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STATISTICAL COMMISSION  
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ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT STATISTICS

Supplementary Note by the Secretary-General

In addition to the information in document E/CN.2/113 and E/CN.3/118 concerning the work of the League of Nations in the field of standardization of accident statistics, and that of the ECE Inland Transport Committee based on the work of the League, the attention of the Transport and Communications Commission and of the Statistical Commission is drawn to the fact that the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries, and Causes of Death,<sup>1/</sup> adopted 24 July 1948 by the First World Health Assembly classified and defines inter alia injuries and deaths resulting from road traffic accidents. Regulations governing the application by Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) of the classification and definitions relating thereto were issued at the same time and came into force on 1 January 1950. According to the Regulations, Member Governments shall compile and publish mortality and morbidity statistics in accordance with the International Statistical Classification unless they notified the Director General of WHO before 24 July 1949 of rejection of, or of reservations to, the Regulations.

This is brought to the attention of the Commissions because of its bearing on any work which may be undertaken with a view to the standardization of road accident statistics. The purposes of the standardization of road transport accident statistics as undertaken by the League of Nations Committee for the

<sup>1/</sup> Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Supplement 1. Manual of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries, and Causes of Death, Sixth Revision of the International Tests of Diseases and Causes of Death, adopted 1948. Volume I, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, 1948.

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Unification of Road Traffic Statistics and by the ECE Inland Transport Committee, and as provided by the International Statistical Classification are somewhat different as the former are concerned more particularly with the manner in which road accidents happen and with their prevention whereas the latter is concerned with showing the extent of loss of human life and damage to health resulting from road accidents. However, despite this difference in purpose, it would appear to be essential to avoid differences in definition and classification which would result in divergent statistics.

The problem of avoiding divergence in statistics compiled with these different purposes was recognized by the League of Nations Committee for the Unification of Road Traffic Statistics which made the following recommendation:<sup>1/</sup>

"9. The Committee recommends that countries which do not yet apply the scheme of classification of accidental deaths contained in the International Convention on the Nomenclature of Causes of Death, signed at Paris on October 19th, 1929, should adopt this system, and that the road accident statistics outlined above should be accompanied, if possible, by statistics of deaths due to means of transport, compiled according to this scheme."

Since then the International Convention of 1929 has been superseded by WHO "Nomenclature Regulations 1948" which also contain mandatory provisions for compiling and publishing statistics of injuries resulting from accidents.

It would appear, therefore, that any work undertaken in the field of road accident statistics should be carried on in close consultation with the WHO.

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<sup>1/</sup> LON document C.276.M.179.1937.VIII.