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Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

**REPORT OF THE WORKING PARTY ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY
ON ITS FORTY-SECOND SESSION**

(8-10 July 2003)

ATTENDANCE

1. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety held its forty-second session in Geneva from 8 to 10 July 2003, chaired by Mr. Bernard Périsset and Mr. Alexander Yakimov (Russian Federation), one of the two Vice-Chairmen. Representatives of the following member States participated: Austria; Czech Republic; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Hungary; Italy; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Norway; Oman; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia and Montenegro; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland. The World Health Organization (WHO) was represented.

The following non-governmental organizations were also represented: International Organization for Standardization (ISO); European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR); International Road Traffic Union (IRU); International Federation of Motorcyclists (IFM); International Touring Alliance/International Automobile Association (AIT/FIA); International Road Federation; International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA); FIA Foundation.

Representatives of Laser Europe and the Task Force for Child Survival and Development participated in the meeting as observers.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. In his introduction, the Chairman of WP.1 thanked the Legal Group and the secretariat for all the efforts made in order to allow WP.1 to work efficiently during the session. He recalled the priority aims, which were:

- Finalization of the group of amendments to the Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals and the European Agreements supplementing them with a view to their final adoption next September.
- Preparation of the Fourth Road Safety Week in the ECE Region and the seminar to be held on 5 April 2004.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (*agenda item 1*)

Document: TRANS/WP.1/89

3. The Working Party adopted its agenda without amendments.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE WORKING PARTY (*agenda item 2*)

4. The Working Party adopted the report of its forty-first session (*TRANS/WP.1/88*) with the following amendments:

- Paragraph 1: The International Federation of Motorcyclists (IFM) should be added to the list of participants.
- Paragraph 19: The following sentence proposed by the delegation of Germany should be added at the beginning: “After considering whether the sign ‘Emergency stopping place’ should be classified in category G or E, the Working Party finally opted for category E.”
- The delegate of Norway pointed out some mistakes in the English version.

AMENDMENTS TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1968 CONVENTIONS ON ROAD TRAFFIC AND ON ROAD SIGNS AND SIGNALS AND THE 1971 EUROPEAN AGREEMENTS SUPPLEMENTING THEM (*agenda item 3*)

5. With reference to the group of documents on the Conventions and Agreements discussed during the session, the Chairman of WP.1 said that he would send the formal amendments to be made to them directly to the secretariat. The Working Party agreed to this proposal.

6. The Working Party then considered point by point each of the documents TRANS/WP.1/2003/1 to 5/Rev.1 prepared by the secretariat.

(a) Vienna Convention on Road Traffic

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/1, TRANS/WP.1/2003/1/Rev.1

7. Document *TRANS/WP.1/2003/1/Rev.1*, which served as the basis for the discussion, was adopted with the following amendments:

Article 8: The Russian delegation requested the deletion of “at all times” before “minimize” in the Russian version and said that the wording of the article should be brought into line in Russian; it would send a proposal to the secretariat.

Article 27: “In paragraph 4” should replace “Paragraph 3” (French and Russian texts).

Article 37: In paragraph 1, “plate(s)” should read “plate”.

Article 41.2: (b) and (c) should begin in lower case in the Russian text.

Article 41.4: On the proposal of the delegation of Switzerland, the introductory sentence of paragraph 4 was amended to read: “Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs **1 and 2**”.

Article 43: After discussion, the proposal by the secretariat to add a new paragraph 3 (informal document No. 4) was rejected by a majority following a vote (3 in favour, 10 against, the other countries abstaining).

Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the English version should be amended to read: “... at **the** latest 5 years ...”.

Annex 1: The delegation of Switzerland having pointed out that a phrase had disappeared in paragraph 9, the phrase “not in conformity with the provisions of this Convention” was added at the end of the paragraph.

Annex 6:

Paragraph 2: On the proposal of the delegation of Switzerland, the following phrase was added at the end of the last sentence: “**subject to the provisions of paragraphs 6 and 7**”.

Paragraph 4: The introductory sentence was amended to read: “It is compulsory to indicate in the permit the data listed below **under the numbers given below**”. The words “**of the holder**” were deleted in points 1, 2 and 3 (French and Russian texts) and point 3 (English text).

Paragraph 5: The introductory sentence should be brought into line with that paragraph 4.

Paragraph 6: On the proposal of the Russian delegation the text of this paragraph was revised for greater clarity. The new wording adopted reads: “All the entries on the permit shall be made only in the Latin alphabet. **If other characters are used, the entries shall also be transliterated into the Latin alphabet.**”

Paragraph 7: On the proposal of the Russian delegation, the words “**of paragraphs 4 and 5**” were added after “numbers 1-7” and “numbers 8-14”.

Paragraph 9: The same remark as for paragraph 8 applies to the Russian text. It was also pointed out that the phrase “**not used for the carriage of passengers**” after “coupled to a trailer”, for subcategory DIE, was missing from the English and Russian texts.

In the English text, for category BE and subcategories of permit CIE and DIE, “motor” should be inserted before “vehicle” (3rd line).

Paragraph 10: The text should be amended to read: “Domestic legislation may (...) define categories ... The designations of such categories (...) should not resemble (...) symbols...”

Annex 7: The amendments to the left and right hand pages of model No.3 were communicated during the meeting.

Explanatory memorandum

Article 1, 2nd subparagraph: At the end of the subparagraph “Vienna Convention” should be replaced by “1968 Convention”.

Article 16, paragraph 1(b): The following phrase should be added to the end of the paragraph: “The Contracting Parties may in addition enact other provisions.”

Article 16, paragraph 2: The last sentence should be amended to read: “... users of the carriageway (for example, cyclists using cycle lanes) but also users of cycle tracks (...).”

Article 25 bis, paragraphs 1 and 3: The text should read “and also when an incident occurs”.

Article 37

(2nd paragraph): “Also” should be deleted before “intended”.

(3rd paragraph): The beginning of the subparagraph is amended to read: “In this sense, the amendment to paragraph 1 of Article 37 sets out more clearly and accurately the basic principles under which the distinguishing sign ...”.

Article 41

Paragraph 1: The French text should read “épreuves théorique et pratique” instead of “examens théorique et pratique” and “exams” in English instead of “examinations”.

Paragraph 2: The text should read “(subparagraph (a) (ii))” instead of “(subparagraph (b))”.

Paragraph 5 first sentence: The text should read “international” instead of “domestic”.

Paragraph 6: The text should read “amended” instead of “deleted”.

Article 43: The last sentence was deleted.

Annex 6 (introductory paragraph): The phrase referring to the European Union was deleted.

(b) European Agreement supplementing the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/2, TRANS/WP.1/2003/2/Rev.1

8. The Working Party did not accept the proposal by Finland to replace in paragraph 7 of the Agreement (Ad Article 8 of the Convention) “0.25 mg per litre in the air expelled” by “an equivalent level per litre in the air expelled”. The delegate from Luxembourg reiterated his country’s reservation concerning the lowering of the permitted level of alcohol in the blood.

9. Document *TRANS/WP.1/2003/2/Rev.1* was adopted without substantive changes. In the explanatory memorandum, the last phrase, referring to the European Union, was deleted.

(c) Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/3, TRANS/WP.1/2003/3/Rev.1

10. Document *TRANS/WP.1/2003/3/Rev.1*, which served as a basis for the discussion, was adopted with the following amendments:

Article 13 bis: In the English text only, (a) should be deleted after “2 bis”.

Article 29 bis: The following sentence should be added to introduce the new article: “*Insert the following new Article 29 bis*”.

Annex 1, section E, subsection II

Paragraph 9 (Sentence introducing the amendment): “Subparagraphs” should be used to replace “paragraphs” in the English text.

Paragraph 14: After a lengthy discussion, the first sentence was amended to read: “Sign E, 17 ‘EMERGENCY STOPPING PLACE’, indicates a place which **shall only be used by drivers for stopping or parking in case of** emergency or danger.” The representative of the Scandinavian countries present said that the symbol on the sign E, 17^a was already used in those countries, although with a different colour, to indicate a diversion and not a stopping place and that this would probably induce them to enter a reservation to the introduction of this sign into the Convention.

Explanatory memorandum

Article 1 (2nd subparagraph): “Vienna Convention” should be replaced by “1968 Convention”.

Article 7: The delegation of Germany had in the past notified its reservation concerning the authorization in the Convention of fluorescent materials for signs and therefore requested that the explanatory wording should be revised to delete a reference to the performance of such signs.

The delegation of Switzerland for its part proposed the addition of the following phrase at the end of the subparagraph: “... and to recommend that domestic legislation specify the conditions for the use of such materials.”

Article 13 bis, paragraph 2 bis (new): The delegation of Switzerland said that it would send a new text for this article to the secretariat, for consideration at the forty-third session.

Article 26 bis: “Shall be ...” should be replaced by “may be ...”.

Article 29, paragraph 2 (1st subparagraph): At the beginning of the subparagraph “Vienna Convention” should be replaced by “1968 Convention” and “Chapter II” by “subsection II”.

Annex 1, section D, subsection II, paragraph 3: In the Russian text, “Sign B” should be replaced by “Sign B.1”. In order to take account of a comment by the delegation of Germany, WP.1 further amended the wording of this paragraph to read: “The lack of precision of the existing wording of paragraph 3 leaves the way open for differing interpretations of the rules of priority to be applied at roundabouts. Sign D, 3 is addressed to drivers entering the roundabout. However, neither the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic nor the Convention on Road Signs and Signals defines the priority rules which apply to drivers already in the roundabout. The aim of the amendment proposal therefore is to make it legally clear that the driver in the roundabout has priority over drivers entering the roundabout when the signs B, 1 or B, 2 are displayed at the approaches together with sign D, 3.”

Annex 1, section E, subsection II: “Paragraphs 9 and 14” were added to the end of the heading.

The first subparagraph was amended to read:

“The aim of the amendment proposed in paragraph 9 is to define in greater detail the meaning of sign E, 11^a ‘TUNNEL’ and the conditions for its use either in advance or at the entrance to the tunnel.”

Annex 1, section F

Subsection I: The third sentence was amended to read: “The symbol F, 14 (emergency telephone) may be black or red.”

Subsection II: The subparagraph was amended to read: “The aim of the proposed amendment is to add the two new symbols referred to in subsection I and in section E, subsection II, paragraph 14 above.”

Annex 1, section G, subsection V: The wording was amended to read: “The aim of the proposed amendment is to harmonize (...) signs indicating emergency exits which are of primordial importance in tunnels.”

(d) European Agreement supplementing the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/4, TRANS/WP.1/2003/4/Rev.1

11. The Working Party adopted document *TRANS/WP.1/2003/4/Rev.1*. The Russian delegate pointed out a wrong term in the Russian text.

(e) Protocol on Road Markings additional to the 1971 European Agreement supplementing the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals

Documents: TRANS/WP.1/2003/5, TRANS/WP.1/2003/5/Rev.1

12. The Working Party also adopted document *TRANS/WP.1/2003/5/Rev.1*. In the English text, however, it was requested to revise the wording of the amended paragraph 6 (Ad Article 29 of the Convention) on the basis of the existing text. The Russian delegate said that he would send the secretariat the exact wording for the Russian version of the amendment to the “Additional paragraphs to be inserted immediately after paragraph 2 of this article.”

PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH ROAD SAFETY WEEK IN THE ECE REGION

(agenda item 4)

Document: Informal document No.7

13. The Chairman of the Working Party said that the small informal group (Switzerland, France, Spain, Netherlands, ECMT and the secretariat), established to prepare the seminar of 5 April 2004 in the context of the Fourth Road Safety Week, had met just prior to the session to finalize the programme. He said that the comments made by delegates at the forty-second session had been taken into account in drafting the programme and emphasized that the greater part of the work of organizing the seminar remained to be done and required considerable technical and logistical coordination in its preparation.

14. The secretariat presented the contents of the programme of the seminar as adopted by the small group (informal document No. 7) and said that on the occasion of the Fourth Week an exhibition would be held at the Palais des Nations in which the countries and organizations were invited to take an active role and to present the brochures, posters, videos and other information material they had prepared for the event. In this context, delegates were requested to inform the secretariat rapidly, either by e-mail or by letter, of their intentions with regard to the Fourth Week, and also constitute an active link with road safety bodies and organizations in their countries in publicizing the seminar to secure large-scale involvement and ensure that the event was a genuine success.

15. The representative of Laser Europe introduced his association, established in 1998 with the aim of contributing to the development of road safety in Europe; it had organized the fifth festival of road safety films at UNESCO in April 2003. He went on to say that Laser Europe was intending to act as a link with local communities for the Fourth Week, as it had already done for the Third Road Safety Week in 2000. Lastly, he said that his association possessed films and multimedia documents which could illustrate aggressiveness on the roads in the context of the seminar.

PREPARATION OF THE WORKSHOP ON ROAD SIGNING (*agenda item 5*)

Document: Informal document No 6

16. The representative of France introduced the programme of work of the workshop on road signing (informal document No. 6) which would be held on 22 September 2003, the purpose of which was to present the results of some of the studies conducted, and also certain problems relating to road signing. She said that the workshop, which would not be followed by conclusions, was essentially aimed at better targeting future work to be undertaken by WP.1. Lastly, she invited all delegates to come accompanied by specialists in road signing.

OTHER BUSINESS (*agenda item 6*)

17. Resolutions R.E.1 and R.E.2

The Chairman of WP.1 reminded the meeting that after the finalization of the work on the amendments to the Conventions and Agreements, which was a matter of priority, attention would be concentrated on redrafting and modernizing Resolutions R.E.1 and R.E.2 which were to be supplemented by provisions concerning safety in road tunnels in order to introduce into them recommendations examined by the small group on tunnels in July 2002 and by provisions concerning the problems of roadside checks, assistance to victims, alcohol and drugs.

Several small groups had been set up with a view to this future work, in particular the group on the restructuring of resolutions (Switzerland, France, PRI, secretariat) with responsibility for proposing a new structure on the basis of an earlier proposal by France, and the group on roadside checks (Switzerland, France, secretariat and possibly PRI), with responsibility for defining guidelines on the subject on the basis of existing resolutions/recommendations. Before the possible establishment of a group on alcohol, with responsibility for updating the earlier recommendation on driving under the influence of alcohol (TRANS/SC.1/336/Rev.1 of 13 March 1989), the secretariat was requested to make this recommendation available to delegations with a view to taking a decision at the September session. Where roadside checks were concerned, WP.1's decision to establish a small group was taken after the subject had been introduced by the delegation of Switzerland (informal document No. 5 recalling the context of this proposal).

18. Overtaking

The Working Party took note of the informal document prepared by the Russian Federation (document No. 3) introducing the problems of overtaking and the verbal explanations provided by the delegation. The Working Party considered that, before envisaging any amendments or additions to the Vienna Convention on the subject, it was necessary to have a specific view of the problem in terms of national practices. It therefore entrusted a small informal group (Russian Federation, Estonia and Poland) with the preparation of a draft questionnaire which should be submitted to the Working Party for consideration at its forty-fourth session (April 2004).

19. Incidence on road signs of the creation of a new classification of dangerous goods for traffic in tunnels

The Working Party requested the secretariat to set out in the form of a note the problems relating to the introduction by the Working Party on Dangerous Goods (WP.15) of the new classification of such goods for traffic in tunnels so that it would be in a position to evaluate the possible incidence of this classification on the road signs defined by the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals.

20. Road safety campaigns

The Working Party took note of the informal documents prepared by the secretariat (No.1 and 1 bis) containing a compilation of the replies received to questionnaires sent out in 2001 and 2002 on road safety campaigns conducted by the ECE countries. It thanked the secretariat for the work done and considered that these data constituted an extremely interesting database in the context of the exchange of experience between countries. It therefore hoped that the questionnaire would continue to be sent out in the future. It requested, however, that an entry should be added enabling the person completing the questionnaire to enter their telephone number or e-mail address.

21. The contribution of the United Nations to road safety

At this special session, in the presence of the Director of the ECE Transport Division and the Director-General of the FIA Foundation, the Working Party welcomed Ambassador Fuad Al-Hinai, the permanent representative of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations, who had come to introduce resolution 57/309 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 May 2003.

In his introduction, the ambassador recalled some data on the magnitude of road safety problems in the world (on average 2,700 deaths per day) and the procedural stages which had had to be negotiated in order for the General Assembly to accept this resolution, and welcomed the fact that the General Assembly had, for the first time in its history, agreed to discuss road safety. He also congratulated the Economic Commission for Europe on the quality of the work achieved by WP.1 and WP.29 in particular, and expressed the hope that all countries could take advantage of its excellence and the experience acquired by the ECE countries. He hoped that collaboration could be developed with the ECE and thanked WP.1 for creating a synergy between the Fourth Road Safety Week and World Health Day on 7 April 2004 which would be accompanied by the publication of a WHO report aimed at increasing road safety awareness in all countries.

In his reply, the Chairman of WP.1 thanked the ambassador for his initiative in taking the cause of road safety to the highest political level and stressed the importance of taking the work of UN/ECE into account in order to ensure the greatest possible synergy.

This exchange was followed by a number of statements which are summarized below:

- The Director General of the FIA Foundation thanked the secretariat for distributing in the three languages the paper he had prepared for the session (informal document No. 2) describing the role to be played by the United Nations in road safety. He pointed out that there was a major lack of expertise worldwide, but also stressed the need of not weakening the sector in globalizing it.
- The Director of the Transport Division thanked the ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman and the Director of the FIA Foundation and also stressed the importance of working in synergy. He said that, through the Directors of the other regional Commissions, he had invited all countries to join the Fourth Road Safety Week and that it was important that a maximum of countries should accede to the ECE Conventions and Agreements. He also stressed the importance of using the work of ECE as a basis to avoiding duplication. Lastly, he considered that WP.1 was best placed to play this international role and expressed the hope that the General Assembly would recognize the role of ECE's work.
- The delegations of France, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation and several NGOs also took the floor to thank the ambassador for his initiative to increase awareness of road safety in all countries. They referred in turn to the difficulty of the task and emphasized the central role that WP.1 should play in the development of the world strategy.

22. Forthcoming meetings of WP.1

The secretariat informed delegates that the forthcoming meetings of WP.1 would be held on:

- 22-25 September 2003 (forty-third session)
- 6-8 April 2004 (forty-fourth session)

ADOPTION OF DECISIONS (*agenda item 7*)

23. The list of decisions taken by WP.1 at its forty-second session, prepared by the secretariat, was adopted.
