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5th meeting
Bangkok, 7-8 October 2013

Report of the Working Group on the Asian Highway on its 5th meeting

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I. Deliberations

1. The secretariat introduced the documents under agenda items 4 (E/ESCAP/AHWG(5)/1), 5 (E/ESCAP/AHWG(5)/2), and 6 (E/ESCAP/AHWG(5)/3), which formed the basis for deliberation.[1]

2. The delegations of Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Georgia, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, and Viet Nam, provided detailed updates of Asian Highway development programmes and projects as well as related policies in their respective countries, including different funding

[1] See the annex for the list of documents.

arrangements, such as budgetary allocations, public-private partnerships and funding from development banks. They also provided details of various road safety and signage initiatives that were being implemented, particularly along the Asian Highway network. The Working Group noted that copies of the presentations made by the delegations would be available on the webpage of the Transport Division (www.unescap.org/ttdw).

II. Conclusions and recommendations

3. The Working Group noted with satisfaction the progress made in the upgrading of the Asian Highway network and requested that member countries further upgrade the remaining portions of highways which were below class III standards. It noted that many countries needed financial assistance from development banks and other entities in order to develop and/or upgrade their sections of the Asian Highway network.

4. The Working Group encouraged the signatory State, and member States which had not yet done so, to give priority to becoming a party to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network.[2]

5. The Working Group noted with appreciation that Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand had completed the placement of Asian Highway route signs. It also noted the progress made in installing Asian Highway route signs in Bhutan, China, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, and encouraged other Parties which had not done so to place the Asian Highway route signs in accordance with Article 4 of the Agreement.

6. The Working Group adopted the following amendment[3] with respect to itineraries of the Asian Highway route in the Philippines:

> AH26: Allen – Tacloban (– Ormoc **City** – ferry – Cebu) – **Sogod (– Maasin City – Bato – Baybay – Ormoc City)** – Liloan – ferry – Surigao – **Butuan City (– Cagayan de Oro City – Iligan City – Tukuran)** – Davao (– Cagayan de Oro City) – General Santos – **Tukuran** – Zamboanga.

7. The Working Group also adopted the following amendment[3] with respect to itineraries of a new Asian Highway route between Cambodia and Viet Nam and agreed to number the route as AH21 in conformity with the existing numbering system:

> **AH21: Quy Nhon port – Pleiku – Le Thanh/O Yadav (Viet Nam-Cambodia border) – Banlung – Stung Treng – Preah Vihear – Siem Reap – Serei Saophoan**

8. The Working Group noted that, in accordance with the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, the adopted amendments would be communicated by the secretariat of ESCAP to the Secretary-General for circulation to all Parties.

9. Noting that the Asian Highway database was being updated, the Working Group requested that member States provide the secretariat with updated information on the status of the Asian Highway network so that the database could be finalized as soon as possible.

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[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2323, No. 41607.

[3] Boldface type indicates amendments.

10. On the basis of an analysis of available road crash data in the Asian Highway database, the Working Group recognized that the higher class of roads were generally much safer than the lower classes of roads, and that significant improvement in road safety might be achieved through the upgrading of Asian Highway routes and safer infrastructure design.

11. The Working Group welcomed the joint statement on Improving Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific (E/ESCAP/AHWG(5)/3, annex II), which had been adopted at the regional Expert Group Meeting on Progress in Road Safety Improvement in Asia and the Pacific (Seoul, 8-9 May 2013).

III. Other matters

12. A representative of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) made a presentation on the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic and Convention on Road Signs and Signals.

13. A representative of the ESCAP secretariat made a presentation on the benefits of taking into account the provision for laying information and communications infrastructure, such as fibre optics, alongside the Asian Highway network when upgrading an existing route or developing a new one.

14. The Working Group was informed that the ECE and ESCAP secretariats, in collaboration with other stakeholders, would be holding the Europe-Asia Road Safety Forum in New Delhi from 4 to 6 December 2013 in conjunction with the sixty-seventh session of the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety. The major focus of the event would be to highlight the salient features and benefits of the conventions mentioned in paragraph 12 above.

IV. Adoption of the report

15. The Working Group adopted the present report on 8 October 2013

V. Expression of appreciation

16. The Working Group expressed its appreciation to the secretariat for organizing and efficiently servicing the meeting.

VI. Organization of the meeting

A. Opening, duration and organization of the meeting

17. The fifth meeting of the Working Group on the Asian Highway was held in Bangkok on 7 and 8 October 2013. The Director of the Transport Division of ESCAP delivered an opening statement.

B. Attendance

18. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States: Afghanistan; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; Democratic People’s Republic of Korea; Georgia; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People’s Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Turkey; and Viet Nam.

19. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the Economic Commission for Europe and the Asian Development Bank.

20. In addition, representatives of Central Consultant Inc., and the Korea Expressway Corporation were present as observers.

C. Election of officers

21. The Meeting elected the following officers:

Chair:	Mr. Dinker **Sharma** (Nepal)
Vice-chairs:	Mr. George **Amashukeli** (Georgia) Mr. **Wang** Hongwei (China)
Rapporteur:	Mr. Hong **Sinara** (Cambodia)

D. Agenda

22. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Status of implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network.
5. Proposals for amendments to the Agreement.
6. Policies and issues relating to the development of the Asian Highway.
7. Other matters.
8. Adoption of the report.

Annex

List of documents

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