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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS THIRTY-FIRST SESSION
(1-4 September 1998)**

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety held its thirty-first session in Geneva from 1 to 4 September 1998 under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Busstra (Netherlands). Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Austria; Belarus; Belgium; Bulgaria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Hungary; Israel; Italy; Latvia; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Slovakia; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Ukraine. The following intergovernmental organization was represented: European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT). The following non-governmental organizations were represented: Confédération Internationale d'Experts et Conseils (CIDADEC); European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR); International Automobile Federation/International Touring Alliance (FIA/AIT); International Federation of Motorcyclists (IFM); International Federation of Pedestrians (FIP); International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA); International Road Transport Union (IRU).

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/61.

2. The Working Party adopted the provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat. Some additional official working documents were introduced.

PART A OF THE REPORT

AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1968 CONVENTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM

(a) Questionnaire on the implementation of the Vienna Conventions and the 1971 European Agreements

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.144; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/8 and Add.1; TRANS/WP.1/1998/12.

3. It was recalled that the Working Party at its thirtieth session considered that it was important to monitor the implementation of the Vienna Conventions and of the European Agreements supplementing them in order to be able to identify possible problems and try consequently to eliminate them through the established amending procedure. The Working Party agreed to continue its work on this item by considering the following (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/60, paras. 7 and 8):

- (i) Are the provisions of the above-mentioned instruments fully transcribed into national legislation or have they been adapted?
- (ii) What problems have been identified in the course of their implementation, how have they been solved and was there a need for additional rules?
- (iii) Are there special issues which need to be brought to the attention of the Working Party?

4. The Chairman of the small group which had been set up at the thirtieth session of WP.1 with a mandate to prepare a working plan addressing the issue of implementation of the instruments in question presented the findings of the small group (TRANS/WP.1/1998/12), identifying the objectives, action to be taken and a timetable for consideration by the Working Party.

5. The Working Party thanked the members of the small group and endorsed the objectives and actions as formulated in TRANS/WP.1/1998/12. It also agreed to the timetable suggested by the small group in the above document and requested it to prepare by the thirty-second session of WP.1 a questionnaire which would help member States in the identification of particular problems and special issues encountered by them during the implementation of the instruments in question.

6. Recognizing the importance of the work to be undertaken, the Working Party enlarged the membership of the small group with the delegation of the Russian Federation which volunteered to contribute to the drafting of the questionnaire.

(b) Documents transmitted by ECMT

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/1; TRANS/WP.1/1998/3; TRANS/WP.1/1998/4; TRANS/WP.1/1998/7 and Add.1; TRANS/WP.1/1998/13.

7. The Working Party considered this item on the basis of document TRANS/WP.1/1998/3 prepared by the secretariat following the preliminary decisions taken by the Working Party at its thirtieth session on proposed ECMT

amendments to the Vienna Conventions regarding cyclists and mopeds (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/60, para. 10).

Convention on Road Traffic

8. With regard to the amendment proposed by ECMT to Article 1, the Working Party agreed to the definition of cycle track proposed by Italy in TRANS/WP.1/1998/13 amended to read (in bold type):

"The term "cycle track" defines a road or part of a road reserved for cycles and signed as such. A "cycle track" may be part of the carriageway(**cycle lane**) or on its own separate alignment. A cycle track which is part of the carriageway **may** be indicated by horizontal signs, and vertical signs may also be added. On the other hand, a "cycle track" which is on its own separate alignment must be indicated by vertical signs, and may also have horizontal signs. If national legislation permits, "cycle tracks" may also be used by mopeds and other cycles."

9. However, the Working Party felt that the above definition of the term "cycle track" used as a generic term for description of a way specifically reserved for cycles needed further study and agreed to come back to it at its thirty-second session, asking delegates to examine whether the new definition is in line with the meaning of this term currently used in the Vienna Conventions as well as with the provisions of their relevant national legislation. The delegates of Israel and Italy offered to provide a revised version of the definition for the Working Party's thirty-second session.

10. As concerned the proposed new paragraph (c) to Article 11.1, the Working Party opted for the following text which it stressed did not prevent countries from requiring stricter provisions in their national legislation if they so wished:

"(c) Domestic legislation may authorize cyclists and moped riders to overtake on the side which corresponds to the direction of the traffic."

11. Regarding the proposed amendment to Article 16.1 (b), the Working Party adopted the text as proposed by ECMT in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/1, para. 6 reading:

"(b) If he wishes to turn off on the other side, and subject to such other provisions as Contracting Parties or subdivisions thereof may enact for cycles and mopeds enabling them to change direction by crossing the intersection in two separate stages, move as close as possible to the centre line of the carriageway if it is a two-way carriageway or to the edge opposite to the side appropriate to the direction of traffic if it is a one-way carriageway and, if he wishes to enter another two-way road, make his turn so as to enter the carriageway of such other road on the side appropriate to the direction of traffic."

12. The Working Party adopted the proposed amendment to Article 16.2 modified as follows (in bold type):

"2. While changing direction, the driver shall, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 21 of this Convention regarding pedestrians, allow **road users to pass** on the carriageway, or on other parts of the same road, he is preparing to leave."

13. The Working Party adopted the new Article 21**bis** as proposed by ECMT:

"Article 21 bis

Behaviour of motor-vehicle drivers towards cyclists and two-wheeled moped riders

Without prejudice to Articles 11 and 12 of this Convention, drivers of motor vehicles shall leave a sufficient safety gap between their vehicle and the cycle or (two-wheeled) moped which they are overtaking or passing in the opposite direction.

When passing an oncoming two-wheeler, the drivers of motor vehicles shall slow down if specific circumstances prevent their leaving a sufficient safety gap between their vehicle and the cycle or (two-wheeled) moped; if necessary, drivers shall stop."

14. The Working Party adopted the amendment to Article 23.3(a)(i) as proposed by ECMT reading:

"(i) Within 5 m before pedestrian crossings and crossings for cyclists, on pedestrian crossings, on crossings for cyclists, and on level crossings."

15. The Working Party adopted the amendment to Article 23.6 as proposed by ECMT reading:

"6. Nothing in this Article shall be construed as preventing Contracting Parties or subdivisions thereof from introducing other provisions on parking and standing or from making individual provisions for the standing and parking of bicycles and two-wheeled mopeds."

Convention on Road Signs and Signals

16. Regarding the proposed amendment to Annex 2, paragraph 39 contained in document TRANS/WP.1/1998/3, the Working Party agreed that it should not be considered.

17. As concerned the two options presented for signs for contraflow cyclists, the majority of delegations was in favour of the signs proposed by ECMT in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/1 using pictogrammes rather than text. It was felt, however, that they were not in accordance with the principles of signing as reflected in the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals (CSR) and, in particular, with the provision contained in para. 4 of Section H, annex 1 of CSR, which directly indicates that regulatory signs may be restricted to particular road users by displaying the symbol for their category such as H,5; H,5^b; H,6 etc. The Working Party confirmed, therefore, its decision as stated in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/60, para. 10 (vii). The text appearing in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/60, para. 10 (viii) was modified to read:

"(viii) Where contraflow cycle traffic is permitted on an otherwise one-way street a cycle lane should be marked on the carriageway;".

18. The Working Party had a detailed discussion on the proposed amendments to article 21(a) and (b) as well as to article 11.9 of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (CCR), concerning behaviour at pedestrian crossings and overtaking in the vicinity of pedestrian crossings, as set out in the document received from ECMT (TRANS/WP.1/1998/4, paras. 1.4 and 2). There was a general feeling, however, that the text of the above articles should be left unchanged. It was also felt that national authorities were free to apply stricter or more detailed provisions than those stipulated in article 11.9 regarding, in particular, the distance from a pedestrian crossing at which overtaking is forbidden.

(c) International driving permit

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1998/9.

19. It was recalled that the Working Party, at its thirtieth session, had set up a small informal group (Czech Republic, Israel, Sweden and AIT/FIA) which had been requested to produce a working document justifying the inclusion of the item on international driving permits in its agenda (TRANS/SC.1/WP./60, paras. 12-16).

20. The considerations of the small group reproduced in TRANS/WP.1/1998/9 gave rise to an extensive exchange of views by delegates on the problems relating to both International (IDP) and Domestic (DDP) driving permits. The comments and views of delegates on this issue could be summarized as follows:

- (i) although some delegates were of the opinion that the harmonized model of driving permits set out in the Convention was sufficient, it was felt that the standardization of DDPs in the way recently undertaken within the European Union (EU) could be a solution to the problem of the fraudulent issuance and use of IDPs since there would no longer be any need for IDPs;
- (ii) both the 1949 and 1968 Road Traffic Conventions provide for unified models of IDPs and DDPs; the problem is, however, who is authorized to issue IDPs. It was proposed that this function should belong exclusively to State bodies as is currently the case with the issuance of DDPs, and not to private entities;
- (iii) the holder of an IDP should be required at any time to present his/her DDP on the basis of which the IDP was issued;
- (iv) the provisions of the 1949 and 1968 Conventions relating to IDPs should be harmonized;
- (v) the IDP is a document of the past and its use should be ceased through an amendment of the Convention with due consideration given to the possible transition consequences;
- (vi) the IDP is widely used throughout the world especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America and represents sometimes the only way to prove the ability of its holder to drive a road vehicle in countries not Parties to the Road Traffic Conventions. IDPs should therefore be maintained, but measures should be elaborated in order to prevent their fraudulent issuance and use.

21. As a result of the above exchange of views, the Working Party agreed that eventually the use of IDPs should be diminished as much as possible through the use of more harmonized DDPs. The Working Party thanked the members of the small group for their findings as reflected in TRANS/WP.1/1998/9 and asked them to continue their work on this matter following the actions proposed in paras. 5.2 - 5.4 of document TRANS/WP.1/1998/9. They were also requested to supplement their proposals with a timetable for completion by WP.1 of this exercise. The small group was invited to report the first results (concerning in particular para. 5.2 of TRANS/WP.1/1998/9) already by the thirty-second session of the Working Party. The secretariat was requested to undertake the compilation of the list of associations authorized to issue IDPs as suggested in para. 5.1 of the proposal of the small group, taking into account, in particular, that both the 1949 and 1968 Conventions are international instruments of a global character.

(d) Signs for roundabouts

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/6.

22. As agreed at its thirtieth session, the Working Party came back to its discussion on signs for roundabouts based on a document prepared by the delegate of Germany (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/6).

23. After an in-depth discussion of the different possibilities of signs for roundabouts and the advantages and disadvantages of each, the Working Party agreed not to amend the Convention on Road Signs and Signals at this stage and to maintain the combination of the B,1 and D,3 signs for roundabouts, as currently used. It further decided that it would consider the option in the future of amending Article 18 of the Convention on Road Traffic regarding intersections and the obligation to give way so that it complemented the Convention on Road Signs and Signals as regards roundabouts.

24. The Working Party thanked the delegate of Germany for the high quality of his document and accepted his offer to prepare a proposal for the thirty-second session of the Working Party for other alternatives involving the use of existing signs and their legal implications regarding the amendment of Article 18 of the Convention on Road Traffic.

REVISION OF THE 1975 AGREEMENT ON MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ISSUE AND VALIDITY OF DRIVING PERMITS (APC)

Documentation: ECE/TRANS/13; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.107; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.120; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.121; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.124; Informal document No. 2.

25. At its thirtieth session, the Working Party had set up a small group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Ukraine and European Commission) to prepare a discussion paper on the above item, bearing in mind the following: (i) the objective of the harmonization process should be the establishment in Europe of a unique legal regime for the issue of driving permits; (ii) key issues should be identified whose solution might lead to prompt progress; and (iii) a timetable should be proposed for reaching step-by-step the complete harmonization of EU and APC provisions (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/60, para. 19).

26. The considerations of the small group in the form of an informal document (in French) were presented to the Working Party by the Chairman of the small group, the delegate of Luxembourg. He said, in particular, that in the opinion of the small group, before embarking on further work on the revision of the Agreement, Contracting Parties and other members of the Working Party should be asked to give their views on:

- (i) the usefulness of the Agreement in its current form;
- (ii) the usefulness of aligning the APC with the relevant provisions of the European Union and the difficulties inherent in that process; and
- (iii) specific problems which had been encountered by Contracting Parties in adhering to the Agreement to date.

27. Given the considerable preparatory work carried out on this item in the past by the French delegation (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.107), the small group considered the participation of the French delegation in its work both useful and desirable.

28. The Working Party thanked the small group for its efforts in preparing the discussion paper and agreed to take up the issue at the thirty-second session when the document would be available in the other working languages.

REVISION OF THE CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC (R.E.1) AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS (R.E.2)

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/294/Rev.5; TRANS/SC.1/295/Rev.3; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.110 and Add.1-10; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/4; TRANS/WP.1/1998/1 and TRANS/WP.1/1998/2.

29. Referring to the consolidated text of R.E.1 as set out in TRANS/SC.1/294/Rev.5, the Working Party noted a number of small misprints and omissions in it and asked Governments to transmit to the secretariat before 1 January 1999 their remarks and proposals in this regard as well as any comments and observations concerning the editorial corrections suggested by the secretariat in TRANS/WP.1/1998/1. The Working Party requested the secretariat to prepare for the thirty-second session a corrigendum to TRANS/SC.1/294/Rev.5 which should include the proposals received from Governments.

30. With regard to the Guidelines on speed control humps approved by the Working Party at its twenty-ninth session (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/4), the delegates of Israel and Denmark offered to prepare a proposal that would summarize the provisions of the Guidelines into general principles and also to propose where they could be introduced into R.E.1. The Working Party thanked the delegates of Denmark and Israel for their kind offer and suggested that they should take into account the comments on this item received from the Governments of the Russian Federation and Ukraine (TRANS/WP.1/1998/2).

31. The Working Party was informed by the International Federation of Pedestrians (FIP) that it had not yet been able to finalize a new section 6 of R.E.1 on pedestrians as proposed at the thirtieth session but that the proposal in this regard of the small group (Netherlands, Hungary, PRI and FIP) would be available for consideration by the Working Party at its thirty-second session.

32. The Working Party was further informed by the Secretary of the Working Party WP.29 about work under way within WP.29 which had a bearing on the possible revision of annex 2 to R.E.1 "Periodic Inspection of Vehicles - checks to be carried out". It was noted, in particular, that the revision of the annex (jointly elaborated in 1975 by WP.1, WP.29 and the International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee (CITA)) could be undertaken by WP.29 in the framework of the proposed cooperation with WP.1 on the basis of draft provisions on safety inspections elaborated by an ad hoc group of experts under the chairmanship of Germany in the course of preparatory work for the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment (TRANS/WP.29/R.762/Rev.1 - TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.138/Rev.1). He said that unfortunately due to a heavy workload, WP.29 might not be in a position to start the work on the revision of annex 2 to R.E.1 for 2-3 years. He also informed the Working Party that after the entry into force of the Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of such Inspections adopted by the 1997 Regional Conference (ECE/RTCE/CONF.4/FINAL), the Administrative Committee of this Agreement would undertake the elaboration of Rules to be annexed to it which might also include provisions relating to safety inspections of road vehicles.

33. The Working Party took note of the above information and confirmed, in the meantime, that a new introductory text could be introduced into recommendation 2.6 of R.E.1 as proposed by the delegate of Norway at the thirtieth session (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/60, para. 23(ii)).

34. With regard to the revision of the Consolidated Resolution on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.2), it was agreed that delegations would transmit to the secretariat as soon as possible, but not later than 1 January 1999, their written proposals concerning the amendment of the consolidated text of R.E.2 as set out in TRANS/SC.1/295/Rev.3.

PART B OF THE REPORT

FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1997 REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Documentation: ECE/RTCE/CONF./2/FINAL; ECE/RTCE/CONF./3/FINAL; ECE/RTCE/CONF./4; ECE/RTCE/CONF./5/FINAL; ECE/RTCE/CONF./6/FINAL; ECE/RTCE/CONF./7/FINAL; TRANS/WP.1/1998/5.

35. It was recalled that at its sixtieth session, the Inland Transport Committee had requested its subsidiary bodies to include the item on follow-up to the Regional Conference in their agendas and to consider how they could contribute to activities at the international level envisaged in the Programme of Joint Action adopted by the Regional Conference (ECE/RTCE/CONF./3/FINAL); ECE/TRANS/125, para. 22).

36. The Working Party noted with appreciation the suggestions of the secretariat in this regard as they appear in the provisional agenda (TRANS/WP.1/61, item 5). It was felt, however, that at least some of the activities mentioned in the provisional agenda for consideration by WP.1 went beyond its competence. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the Working Party had already contributed to the elaboration of draft amendments to the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic concerning environmental standards for heavy commercial vehicles, and that it

might also contribute to the follow-up to the Regional Conference as far as the training of drivers and the use of telematics were concerned.

37. Governments were invited to carefully review the Programme of Joint Action (ECE/RCTE/CONF./3/FINAL) and inform the secretariat before 1 January 1999 of their views regarding particular activities in the Programme to which WP.1 might be able to contribute and regarding the modalities for making such a contribution.

PREPARATION OF THE THIRD ROAD SAFETY WEEK IN THE ECE REGION

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1998/10; TRANS/WP.1/1998/10/Add.1

38. The Working Party considered the draft Programme of the Third Road Safety Week (RSW) prepared by the secretariat with the help of a small group (Czech Republic, Netherlands, Ukraine and FEVR), and approved the text of the programme as set out in TRANS/WP.1/1998/10. It was also decided to keep the same logo as used for previous Road Safety Weeks.

39. One delegation suggested that publicly financed television stations should be obliged to show 20 minutes of road safety programming weekly during prime time at their own expense and that this practice might be maintained even after the Road Safety Week. Several delegations responded that television stations in their countries could not be obliged to show such programming and even if they were willing to do so the costs would be prohibitive. In this regard, the Working Party stressed that conditions were different in all member countries and that national campaigns carried out within the framework of the Third RSW had to be adapted to the particular situation and needs in each member country.

40. The Working Party believed that the Third RSW should not be considered as just another public information campaign but should be aimed at the identification of common objectives and show the progress achieved and actions to be taken by all sides concerned in order to meet those objectives.

41. A member of the secretariat informed the Working Party of the possibilities regarding an ECE road safety Internet site and invited delegates to transmit to the secretariat their ideas, suggestions and documents relating to the creation and organization of the RSW Internet site. In this regard, the Working Party took note with interest of the ideas regarding the possible organization of the Internet site put forward by FEVR and FIP in TRANS/WP.1/1998/10/Add.1.

42. The Working Party requested the small group (Czech Republic, Netherlands, Ukraine and FEVR), with the assistance of FIP and the secretariat, to continue its work on preparations for the Third Road Safety Week and, in particular, to proceed on a provisional basis with the creation of the Internet site. It was agreed to come back to this item at the thirty-second session of WP.1 and to agree on the final format and contents of the Internet site. Governments were requested to send information to the secretariat about special events or activities which they planned to undertake in connection with the Third Road Safety Week.

COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

(a) National road safety requirements

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/1 and Add.1; TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/2 and Add.1-2; TRANS/SC.1/1997/5 and Add.1-4.

43. The Working Party took note of information received from the Governments of Denmark, Finland and Ukraine on national legal instruments on road traffic safety (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/1/Add.1), from the Governments of Luxembourg, Switzerland and Ukraine on methods of training and follow-up for categories A and B driving licences (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/2/Add.1-2), and from the Governments of Denmark, Poland and Switzerland on national requirements concerning road traffic safety.

(b) Exchange of experiences in the field of road safety

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1998/11.

44. The delegate of the Czech Republic informed the Working Party of some of the early results of recent modifications in speed limits in his country as outlined in TRANS/WP.1/1998/11. He pointed out, in particular, that a reduction in the urban speed limit by 10 km/h (from 60 to 50 km/h) had led to a 20 per cent reduction in accidents. The delegates of Poland and the Russian Federation informed the Working Party of the latest developments in their national road safety requirements and agreed to send the information in writing to the secretariat.

45. The Working Party decided to retain this item on its agenda and invited Governments to submit to the secretariat written information about changes in national legislation or recent developments in road traffic safety.

APPLICATION OF INFORMATICS IN ROAD SAFETY

Documentation: TRANS/WP.29/1998/28.

46. The Working Party was informed by the Secretary of WP.29 that guidelines for the design and installation of information and communication systems in motor vehicles, as contained in document TRANS/WP.29/1998/28, had been adopted by WP.29 at its one-hundred-and-fifteenth session (Geneva, 10-13 March 1998) and would be included in the Consolidated Resolution on the Construction of Motor Vehicles (R.E.3) as annex 16 (document TRANS/WP.29/78/Rev.1/Amend.1). The guidelines recognized that while such information and communication systems were often designed to assist the driver, they also made demands on the driver's attention and that they had important implications for road safety.

47. The Working Party was also informed that an EU Code of Conduct concerning the safety impact of in-car telematic devices would be finalized later this year and that it should be taken into consideration by the Working Party when deciding how to proceed with work in this area.

CONSIDERATION OF THE POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO THE WORK ON A UNITED NATIONS LONG-TERM STRATEGY ON ROAD SAFETY

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/3/Rev.1.

48. The Working Party was informed that the secretariat had recently sent a letter to the international governmental and non-governmental organizations listed in TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1998/3/Rev.1, explaining the purpose of the proposed United Nations Long-term Strategy on Road Safety and inviting them to explore ways of possible cooperation with WP.1 on road safety issues in general and on their possible contribution to the Third Road Safety Week, in particular. The secretariat was requested to inform the Working Party at its thirty-second session about replies to that letter.

49. The Secretary of WP.29 informed the Working Party about the many ways in which WP.29 was already contributing to road safety through enhanced technological requirements for motor vehicles. The Working Party agreed that the activities of WP.29 and WP.1 in this regard were complementary and that cooperation between the two Working Parties was well established. The object of the agenda item on a United Nations Long-term Strategy on Road Safety was to ascertain which organizations were active in the field and then, as had been the case with WP.29, to collaborate with them and create synergies which could make a real contribution to road traffic safety.

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ECE BODIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/11.

50. Referring to document TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/11 which had been transmitted to WP.1 at the request of WP.29 and which described the dangers relating to airbag deployment in the case of children in rearward facing child restraint seats placed on a front passenger seat protected by an airbag, the Secretary of the WP.29 informed the Working Party that, in response to that document, the Meeting of Experts on Passive Safety (GRSP) had adopted a proposal for a draft amendment to Regulation No. 44 on child restraints and a warning label regarding airbag deployment (TRANS/WP.29/1998/61) which would be submitted to WP.29 for consideration at its one-hundred-and-sixteenth session (Geneva, 10-13 November 1998).

51. The Working Party thanked the WP.29 and its Secretary for their work on this issue, agreed that it was indeed important to inform the public about the possible dangers relating to front passenger seat airbag deployment, and invited national authorities to give all possible publicity to such information in the course of their road traffic safety campaigns.

FUTURE WORK

- (a) Consideration of the issues dealt with by the ECMT Group on Road Traffic, Signs and Signals, transmitted to ECE for follow-up

Documentation: TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/1997/13; TRANS/WP.1/1998/6; and TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/R.140 and Add.1-7.

52. The Working Party took note of the discussion paper prepared by IMMA on the issue of the definition of mopeds and motorcycles (TRANS/WP.1/1998/6).

The representative of IMMA introduced the issue which stemmed from the differences in the definitions used in EU Directive 92/61/EEC and the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic. The IMMA was of the opinion that any alignment of the definitions should be based on the Directive following the Convention, but recommended that because of the political difficulties posed by such a solution the definitions should remain unchanged for the time being.

53. The Working Party thanked the representative of IMMA for the document and decided to discuss this issue in greater depth at its thirty-second session under the agenda item on amendments to and implementation of the 1968 Vienna Conventions.

(b) Assistance to the victims of road accidents

Documentation: Informal document No. 3.

54. The representative of the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR) introduced Informal document No.3 on assistance to the victims of road accidents submitted by FEVR. The Working Party thanked the representative of FEVR for the paper and requested him to prepare a formal proposal for the thirty-second session outlining the objectives, proposed actions and a timetable for work by WP.1. The Working Party also requested the secretariat to make any past ECMT documents on this subject available to the Working Party so that they could be considered in conjunction with the FEVR proposal.

(c) Draft Programme of Work for 1999-2003

Documentation: TRANS/WP.1/1998/8.

55. The Working Party considered its draft programme of work for 1999 to 2003 (TRANS/WP.1/1998/8) prepared by the secretariat in accordance with the guidelines provided by the ECE (E/1998/38 - E/ECE/1365) and the Inland Transport Committee (ECE/TRANS/125, paras. 139-144). Subsidiary bodies had been requested, in particular, to indicate the output expected within the next two years (or earlier), dissociate work elements which were permanent from those with a limited character, streamline, as much as possible, the programme of work and specify the broad objectives and measures to be carried out to achieve those objectives.

56. The Working Party felt that in some cases the presentation of expected outputs in the draft programme of work lacked flexibility and should be redrafted in a more general way avoiding explicit formulations in cases when it was not clear what the expected output could be. The question of assigning priorities to individual programme elements rather than to the overall programme activity was also raised. To take care of these concerns, the Working Party requested the secretariat to adapt the draft programme of work in the light of the discussion held in consultation with the delegations of Germany and Switzerland and finally with the Chairman.

57. The final version of the draft programme of work of WP.1 is reproduced in the annex to this report.

(d) Copyright of signs and signals

58. The delegate of Denmark informed the Working Party that during the redesigning of the H,7 (handicapped person) sign to enable illumination at night, his agency had been approached by an organization which claimed to hold the copyright to that sign. The Working Party requested the delegate of Denmark to prepare a note describing the circumstances in greater detail so that this issue could be taken up at the thirty-second session.

OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Assistance to countries in transition

59. During its discussion of this item, it was suggested by the delegate of Spain that the Working Party should consider cooperation with the Organisation for Economic

Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the organization of workshops for the countries in transition. It was also suggested that a good model to follow might be that of the technical cooperation programmes organized by the Nordic countries for Baltic countries and other countries in transition. It was felt, however, that the countries concerned had to identify areas where they needed assistance. The Working Party renewed its call to countries to send relevant information to the secretariat so that this issue could be taken up again at the Working Party's thirty-second session.

60. The delegate of Hungary offered to find out whether his Government would be interested in organizing in his country a workshop for interested countries in transition on the subject of assistance to the victims of road accidents as outlined in Informal document No.3 submitted by FEVR, possibly within the Third RSW campaign.

(b) Election and duration of office of WP.1 Office Bearers

61. The Working Party was informed by the secretariat of the provisions of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of ECE concerning the election of officers as well as of existing practice in this regard in the Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies. The Working Party decided that it would in future elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairmen for each coming year at the end of its autumn session.

62. In accordance with the above decision, the Working Party re-elected Mr. Jan Busstra (Netherlands) as Chairman and Messrs. Dan Link (Israel) and Alexander Yakimov (Russian Federation) as Vice Chairmen for the year 1999.

(c) Documentation for the thirty-second session

63. The Working Party invited its members to transmit to the secretariat information and documents to be considered at its thirty-second session as soon as possible, but not later than 1 January 1999.

(d) Date of the next session

64. The thirty-second session of the Working Party is scheduled to be held from 13 to 16 April 1999.

(e) Appointment of a new Secretary to the Working Party

65. The Working Party was informed by the Chief of the Technology Section of the ECE Transport Division that the procedures for appointing a new Secretary for WP.1 were well advanced and that it was hoped that a new Secretary might take up the position soon.

66. The Working Party took note of the above information, stressed the importance of the urgent filling of the post on a permanent basis and expressed its appreciation to Messrs. V. Novikov and C. Smith for ensuring continued secretariat services to WP.1 since the retirement of Mr. Walawski in 1997.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

67. As agreed by the Working Party at its twenty-ninth session (TRANS/SC.1/WP.1/58, para. 47), the WP.1 adopted Part A of the report on its thirty-first session concerning decisions taken under agenda items relating to legislative work on the basis of a draft prepared by the secretariat. Part B of the report, reflecting in a concise form the discussions held on other agenda items, was prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairman.

Annex

DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 1999-2003 */

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 02.2: ROAD TRANSPORT

02.2.3 Road traffic safety

Priority: 1

Description: Mindful of the world-wide scope of its work, the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) will examine matters and adopt measures aimed at improving road traffic safety. To this end, it will consider, inter alia, the implementation of the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals and the European Agreements supplementing them and elaborate proposals for updating these legal instruments as well as the Consolidated Resolutions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals (R.E.1 and R.E.2).

Work to be undertaken: **The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety will pursue the following activities:**

- (a) Monitoring and encouraging the implementation of the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals and of the European Agreements supplementing them, and elaboration of amendment proposals to these legal instruments with a view to raising of road safety standards.
(Continuing) **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2000:

- **Consideration of a number of amendment proposals to the above instruments concerning, in particular, the safety of cyclists and moped riders; international driving permits; priority rules at roundabouts; definitions for mopeds, motorcycles and quadricycles, etc;**
 - **Establishment of a feedback mechanism with the help of a questionnaire to be circulated among States Parties to the above legal instruments;**
 - **Examination of the possibility of contributing to activities envisaged in the Programme of Joint Action adopted at the 1997 Regional Conference on Transport and the Environment.**
- (b) Development of new recommendations to be included in the Consolidated Resolutions on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals (R.E.1 and R.E.2) and updating of the existing ones (in cooperation with other subsidiary bodies of ITC) for the purpose of ensuring higher standards of safety on roads. (Continuing) **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2000:

- **Formulation and inclusion in R.E.1 of new recommendations on pedestrians;**

*/ New wording replacing text adopted by the Inland Transport Committee at its sixtieth session (ECE/TRANS/125/Add.1) is indicated in bold characters; text for deletion appears in square brackets.

- **Incorporation in R.E.1 and/or R.E.2 of recommendations concerning speed control humps as well as the sign for contraflow cyclists and the conditions for its use;**
- **Submission to the Inland Transport Committee of revised texts of Consolidated Resolutions R.E.1 and R.E.2 for adoption.**

- (c) Exchange of information on national road safety programmes, in particular taking into account **means of financing** of road safety activities, and on road safety regulations and requirements in force in member States and circulation of such information in order to avail Governments of the practice and experience gained on these matters. (Continuing) **Priority: 3**

Output expected by the end of 2000: Updating the set of tables reflecting current national road traffic safety requirements, national legal instruments and national methods of training and follow-up for categories A and B driving licences.

- (d) Assisting countries in transition in the establishment of sound and up-to-date traffic safety practice and procedures and organizing to this end workshops or seminars on road safety. (Continuing) **Priority: 2**

Output expected by the end of 2000: Organization of a workshop on road traffic safety issues of priority concern to countries in transition, possibly within the framework of the Third Road Safety Week. (Host country to be identified).

- (e) Consideration of selected timely topics related to road safety in the form of an in-depth discussion based on papers prepared by experts and undertaking appropriate follow-up action with a view to finding concerted solutions to the most urgent problems in the field of traffic safety. (Continuing) **Priority: 2**

Output expected by the end of 2000: Identification of at least one timely topic for in-depth discussion.

- (f) Revision of the 1975 Agreement on Minimum Requirements for the Issue and Validity of Driving Permits (APC). (To be undertaken by an ad hoc informal group of experts with a renewable mandate of two years). **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2000: Examination with the help of a small group of experts of proposals aimed at the establishment in Europe of a unique legal regime for the issue of driving permits.

- (g) Preparation of the Third ECE Road Safety Week with a view to **encouraging** greater partnership between public administrations, private sector organizations and road-users aimed at **improving the safety of vulnerable road users.** (2000) **Priority: 1**

Output expected by the end of 2000:

- Organization in May 2000 of the Road Safety Week campaign in the ECE region in accordance with the Programme adopted by WP.1;
 - Evaluation of the Road Safety Week and adoption of possible follow-up action.
- (h) Consideration of possible approaches to the work on a United Nations Long-Term Strategy on Road Safety aimed at the establishment within the UN of a concerted programme of action in this regard. [(1998)]
(2000) Priority: 2

Output expected by the end of 2000: Elaboration jointly with all UN and non-UN international governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned of a concerted long-term strategy aimed at the improvement of road traffic safety in the ECE region.
