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Status of implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network

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Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document contains information on the obligations of the parties to the Agreement and the current status of signatories and parties to the Agreement. It also provides information on the current status of the Asian Highway network. The Working Group may wish to consider the document with a view to encouraging the participation of member States in the implementation of the Agreement to promote the harmonized development of road transport infrastructure in the ESCAP region.

I. Introduction

1. The Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network[1] is a treaty that provides a coordinated plan for the development of highway routes of international importance in Asia to meet the need to promote and develop international road transport in Asia and with neighbouring regions. The present document outlines the obligations of the parties to the Agreement and the current status of implementation of the Agreement.

2. The main obligations of the parties to the Agreement are:

(a) To adopt the Asian Highway network as a coordinated plan for the development of highway routes of international importance which they intend to undertake within the framework of their national programmes (article 1);

(b) To bring the routes of the Asian Highway network into conformity with the classification and design standards described in annex II of the Agreement (article 3);

(c) To place route signs on all Asian Highway network routes within five years from the date of entry into force of the Agreement for the State concerned (article 4);

(d) To give full consideration to issues of road safety while developing the Asian Highway network (annex II, chap. III, sect. 10).

II. Status of implementation of the Agreement

A. Accession, signatures and ratifications/acceptance/approval

3. The Agreement entered into force on 4 July 2005, 90 days after it had been signed definitively, ratified and/or approved by the requisite number of States. As of 14 June 2011, 29 member States had signed the Agreement; 28 of them are parties to the Agreement. The current status of signatories is given in annex I to the present document.

4. Member States that have not signed the Agreement can join by accession, which is a one-step action to become a party to the Agreement. A model instrument of accession is attached in annex II.

5. After completing the national procedure for ratification, acceptance or approval of the Agreement, signatory States should inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations. A model instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval is attached in annex III.

6. Reservations may not be made with respect to any of the provisions of the Agreement, except as provided in article 14, paragraph 5 of the Agreement, whereby any State may, at the time of definitive signature or of depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, deposit a reservation stating that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 14 relating to conciliation. A model instrument of reservation/declaration is attached in annex IV.

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2323, No. I-41607.

B. Conformity with the classification and design standards

7. The Asian Highway network now comprises over 142,000 km of roads passing through 32 member States.

8. The Asian Highway classification and design standards[2] provide the minimum standards and guidelines for the construction, improvement and maintenance of Asian Highway routes. These guidelines group Asian Highway routes into four classes: primary, class I, class II and class III; class III is specified as the minimum desirable standard. Parties shall make every possible effort to conform to the minimum standards, both in constructing new routes and in upgrading and modernizing existing ones. A summary of the Asian Highway classification and design standards is attached in annex V.

9. The Asian Highway Database, which contains, among other things, information on compliance with minimum standards, is being updated using 2010 data received from member States.[3] According to the information currently available in the database, about 11,570 km (8 per cent) of the roads in the network did not meet the minimum desirable standards in 2008. Information from the Asian Highway Database is available to member countries and developing partners through the ESCAP website (www.unescap.org/ttdw/common/tis/ah/member%20countries.asp).

C. Asian Highway route signs

10. Parties are required to place Asian Highway route signs conforming to the descriptions in annex III of the Agreement on all routes of the Asian Highway network within five years of the date of entry into force of the Agreement for the State concerned. In this regard, member States may update the Working Group on their progress and plans for placing route signs.

11. Further, in order to improve the visibility and public awareness of the Asian Highway routes, member States are encouraged to indicate corresponding Asian Highway route numbers on national maps and to encourage similar notations on commercially produced maps. At the regional level, the secretariat will, when possible, encourage international map publishers to indicate the Asian Highway routes and numbers on commercially produced maps.

D. Improving road safety on the Asian Highway

12. The agreement requires the parties to give full consideration to issues of road safety while developing the Asian Highway network. The Ministerial Declaration on Improving Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/63/13, chap. IV), adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Busan, Republic of Korea in November 2006, invited ESCAP members and associate members to address road safety with regard to, among other areas, developing the Asian Highway as a model of road safety.

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2323, No. I-41607, annex II.

[3] As of 10 June 2011, updated data had been received from 14 member countries.

13. The General Assembly in its resolution 64/255 proclaimed the period 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety. The overall goal of the Decade is to stabilize and then reduce the forecast level of road traffic fatalities around the world by increasing road safety activities conducted at the national, regional and global levels. The resolution, among other things, invited all Member States to set their own national road traffic casualty reduction targets to be achieved by the end of the Decade, in line with the plan of action of the Decade.

14. Data on road safety components are also contained in the Asian Highway Database, including the number of accidents and fatalities for each Asian Highway section. Road safety data (2008) are available for 33 per cent of the length of the Asian Highway, including 630 road sections (or 42.7 per cent of all sections), covering 47,939 km in 21 countries. Member States may provide the secretariat with road safety data updates for the Asian Highway Database.

III. Issues for consideration

15. The Working Group may wish to consider the present document with a view to encouraging the participation of member States in the implementation of the Agreement with a view to promoting the harmonized development of road transport infrastructure in Asia.

Annex I

Signatories to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network as of 14 July 2009

Signatory	Type of signature	Date of signature	Date of entry into force
1. Afghanistan	Simple Ratified on 8 January 2006	26 April 2004	8 April 2006
2. Armenia	Simple Ratified on 6 June 2005	26 April 2004	5 September 2005
3. Azerbaijan	Simple Ratified on 5 May 2005	28 April 2004	3 August 2005
4. Bangladesh	Acceded on 10 August 2009		8 November 2009
5. Bhutan	Simple Ratified on 18 August 2005	26 April 2004	16 November 2005
6. Cambodia	Simple Approved on 5 April 2005	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
7. China	Definitive	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
8. Georgia	Simple Approved on 9 December 2005	26 April 2004	9 March 2006
9. India	Simple Ratified on 16 February 2006	27 April 2004	17 May 2006
10. Indonesia	Simple Ratified on 11 February 2010	26 April 2004	12 May 2010
11. Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Simple Ratified on 3 November 2009	26 April 2004	1 February 2010
12. Japan	Definitive	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
13. Kazakhstan	Simple Approved on 1 November 2007	26 April 2004	30 January 2008
14. Kyrgyzstan	Simple Ratified on 30 August 2006	26 April 2004	28 November 2006
15. Lao People's Democratic Republic	Simple Ratified on 10 April 2008	26 April 2004	9 July 2008
16. Malaysia	Simple	24 September 2004	-
17. Mongolia	Simple Ratified on 25 July 2005	26 April 2004	23 October 2005
18. Myanmar	Simple Ratified on 15 September 2004	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
19. Nepal	Simple Ratified on 14 June 2010	26 April 2004	12 September 2010

Signatory	Type of signature	Date of signature	Date of entry into force
20. Pakistan	Simple Ratified on 19 October 2005	26 April 2004	17 January 2006
21. Philippines	Simple Ratified on 18 December 2007	2 November 2005	17 March 2008
22. Republic of Korea	Simple Ratified on 13 August 2004	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
23. Russian Federation	Definitive	27 April 2004	4 July 2005
24. Sri Lanka	Simple Ratified on 24 September 2004	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
25. Tajikistan	Simple Ratified on 9 April 2006	26 April 2004	8 July 2006
26. Thailand	Simple Ratified on 13 March 2006	26 April 2004	11 June 2006
27. Turkey	Simple Ratified on 30 March 2010	26 April 2004	28 June 2010
28. Uzbekistan	Definitive	26 April 2004	4 July 2005
29. Viet Nam	Simple Approved on 3 August 2004	26 April 2004	4 July 2005

Annex II

Model Instrument of Accession

(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

ACCESSION

WHEREAS the ***Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network*** was adopted ***on 18 November 2003 in Bangkok*** and opened for signature ***in Shanghai, China, from 26 to 28 April 2004 and thereafter at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 1 May 2004 to 31 December 2005,***

NOW THEREFORE I, [**name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs**] declare that the Government of [**name of State**], having considered the above-mentioned ***Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network***, accedes to the same and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the stipulations contained therein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have signed this instrument of accession at [**place**] on [**date**].

[Signature]

Annex III

Model Instrument of Ratification, Acceptance or Approval

(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

[RATIFICATION/ACCEPTANCE/APPROVAL]

WHEREAS the ***Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network*** was adopted ***on 18 November 2003 in Bangkok*** and opened for signature ***in Shanghai, China, from 26 to 28 April 2004,***

AND WHEREAS the said ***Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network*** has been signed on behalf of the Government of [**name of State**] on [**date**],

NOW THEREFORE I, [**name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs**] declare that the Government of [**name of State**], having considered the above-mentioned ***Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network***, [**ratifies, accepts, approves**] the same and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the stipulations contained therein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have signed this instrument of [**ratification, acceptance, or approval**] at [**place**] on [**date**].

[Signature]

Annex IV

Model Instrument of Reservation/Declaration

(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

[RESERVATION/DECLARATION]

I, [**name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs**],

HEREBY DECLARE that the Government of [**name of State**] makes the following [**reservation/declaration**] in relation to article [***14 (5) of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network adopted on 18 November 2003 in Bangkok***:]

[**Substance of reservation/declaration**]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal.

Done at [**place**] on [**date**]

[**Signature and title**]

Annex V

Asian Highway Classifications and Design Standards

Highway classification		Primary (4 or more lanes)				Class I (4 or more lanes)				Class II (2 lanes)				Class III (2 lanes)			
Terrain classification		L	R	M	S	L	R	M	S	L	R	M	S	L	R	M	S
Design speed (km/h)		120	100	80	60	100	80	50		80	60	50	40	60	50	40	30
Width (m)	Right of way	(50)				(40)				(40)				(30)			
	Lane	3.50				3.50				3.50				3.00 (3.25)			
	Shoulder	3.00		2.50		3.00		2.50		2.50		2.00		1.5 (2.0)		0.75(1.5)	
	Median strip	4.00		3.00		3.00		2.50		N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	
Minimum radii of horizontal curve (m)		520	350	210	115	350	210	80		210	115	80	50	115	80	50	30
Pavement slope (percentage)		2				2				2				2-5			
Shoulder slope (percentage)		3-6				3-6				3-6				3-6			
Type of pavement		Asphalt/cement concrete				Asphalt/cement concrete				Asphalt/cement concrete				Dbl. bituminous treatment			
Maximum superelevation (percentage)		10				10				10				10			
Maximum vertical grade (percentage)		4	5	6	7	4	5	6	7	4	5	6	7	4	5	6	7
Structure loading (minimum)		HS20-44				HS20-44				HS20-44				HS20-44			

Notes: Figures in parentheses are desirable values.

Minimum radii of horizontal curve should be determined in conjunction with superelevation.

The recommended width of the median can be reduced with the proper type of guard fence.

The parties should apply their national standards when constructing such structures as bridges, culverts and tunnels along the Asian Highway.

Abbreviations: L, level; R, rolling; M, mountainous; S, steep.