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

**Consolidated proposals for amendments to the Vienna Convention
on Road Traffic**

Note by the secretariat

This document is a compilation of the proposals for amendments to the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic adopted to date by the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) (see documents TRANS/WP.1/2002/23, TRANS/WP.1/2002/23/Rev.1 and TRANS/WP.1/86). The proposed amendments appear in bold and are presented in the order of the articles and annexes of the Convention. New additions or amendments adopted, on the basis of document TRANS/WP.1/2002/23/Rev.1, by WP.1 at its fortieth session or by the Legal Group at its meeting of 26 November 2002, appear in bold italics.

At the end of this document can be found explanatory notes for the proposed amendments. The amendments to the explanations contained in document TRANS/WP.1/2002/23 appear in italics.

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Part I - Proposed amendments to the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic

I. Article 1: Definitions

Insert a new subparagraph (g bis) to read:

“(g bis) Cycle lane means a part of a carriageway designated for cycles. A cycle lane is distinguished from the rest of the carriageway by longitudinal road markings.”

Insert a new subparagraph (g ter) to read:

“(g ter) Cycle track means an independent road or part of a road designated for cycles, signposted as such. A cycle track is separated from other roads or other parts of the same road by structural means.”

II. Article 8: Drivers

Add a new paragraph 6 to read:

“6. A driver of a vehicle shall at all times minimize any activity other than driving. Domestic legislation should lay down rules on the use of phones by drivers. In any case, legislation shall prohibit the use by a driver of a handheld phone while the vehicle is in motion.”

III. Article 11: Overtaking and movement of traffic in lines

Insert a new subparagraph 1 (c) to read:

“(c) Domestic legislation may authorize cyclists and moped riders to pass stationary vehicles or vehicles moving at a low speed other than cycles or mopeds on the side which corresponds to the direction of traffic provided that sufficient space is available.”

IV. Article 16: Change of direction

Amend Article 16.1 (b) to read:

“(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, for instance by crossing the intersection in two separate stages, move as closely as possible to the centreline 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.”**

Amend Article 16.2 to read:

“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.**”

V. Article 23: Standing and parking

Amend the last sentence of Article 23.1 to read:

“**Both** in and outside built-up areas they shall not be stationed on cycle tracks, **cycle lanes, bus lanes, tracks for horseback riders, footpaths,** pavements or on verges specially provided for pedestrian traffic, save where applicable domestic legislation so permits.”

Amend Article 23.6 to read:

“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 cycles and mopeds.**”

VI. Article 27: Special rules applicable to cyclists, moped drivers and motor cyclists

Amend Article 27.4 to read:

“4. Where cycle **lanes or cycle** tracks exist, Contracting Parties or subdivisions thereof may forbid cyclists to use the rest of the carriageway. In the same circumstances, they may authorize moped drivers to use the **cycle lane or cycle** track and, if they consider it advisable, prohibit them from using the rest of the carriageway. **Domestic legislation shall specify under what conditions other road users may use the cycle lane or cycle track or cross them, maintaining cyclists’ safety at all times.**”

VII. Article 37: Distinguishing sign of the State of registration

Amend and supplement Article 37.1 to read:

“(a) Every motor vehicle in international traffic shall display at the rear, in addition to its registration number, **the** distinguishing sign of the State in which it is registered.

(b) **This sign may either be placed separately from the registration plate(s) or may be incorporated into the registration plate(s).**

(c) **When the distinguishing sign is incorporated into the registration plate, it must also appear on the front registration plate of the vehicle if such is obligatory.**”

Amend the first sentence of Article 37.2 to read:

“2. Every trailer coupled to a motor vehicle and required under Article 36 of this Convention to display a registration number at the rear shall also display at the rear, **either separately from its registration plate or incorporated into it**, the distinguishing sign of the State where the registration number was assigned.”

Amend Article 37.3 to read:

“3. The composition of the distinguishing sign, and the manner of displaying it **or its incorporation into the registration plate, shall conform to the conditions laid down in Annexes 2 and 3** to this Convention.”

VIII. Article 41: Driving permits

Amend subparagraphs (b) and (c) of Article 41.1 to read:

“(b) Contracting Parties undertake to ensure that driving permits are issued only after verification by the competent authorities **that the driver possesses the required knowledge and skills; the persons authorized to check if drivers have the necessary knowledge and skills must have appropriate qualifications; the contents and procedure of both theoretical and practical exams are regulated by national legislation;**

(c) **Domestic legislation must lay down requirements for obtaining a driving permit, including those for the theoretical and practical exams and medical conditions;**”

Amend Article 41.2 to read:

“Contracting Parties shall recognize:

(a) Any domestic permit conforming to the provisions of Annex 6 to this Convention;

(b) Any international permit conforming to the provisions of Annex 7 to this Convention, **on condition that it is presented together with the corresponding domestic permit**, as valid for driving in their territories a vehicle coming within the categories covered by the **permit(s)**, provided that the **permit(s) is (are)** still valid and that **it was (they were)** issued by another Contracting Party or subdivision thereof or by an association duly empowered thereto by such other Contracting Party or one of its subdivisions. The provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to learner-driver permits.”

IX. Annex 1: EXCEPTIONS TO THE OBLIGATION TO ADMIT MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

Amend Annex 1, paragraph 9 to read:

“9. Contracting Parties may refuse to admit to their territories in international traffic any motor vehicle, or any trailer coupled to a motor vehicle, which displays a distinguishing sign other than **one of those** prescribed in Article 37 of this Convention. **Contracting Parties may not refuse admission to a vehicle which has a distinguishing sign placed separately from the registration plate in conformity with the provisions of this Convention substituting a distinguishing sign which is incorporated into the registration plate(s).**”

X. Annex 2: REGISTRATION NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

Amend the title of Annex 2 to read:

“Annex 2: REGISTRATION NUMBER AND PLATE OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC”

Amend Annex 2, paragraph 3 (first sentence) to read:

“3. When the registration number is displayed on a (...) plate, this plate shall be flat and fixed in a vertical or nearly vertical position and at right angles to the vehicle’s median longitudinal plane.”

Replace Annex 2, paragraph 4 by the following:

“4. **Without prejudice to the provisions of Annex 5, paragraph 61 (g) of this Convention, the background of the registration plate on which the registration number and, where applicable, the distinguishing sign of the State in which the vehicle is registered, possibly completed by the flag or emblem according to the conditions defined in Annex 3, is displayed, may be of a retro-reflective material.**”

Add a new paragraph 5 to Annex 2 as follows:

“5. **The background of the part of the registration plate on which the distinguishing sign is incorporated shall be of the same material as that used for the registration number.**”

XI. Annex 3: DISTINGUISHING SIGN OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

Amend Annex 3 to read:

“1. The distinguishing sign referred to in Article 37 of this Convention shall

consist of one to three letters in capital Latin characters. (...)

2. When the distinguishing sign is displayed separately from the registration plate, it must conform to the following conditions:

2.1 The letters shall have a height of at least 0.08 m and their strokes a width of at least 0.01 m. The letters shall be **in black** on a white background having the shape of an ellipse with the major axis horizontal. **The white background may be of a retro-reflective material.**

2.2 When the distinguishing sign consists of only one letter, the major axis of the ellipse may be vertical.

2.3 **The distinguishing sign shall not be affixed in such a way that it could be confused with the registration number or impair its legibility.**

2.4 On motorcycles and their trailers, the dimensions of the axes of the ellipse shall be at least 0.175 m and 0.115 m. On other motor vehicles and their trailers, the dimensions of the axes of the ellipse shall be at least:

(a) 0.24 m and 0.145 m if the distinguishing sign comprises three letters.

(b) 0.175 m and 0.115 m if the distinguishing sign comprises less than three letters.

3. When the distinguishing sign is incorporated into the registration plate(s), the following conditions shall apply:

3.1 The letters shall have a height of at least 0.02 m, taking as a reference a registration plate 0.110 m high.

3.2 (a) The distinguishing sign of the State of registration, which may be supplemented where applicable by the flag or emblem of the State or the emblem of the regional economic integration organization to which the country belongs, shall be displayed on the far left or right of the rear registration plate, but preferably on the left or the far upper left on plates where the number takes up two lines.

(b) When, in addition to the distinguishing sign, a *non-numerical* symbol and/or a flag or a regional or local emblem is displayed on the registration plate, the distinguishing sign of the State of registration shall obligatorily be placed on the far left of the plate.

3.3 The flag or emblem supplementing where applicable the distinguishing sign of the State of registration shall be positioned so that it cannot impair the legibility of the distinguishing sign and shall preferably be placed above it.

3.4 The distinguishing sign of the State of registration shall be positioned so as to be easily identifiable and so that it cannot be confused with the registration number or impair its legibility. The distinguishing sign shall therefore be at least of a different colour from the registration number, or have a different background colour to that reserved for the registration number, or be clearly separated, preferably by a line, from the registration number.

3.5 For the registration plates of motorcycles and their trailers and/or for registration plates taking up two lines, the size of the letters of the distinguishing sign as well as, where applicable, the size of the national flag or emblem of the State of registration or the symbol of the regional economic integration organization which the country belongs to may be appropriately modified.

3.6 The provisions of this paragraph shall apply according to the same principles to the front registration plate of the vehicle when this plate is obligatory.”

4. The relevant provisions of Annex 2, paragraph 3, shall apply to (...) the distinguishing sign.”

XII. Annex 5: TECHNICAL CONDITIONS CONCERNING MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS

Corrigendum concerning the Russian version only

In chapter II, paragraph 19, correct the wording of the definition of “Rear registration plate illuminating device” to read:

“Rear registration (регистрационный) plate illuminating device” means the device ensuring the illumination of the rear registration (регистрационный) plate; it may be made up of several optical elements;”.

Correct the wording of chapter II, paragraph 25, to read:

“25. Every motor vehicle displaying a registration (регистрационный) number at the rear shall be equipped with a lighting device such that the number is legible at night in clear weather.”

Correct the wording of chapter IV, paragraph 61 (g), to read:

“(g) By authorizing the emission towards the rear of white or coloured light reflected by figures or letters or by the background of rear registration (регистрационный) plates, by distinctive signs or by other distinctive marks required by domestic legislation;”

Part II - Explanatory notes

Article 1 - Definitions

Since cyclists are a particularly vulnerable category of users, it is proposed to introduce into the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic new measures to favour and improve their safety. In addition to this article, these measures concern Articles 11, 16, 23 and 37 below.

In this context, it is proposed to add definitions of the concepts of “cycle lane” and “cycle track” (subparagraphs (g bis) and (g ter)) corresponding to the two forms of adaptation of the infrastructure for cycle traffic. These two definitions will at the same time be incorporated into the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals which is the subject of a separate amendment.

Article 8 - Drivers

Considering the major risks for road safety caused by the use by drivers of appliances such as the telephone while driving, the proposed amendment is intended to introduce new provisions (new paragraph 6) into the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic inviting the Contracting Parties to take steps to regulate the use of telephones by drivers. They are requested at least to prohibit drivers from using handheld telephones while their vehicle is in motion.

Article 11 - Overtaking and movement of traffic in lines

The purpose of the amendment proposed in paragraph 1 (c) is to give Contracting Parties the opportunity of permitting cyclists and moped riders to pass stationary vehicles or vehicles moving at a low speed on the side which corresponds to the direction of traffic. This practice is already applied by countries with significant cycle traffic.

Article 16 - Change of direction

The purpose of the amendment proposed in paragraph 1 (b) is to give cyclists and moped riders the opportunity to change direction by crossing the intersection in two separate stages.

The second proposal (paragraph 2) requires drivers, when preparing to change direction, whether they intend to cross another carriageway or not, (...) to give way to other road users. “Other road users” should be taken to mean not only users of the carriageway but also users of (...) cycle tracks or lanes.

Article 23 - Standing and parking

The purpose of the amendments proposed in paragraph 1 (last sentence) is to extend, in built-up areas and outside these, the prohibition of standing or parking to other types of infrastructure such as cycle lanes, bus lanes, tracks for horseback riders and footpaths.

The second proposal (paragraph 6) sets out the principle that Contracting Parties may introduce other provisions on standing and parking than those for which Article 23 provides and individual provisions for the standing and parking of cycles and mopeds.

Article 27 - Special rules applicable to cyclists, moped drivers and motorcyclists

The proposal in paragraph 4 is intended on the one hand (first sentence) to extend existing provisions to cycle tracks (...), and on the other (second sentence) to leave it for domestic legislation to specify which other road users may also use the cycle tracks or lanes.

Article 37 - Distinguishing sign of the State of registration

Pursuant to existing Article 37 of the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, only the distinguishing sign of the State of registration affixed to the rear of the vehicle separately from the registration plate is permitted.

The amendments proposed are also intended to permit a practice already recognized in the European Union, namely, the incorporation of the distinguishing sign of the State of registration into the registration plate.

Taking this new possibility into account has meant that Article 37.1 sets out more clearly and accurately the basic principles under which the distinguishing sign of the State of registration is authorized and with which it must comply; the terms and conditions for its application, defined in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 below, have also had to be revised. In parallel, paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 37 have been adapted in line with the principles established.

Article 41 - Driving permits

The purpose of the amendments proposed in paragraph 1 is to specify and reinforce the conditions of issue of domestic driving permits, in particular by making it an obligation in national legislation to define the content and the conditions for the theoretical and practical examinations (subparagraph (b)), and to establish (subparagraph (c)) the conditions required to obtain a driving permit (age, minimum standards for physical and mental fitness to drive a motor vehicle, residence, etc.).

In response to increasing evidence that international driving permits are fraudulently issued, inter alia, by means of the Internet, the amendment proposed in paragraph 2 is intended to reinforce the rules relating to the presentation of the international driving permit. It is therefore proposed that the validity of this permit should be recognized only if it is presented together with the corresponding domestic permit on the basis of which it was issued.

Annex 1: EXCEPTIONS TO THE OBLIGATION TO ADMIT MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

The amendment proposed in paragraph 9 is intended to specify the conditions for the admission of a vehicle when the distinguishing sign incorporated into the registration plate does not conform, so as to avoid incorrect or zealous interpretations on the ground when checks are made.

Annex 2: REGISTRATION NUMBER OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

The proposed amendments concerning this Annex are intended to:

- complete the title of the Annex to bring it into line with its content;*
- delete “special” before “plate” (paragraph 3, first sentence);*
- permit the background of the registration plate to be of a retro-reflective material (paragraph 4) and replace existing references to Article 32.5, which became obsolete following an earlier amendment, by paragraph 61 (g) of Annex 5;*
- specify (paragraph 5) that the background of the part of the registration plate on which the distinguishing sign is incorporated shall be of the same material as that used for the registration number.*

Annex 3: DISTINGUISHING SIGN OF MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAILERS IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

The whole of this Annex has been restructured so as to take into account the introduction of the distinguishing sign on the registration plate when it obeys rules different from those concerning the distinguishing sign displayed separately from the plate, as defined in paragraph 2. When this amendment was drafted, improvements of form and additional clarifications were made to the existing provisions.

The amendments proposed in paragraph 3 are intended to:

- allow for the possibility of affixing to the registration plate, in addition to the distinguishing sign, a national flag or emblem or the symbol of the regional economic integration organization to which the country belongs;*

- *specify the dimensions of the distinguishing sign incorporated into the registration plate (...), and the conditions with which it must comply, particularly as regards its position and its legibility;*
- *permit a reduction in the size of the letters of the distinguishing sign and of the flag or emblem for the plates of motorcycles and for registration plates taking up two lines.*

**Annex 5: TECHNICAL CONDITIONS CONCERNING MOTOR VEHICLES
AND TRAILERS**

The amendments proposed concern the Russian version only and are intended to correct terminology errors.
