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Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety

Eighty-first session

Geneva, 21-25 September 2020

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

I. Attendance

1. The Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) held its eighty-first session in Geneva from 21 to 25 September 2020, chaired by Ms. L. Iorio (Italy). Representatives of the following ECE member States participated: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.
2. The representatives of non-ECE member States also participated: Australia, Brazil, India and Japan.
3. The following non-governmental organizations were also represented: American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), Europäische Fahrlehrer Assoziation (EFA), European Transport Safety Council (ETSC), EuroMed Transport Project, European Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), Federation of International Motorcycling (FIM), International Federation of Pedestrians (IFP), International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA), International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (OICA), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Road Safety Institute (RSI) "Panos Mylonas", Laser Europe, the Law Commission of England and Wales and World Bicycle Industry Association (WBIA).
4. Representatives from Johns Hopkins University, University of South Carolina and Waymo participated as observers.

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.1/172).
6. WP.1 expressed its regrets that the report of the previous session (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/171) as well as ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/8 and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/3/Rev.1 were not available in French and Russian at this session.

* This document is reissued for technical reasons on 11 December 2020.



It stressed again that the availability of formal documents in three official ECE languages is the “sine qua non” at the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1).

7. The secretariat explained that the current session is taking place in a dual format due to the COVID-19 situation. Participants can attend in-person or can connect via an Internet platform with simultaneous interpretation in three official languages. In addition, due to United Nations resource challenges and the reduction in duration of sessions from three to two hours, some sessions would be in English only.

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

8. Due to time constraints, national delegations and international organizations had the opportunity to submit, in writing, information on national and international road safety activities and initiatives, including recent and forthcoming changes to their traffic legislation as well as any information on the events taking place prior to the next WP.1 session. No written submissions were received.

9. The secretariat informed WP.1 about a document on the implementation of the ITC Strategy prepared by the ITC secretariat (Informal document No. 4) and about a request by the ITC Bureau to share this document with working parties. The secretariat recalled that WP.1 had already adopted Informal document No. 4/Rev.1 (March 2020) – which describes its activities and actions in the framework of ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2 – but nevertheless invited WP.1 delegates to provide further suggestions and comments to the WP.1 Chair by 9 October 2020.

10. WP.1 welcomed and appreciated a statement made by Ms. Marie Gaultier-Melleray, who was appointed as France’s Inter-Ministerial Delegate for Road Safety in June 2020. She outlined France’s continued firm commitment to improving road safety as well highlighted the country’s focus on education, user behaviour, and new technologies.

11. WP.1 also welcomed presentations by FIA on “The FIA affordable and safe helmet initiative” and by the European Driving Schools Association (EFA) on “A European Driving Training Curriculum”. With respect to the latter, WP.1 stressed that driver education is of utmost importance in the context of safe mobility policies and rapid advances in vehicle technology.

12. The Chair of ITU Focus Group on AI for Autonomous and Assisted Driving gave a presentation on the challenges related to automotive technological advances in the context of the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and in the light of the amendment proposal as per ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/1/Rev.1 (presentation and related Informal document No. 6 are available on the WP.1 webpage).

13. The Human Factors in International Regulations for Automated Driving Systems (HF-IRADS) group submitted an Informal document No. 8 and made a presentation providing its guidance on the major human factors challenges to be considered when providing remote support and control to assist vehicle operation under automation. WP.1 appreciated the presentation and encouraged the HF-IRADS group to share future developments on such initiatives.

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

A. Consistency between the Convention on Road Traffic (1968) and Vehicle Technical Regulations

14. WP.1 resumed discussions of points (i), (j), (r), (t), 34, 35, and 36 in ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2017/1/Rev.1 and decided to delete points (i) and (j) as well as corresponding points 35 and 36. The Group also reached agreement on points (r), (t) and 34. To facilitate the WP.1 work on reviewing the proposed changes at the next session, the secretariat will table an informal document which contains draft

ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2017/1/Rev.1 with the provisions that are still to be discussed indicated in bold.

B. Driving permits

1. Amendment proposal

15. At WP.1 request at the last two sessions, the informal group of experts on driving permits submitted ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2018/1/Rev.3 and related documents ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/6 (Appendix A), ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/7 (Appendix B), and ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/8 (Appendix C) containing an amendment proposal with changes in relation to the 1968 Convention based on elements of the three options (a), (b) and (c) in ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2018/1/Rev.1 (an “amalgamated approach”). The informal group also recommended changes beyond the amalgamated approach as well as suggested potential options for minimum security features in domestic and international driving permits. The United Kingdom gave a presentation to facilitate WP.1 discussion.

16. WP.1 expressed its appreciation to the informal group of experts for their continued work and the extensive amendment proposal. Following a lengthy discussion on the amalgamated approach (as summarized in the first four bullet points in paragraph 2 of ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2018/1/Rev.3) and in particular, whether this included a standalone IDP, it was noted that the proposal for a standalone IDP was not supported by some contracting parties.

17. WP.1 requested that the informal group reflect on the discussion at this session and return to WP.1 in March 2020 with a concrete proposal how to proceed. If deemed useful, the informal group may, instead, develop a simplified proposal amendment that suggests options for minimum security features for the current system of DDPs and IDPs under the 1968 Convention (without the amalgamated approach), as well as any improvements to the current system or permits. To facilitate the above, the Chair invited WP.1 delegates to provide comments to the informal group of experts.

18. The Chair also invited the informal group of experts to consider the “set of principles” contained in paragraph 46 of ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2018/1/Rev.1 (as extracted in page 3 of Informal document No. 7) to bridge the differences between the 1949 and 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic which could also be used as a reference for a future amendment proposal to the 1968 Convention.

19. During the discussion, the secretariat suggested WP.1 to consider using the table entitled ‘Prevailing Convention for the issue/use of DDPs and IDPs’ (Table 6, ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2018/1/Rev.1) to provide guidance in this regard. WP.1 agreed on the relevance of the table and requested the secretariat to compile a document (based on the table containing the text) for a guidance note or brochure.

2. Mobile driving permits

20. AAMVA made a presentation on “mobile driving permits”. WP.1 appreciated the presentation and welcomed updates on future developments of such initiatives.

C. Automated driving

1. Vehicles with automated driving systems: The concept of activities other than driving

21. At this session, WP.1 discussed ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/3/Rev.1 as well as complementary Informal document no. 9 (WP.1 noted that Switzerland was not a co-author of this document). The discussion centred on defining the specific focus of this document i.e., exactly what type of motor vehicles (and technology) is to be a subject matter. WP.1 invited the authors to revise ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/3/Rev.1 by combining it with Informal document no. 9 and by taking into account the comments expressed at this session.

2. Situations when a driver operates a vehicle from the outside of the vehicle

22. At the last session, the Working Party considered ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/2 and focussed on how to properly address the complex issues related to operating a vehicle from the outside of the vehicle. WP.1 had invited the authors (United Kingdom) to review their initial approach, and to draft ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/2/Rev.1 for the current session. At this session, the United Kingdom informed WP.1 about comments and suggestions received to date which it intends to incorporate into the revised document to be submitted at a future session as ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/2/Rev.1.

3. Optical and/or audible signals in DAS and ADS vehicles

23. At the last session, Germany had introduced Informal document No. 13 (March 2020) on the possible need to require an automated vehicle to indicate – by either an optical or audible signal or both – its mode of operation (“automated vs manual”). WP.1 had agreed to consider this topic in more detail at the current session. At this session, Germany informed WP.1 (through the secretariat) that due to the COVID-19 situation the relevant World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) bodies (i.e., Working Party on Lighting and Light-Signalling (GRE) and Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles (GRVA)) could not meet and thus make progress on this issue. France stressed the importance of this topic. WP.1 agreed and invited Germany to provide a revised document at the next session.

4. Amendment proposal to Article 34 in the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic

24. WP.1 considered the amendment proposal to Article 34 (and its corresponding explanatory memorandum) contained in ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/1/Rev.1 and, after discussion, decided to adopt it without any changes. Germany abstained from the decision to adopt. The secretariat informed WP.1 that it will forward the proposal to the Office of Legal Affairs as soon as the report of the current WP.1 session is available in French and Russian. The proposal and explanatory memorandum are provided in addendum (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/173/Add.1) to this report.

5. Establishment of Group of Experts on drafting a new legal instrument on the use of automated vehicles in traffic

25. At the last session, WP.1 had discussed the ITC decision not to approve the establishment of a new Group of Experts (para 35, ITC Informal document No. 10/Rev.6) and its request for WP.1 to reconsider the proposed TOR (contained in ECE/TRANS/2020/7). ITC also requested the WP.1 Chair consult “all relevant working parties”, prepare a revised draft of the TOR taking into account the suggestions received, and table the document at the September 2020 WP.1 session (paragraph 17, ECE/TRANS/WP.1/171).

26. Subsequently, the WP.1 Chair communicated and sought contributions – as requested – with all the relevant working parties as well all WP.1 delegates. The received inputs have been consolidated in a new revised document prepared by the Chair and secretariat as ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/2.

27. At the current session, WP.1 discussed the document, made some revisions, added paragraph 12, and adopted it. WP.1 requested the secretariat to have the revised ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/2 translated into French and Russian at the earliest opportunity and submit it to the February ITC session for endorsement.

28. Upon the request of one delegation for clarification on the next steps, the secretariat explained that for the new Group to be established, its terms of reference must be submitted to EXCOM in three official languages. The earliest opportunity to have the TOR in three official languages is the February ITC session. In addition, the ITC Bureau (as all Bureaux) does “not adopt the conclusions, recommendations, decisions and meeting reports of the subsidiary bodies” (Guidelines on procedures and practices for UNECE bodies, E/ECE/1464, paragraph 12). As a result, the ITC Bureau would be unable to submit the TOR to EXCOM for final approval and this is why WP.1 is submitting the TOR to ITC in February 2021.

29. Canada and United States stated that there was no need for a new convention to address automated vehicles.

V. Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968) (agenda item 4)

Group of Experts on Road Signs and Signals

30. WP.1 resumed and completed its discussion of the Group of Experts' final report with comments, using Informal document No. 10/Rev.1 (March 2020). As a result, WP.1 concluded its review of ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2019/4. WP.1 also continued its discussion of the Group of Experts' proposals to amend Annexes 1 and 3 of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals with comments, using Informal document No. 12/Rev.1 (March 2020). The discussions will continue at the next session.

31. The secretariat informed WP.1 about the approvals required to allow the Group of Experts to resume its work. The secretariat recalled that the Group of Experts had requested and received an EXCOM mandate extension to continue its work until the end of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 situation, relatively late EXCOM approval (May 2020) as well as United Nations resource challenges, the secretariat could not schedule any formal sessions for the Group in 2020. Given this force majeure situation, the secretariat intended to request EXCOM extend automatically (i.e., without going again through the necessary approvals) the Group's mandate for 2021. However, the secretariat received advice that it is necessary for the Group of Experts and WP.1 to seek the EXCOM approval again. As a result of this briefing, the Global Forum, in its capacity as the Group's parent body, agreed to extend the Group's mandate until the end of 2022 and – in order to re-activate the Group of Experts as soon as possible - instructed the WP.1 secretariat to seek the direct EXCOM approval (in full conformity with EXCOM "Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of teams of specialist within UNECE" (ECE/EX/2/Rev.1), in particular paragraphs 3 (a) and 3 (f)).

32. The secretariat also informed WP.1 about the progress in developing e-CoRSS (an electronic version of the 1968 Convention on Road Signs and Signals).

VI. Consolidated Resolution on Road Traffic (R.E.1) (agenda item 5)

A. A Safe System Approach and amendment proposals on distracted driving

33. At the last session, WP.1 had discussed Informal document No. 9 (March 2020) and incorporated changes into ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2017/2/Rev.3. At this session, WP.1 resumed its discussion and agreed on the last pending proposal related to access to mobile phone data in case of accidents (para 1.5.2.5). The Chair informed WP.1 that the review and revisions of RE.1 will be concluded once the new Annex VIII is adopted (agenda item 5 (b)).

B. Policies for Vulnerable Road Users (VRU): focus on road safety challenges in South-East Asia

34. The informal group of experts (Italy, IRTE, University of Birmingham (UK), and Johns Hopkins University) tabled its proposal (ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/5 which has significantly revised the document ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2018/6 to serve as a new annex in RE.1). The document builds on the outcomes of research by IRTE done in cooperation with WP.1 and various research institutions from South-East Asia. WP.1 agreed on having this document as a new Annex VIII in RE.1. WP.1 began the discussion and will continue reviewing it at the next session.

35. At the last session, the Chair had invited WP.1 to reflect on roles "informal transport modes" may play in mobility across the world. At this session, the Chair and Johns Hopkins University introduced Informal document No.1 - a draft paper on the complex issue of the "non-regulated transport modes". WP.1 appreciated Informal document no.1 and decided

that a policy discussion should be initiated to address the challenging multidisciplinary problem of road safety of non-conforming transport modes with a particular focus on their use in the Global South. The product of this discussion should be a report in line with WP.1 objectives.

36. The Chair also informed WP.1 about the ongoing plans to organize a dedicated event – likely part of a WP.1 session - on the above topics to celebrate the 30th anniversary of IRTE Foundation in 2021.

C. Personal mobility devices

37. At the last session, WP.1 had invited Lithuania to collect legislative information on personal mobility devices such as e-scooters from WP.1 national delegates and table it as a document at the current session (Informal document No. 2). WP.1 expressed its appreciation to Lithuania and the Chair invited all delegates to continue providing this type of information to Lithuania for consolidation and possible tabling at the next session. Given the emergence of micro-mobility and its related challenges, the Chair volunteered to prepare a concept paper to outline some key issues and a possible way forward for WP.1 in this area, including stocktaking the existing activities among contracting parties. A representative of Johns Hopkins University made a presentation on micro-mobility and insights from stakeholders across the United States.

VII. Revision of the terms of reference and rules of procedure for WP.1 (agenda item 6)

38. At the last session, the secretariat had made ECE/TRANS/WP.1/100/Add.1/Rev.4 with track changes available as Informal document No. 2 (March 2020) to assist in revising ECE/TRANS/WP.1/100/Add.1/Rev.4 (Terms of Reference of the Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety). WP.1 resumed its discussion of ECE/TRANS/WP.1/100/Add.1/Rev.4, focussing on paragraph 1 in the preamble (i.e., paragraph 1 second paragraph, and subparagraphs (j) and (l)).

VIII. Sustainable Development Goals: Potential contribution by WP.1 (agenda item 7)

39. At the last session, Brazil, Sweden and Road Safety Institute (RSI) “Panos Mylonas” had prepared an informal document on an assessment process which could be used to evaluate WP.1 contribution to the ITC strategy or its contribution to Sustainable Development Goals 3.6 and 11.2 (Informal document No. 3 (March 2020)). Based on presentation by Sweden at this session and the further work of the proponents contained in Informal document No. 3/Rev.1 (March 2020), WP.1 welcomed this approach and encouraged the proponents to continue their work. In particular, WP.1 invited them to reflect upon how this approach can be used at WP.1 in the future.

IX. Definition of a serious injury (agenda item 8)

40. Due to the COVID-19 situation, neither Sweden nor Italy presented information on the use, in the context of road safety, of Abbreviated Injury Scale (AIS) in combination with the “Risk of Permanent Medical Impairment” (RPMI), or on the work related to quality of life after life changing injury (Quality Adjusted Life Years – Disability Adjusted Life Years). WP.1 invited Sweden and Italy to present this information at the next session.

X. Election of officers (agenda item 9)

41. WP.1 elected its officers for the period of March 2021 – September 2022. Ms. Luciana Iorio (Italy) was re-elected as the Chair while Mr. Dmitry Mitroshin (Russian Federation) was re-elected as a Vice-Chair. Mr. Karel Hofman (Belgium) was elected as a Vice-Chair.

Canada and the United States drew attention to the relevance of balancing the representation of contracting parties to the 1949 and 1968 Conventions when electing the WP.1 officers.

42. WP.1 expressed its sincere gratitude to Mr. Joel Valmain (France) for his many constructive and valuable contributions over the last fifteen years, first as a delegate and then as a WP.1 Vice-Chair. WP.1 wished him all the best for his retirement.

XI. Other Business (agenda item 10)

43. The secretariat informed WP.1 about the work of the United Nations Road Safety Fund (presentation is available at the WP.1 webpage).

44. The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety provided an update on his recent activities in promoting road safety across the world. WP.1 thanked the Special Envoy for his commitment to improving road safety and his actions to promote United Nations road safety conventions.

45. The WP.29 secretariat provided information about the current status of ECE/TRANS/WP.1/2020/3 (the document describing future cooperative initiatives between WP.1 and WP.29, which WP.1 has already adopted). WP.1 took note that the document is being tabled at the current GRVA session (which will subsequently report to WP.29) and it looked forward to receiving feedback from the WP.29 secretariat at its next session.

46. The WP.29 secretariat also provided information on ITS Road Map update (ITC decision 18, Informal document no. 10/Rev.6). The Road Map has already been revised and its first draft is available at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-tIgg7XLAaax0t-WuiMrdU8WfXh3eOO6/edit> for further comments and inputs by working parties (changes to the original text are indicated in bold). The WP.1 Chair invited all delegates to access the draft document and to provide comments online.

47. WP.1 appreciated the information provided by the GRVA Chair on the recently adopted Automated Lane Keeping Systems vehicle regulation and invited the GRVA Chair to share information and clarification about the terminology used in the above mentioned regulation.

48. The Chair and secretariat informed WP.1 about the newest United Nations General Assembly Resolution on Improving Global Road Safety (A/RES/74/299). The Resolution – in addition to announcing the new 2021-2030 Decade of Action for Road Safety as well as development of a new Plan of Action, is quite complimentary to WP.1 and its work. WP.1 agreed that it is prepared to be part of consultative process leading to the adoption of the new Plan of Action.

49. At the last session, Informal document No. 4 (March 2020) which describes WP.1 activities and actions in the framework of Table 1 in ECE/TRANS/288/Add.2 was discussed, revised, and adopted. The secretariat has tabled the revised document as Informal document No. 4/Rev.1 (March 2020) for information only.

50. The secretariat tabled Informal document No. 5 containing a draft Charter of Road Traffic Victims' Rights (Charter) which is the outcome of a joint collaboration between the secretariat, the Institute for European Traffic Law and the Council of Bureaux. The aim is to improve the situation of road traffic victims by alleviating the damage and pain suffered through the proposed application of ten principles concerning road traffic victims' rights. WP.1 is invited to provide feedback to the secretariat. WP.1 invited the secretariat to present the finalized Charter at the next session.

XII. Date of next session (agenda item 11)

51. The next session of WP.1 is scheduled for 9-12 March 2021 in Geneva. The deadline for submission of formal documents is 11 December 2020.