain the public key certificates required to authenticate an mDL, given that this is essential for implementation of mDLs.

B. Remote activities related to driving

21. The United Kingdom introduced ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2024/3 (submitted by Finland, Germany, and the United Kingdom) by giving a presentation highlighting evolution of the document. WP.1 discussed the document extensively and provided general comments during the line by line reading (paragraphs 1-4). During the discussion, countries were also encouraged to share domestic efforts (safety challenges, legislation, testing) at future sessions. WP.1 will continue the line by line review at the next session.

V. Assessment of the safe deployment of automated vehicles in road traffic: human factors (agenda item 4)

22. At the last session, Canada submitted Informal document No. 9 (September 2023) which aims at developing key principles on automated vehicle safety and human-centered needs (originally based on Informal document No. 11/Rev.1 (September 2021)). At this session, Canada introduced Informal document No. 9/Rev.1/Corr.1 (September 2023) submitted in March 2024. During extensive discussions, WP.1 participants agreed human factors was an important topic and provided general comments. Canada is invited to revise the document taking into account the comments provided during the session as well as any other written comments to be provided to Canada by 15 July 2024.

23. The Korea Road Traffic Authority, Traffic Science Institute, gave a presentation on “Automated vehicles safety regime in South Korea”. The University of Bologna spoke about “Protecting vulnerable road users in the age of assisted and automated driving between current rules and new perspectives”. WP.1 warmly appreciated both presentations.

24. At the last session, WP.1 continued discussing and elaborating the topic of optical and/or audible signals in driving assistance systems (DAS) and Automated driving system (ADS) vehicles to indicate their status and to communicate their intended actions on the roads. At this session, International Federation of Pedestrians submitted Informal document No. 7 and gave a presentation on “Automated vehicles’ signalling and human factors”.

VI. Group of Experts on drafting a new legal instrument on the use of automated vehicles in traffic (LIAV) (agenda item 5)

25. The Vice-Chair of the Group of Experts on LIAV presented the Group’s work. WP.1 noted the work performed by the Group of Experts on LIAV, focused on assessment, and acknowledged the collaborative spirit.

VII. Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968) (agenda item 6)

26. WP.1 agreed to amendment proposals to the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/2/Rev.1), the European Agreement Supplementing the 1968 Convention (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/3), and the Protocol on Road Markings (additional to the European Agreement) (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/4).

27. After discussion, the working party requested the secretariat to re-format the documents and to insert the transitional provisions informing Contracting Parties about a 15-year transitional period (see Annex). The revised documents: ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/2/Rev.2, ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/3/Rev.1, and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2023/4/Rev.1 will be tabled for formal adoption at the September 2024 session.

28. The Chair of the Informal Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals updated WP.1 on the work done by the Group, focusing on recommended new signs to be included in the 1968 Convention.

29. The secretariat informed WP.1 about the current status of Electronic Convention on Road Signs and signals (e-CORSS).

30. On the basis of ITC decisions 49 and 50 taken in February 2024, the UK requested the secretariat invite to the next session a representative of (or secretary to) WP.5 Group of Experts on Cycling Infrastructure Module to provide comprehensive information on the Group's outputs.

VIII. Contribution to Agenda 2030 – Goals 3 and 11, Targets 3.6 and 11.2 (agenda item 7)

A. A Safe System Approach

31. WP.1 participants were invited to continue sharing best practices and lessons learned with a view to developing a guide on Multi-Disciplinary Collision Investigation (MDCI). In this context, Canada informed WP.1 about its work on developing an MDCI best practice exchange platform. Given the importance of this subject, WP.1 invited Canada to lead an informal group of experts on MDCI and report on its work at the next session.

B. Risky driving behaviours

32. Presentations were received from the Governments of Brazil and Spain, Bar-Illan University and the Polytechnic University of Coimbra. Bar-Illan University shared studies and research in support of the contribution of drivers' education and training to road safety. The representative from Spain provided information on the functionality of, and the relevant legislation supporting the use of V-16 hazard warning devices. The representative from Brazil and the Polytechnic University of Coimbra presented on alcohol, drugs, mental workload and emerging technology, citing different technologies related to alcohol and drugs detection and some policy examples from Brazil.

C. Road Traffic: Urban challenges and perspectives

33. Lithuania provided an update of legislative information about personal mobility devices (Informal document No. 4/Rev.2 (March 2022)). Lithuania was invited to provide an update at the next session.

34. During a previous session, WP.1 participants exchanged views during a dedicated panel on the road safety potentialities, risks and challenges associated with personal mobility devices. As a follow up, at this session WP.1 participants exchanged views, with a special focus on the relevant role of delivery agents in today's traffic. In this context, Amazon.com, Inc. gave presentation on its approach to enhancing road safety and expressed its appreciation for WP.1 work in promoting road safety globally. Presentation by Azienda Nazionale Autonoma delle Strade Statali (ANAS) highlighted many road safety recommendations in the context of evolving technology ("Mobility of the future: safety first").

IX. Revision of the terms of reference and rules of procedure for WP.1 (agenda item 8)

35. WP.1 resumed its discussion on the proposed text for Rule 1 (a) to (h). The Working Party requested clarification by the secretariat on proposed paragraphs for Rule 1 (b), (c) and (d) for the next session. The secretariat will provide WP.1 participants with a copy of Informal document No.4 (September 2023) with the changes made at this session upon request.

X. Global dialogue and contribution to road safety capacity building: Focus on low and middle-income countries (agenda item 9)

36. The Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE) provided information on the launching event and working session of the “Global Road Safety Initiative”, organized in partnership with the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, India, and in association with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The event addressed the criticalities and needs of some regions to implement the appropriate road safety policies to save lives. It was held on 4-6 December 2023 in New Delhi and gathered government representatives from India and South-East Asian countries, the industry, academia, as well as many delegates from the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety. WP.1 appreciated the initiative, took note of the outcomes and recommendations of the “Initiative” (Informal document No.3) and agreed to consider these recommendations at the next session.

37. In the context of Agenda 2030, and safe mobility as an enabler for improving the lives of everyone across the world, WP.1 continued to gather knowledge and insights from other UN Regions on mobility best practices. To this end, Mr. Mahmood Ahmed, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, India, delivered a keynote address to open a panel of speakers moderated by Belgium. The panel members included Johns Hopkins University, Cattolica University (Milan) (presentation on “Motorcycle riders in Tanzania and Madagascar”), Malopolska Voivodship Road Safety Council (“Holistic approach to road crash victims and post-crash care”), and Panos Mylonas (“Traffic safety and mobility education”).

XI. Other Business (agenda item 10)

38. The Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles (GRVA) Chair provided an update on matters of mutual interest to both WP.1 and WP.29 (Informal document No.8). Of particular note is a new draft United Nations Regulation on driver control assistance systems (DCAS); framework document on automated vehicles (FNAV); and completion of Functional Requirement for Automated Vehicles (FRAV) and Validation Method for Automated Driving (VMAD) integration document. New activities include the drafting of a single regulatory text under both the 1958 Agreement and the 1998 Agreement on Automated Driving Systems.

39. The WP.1 Chair reiterated the importance of organizing a joint event, and also exploring the possibility of more flexible and agile form of meeting.

40. The GRVA Chair informed WP.1 that “Proposal to WP.29 regarding the structuring of activities supporting the coordination between WP.1 and WP.29” (WP.29-190-07) is still being reviewed by WP.29.

41. The Informal Group of Experts on Automated Driving (IGEAD) Vice-Chair provided an update on the Group’s recent work. This included work on analysis of the differences between ADS and ADAS, remote driving and remote management as well as and on driver education. The Group elected Ms. B. Van Ooijen (the Netherlands) as the Chair, Ms. K. Miettinen (Finland) and Ms. M. Molina (France) as Vice-Chairs. The WP.1 Chair thanked the Group for its efforts. The WP.1 Chair will consider a possibility of organizing a panel on the topic related to road safety implications of new automotive technology at the next session.

42. The Chair briefed WP.1 that information on the Global Road Safety Film Festival (Alcobaça, Portugal) will be provided at the next session.

43. ANAS and Euro-Med Transport Support Project invited WP.1 to participate in an event which aims at promoting road safety best practices, including global principles embedded in the road safety legal instruments with special attention to the Mediterranean countries. The event is planned for 19 November 2024 in Rome, Italy. More information will be provided at the next session.

44. The Chair informed WP.1 that the Imola Living Lab which strives for replicable, safe, sustainable, and inclusive mobility policies will organize on 11 July 2024 in Imola a special event on road safety policies in line with WP.1 agenda.

45. The Chair suggested WP.1 consider organizing a session in a location outside of Geneva in 2025. During discussion, WP.1 identified UNESCAP (Bangkok, Thailand) as a possible location. In addition, the Russian Federation proposed to consider organizing a side-event during the Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Morocco, in February 2025.

46. WP.1 did not discuss any other issues.

XII. Date of next session (agenda item 11)

47. The next session of WP.1 is scheduled for 23-27 September 2024 in Geneva. The deadline for submitting working documents is 1 July 2024.

XIII. Adoption of the report of the eighty-eighth session (agenda item 12)

48. The Working Party adopted the report of its eighty-eighth session.

Annex

Amendment to 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals:

Contracting Parties undertake to replace, within 15 years from the date of entry into force of this amendment in their territories, any sign, symbol, installation or marking which does not conform to those prescribed in this amendment. During this period, in order to familiarize road users with the signs, symbols, installations and markings prescribed in this amendment, previous signs, symbols, installations and markings may be retained beside those prescribed in this amendment.

Amendment to 1971 European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Signs and Signals

Contracting Parties undertake to replace, within 15 years from the date of entry into force of this amendment in their territories, any sign, symbol, installation or marking which does not conform to those prescribed in this amendment. During this period, in order to familiarize road users with the signs, symbols, installations and markings prescribed in this amendment, previous signs, symbols, installations and markings may be retained beside those prescribed in this amendment.

Amendment to the 1973 Protocol on Road Markings, Additional to the European Agreement supplementing the Convention on Road Signs and Signals:

Contracting Parties undertake to replace, within 15 years from the date of entry into force of this amendment in their territories, any marking which does not conform to those prescribed in this amendment. During this period, in order to familiarize road users with the markings prescribed in this amendment, previous markings may be retained beside those prescribed in this amendment.
