



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Transport**Fifth session**Bangkok, 19–21 November 2018
Item 3 (f) of the provisional agenda****Major issues in transport****Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

Road safety remains a top priority on the secretariat's agenda for transport, and indeed one of increasing importance. In the Asia-Pacific region, one person is killed in a road crash every 40 seconds. The region is losing more than 2,000 lives per day. While the Asia-Pacific region suffers the loss of some 733,000 lives on its roads every year, many more people sustain serious life-changing injuries, resulting in significant economic and social losses. The adverse impacts of road crashes can no longer be ignored.

The present document contains a brief review of the road safety situation in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) region. The global and regional mandates under which the United Nations in general, and ESCAP in particular, develop and implement programmes and activities aimed at improving road safety in the region are recalled. Also highlighted is the recent establishment of a global road safety trust fund, launched in April 2018 with the objective of mobilizing public and private funds to raise financial commitment to a level commensurate with the magnitude of the global road crashes pandemic. Lastly, guidance is sought from the Committee on Transport on the most impactful action that they wish the secretariat to take at the regional and national levels to help member States to reduce the number of road crashes in the ESCAP region.

I. Introduction

1. Road transport has become an essential part of economic and social development. Its flexibility in delivering goods to cities and villages is unmatched by any other transport modes. However, road transport is also a killer. In the Asia-Pacific region, one person is killed in a road crash every 40 seconds, bringing the tally of fatalities to over 2,000 each day.

2. While many development issues are intractable, that of road crashes is not one of them. In Japan, in 2016, road fatalities fell below 4,000 from 16,765

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** ESCAP/CTR/2018/L.1.

in 1970.¹ In Sweden, meanwhile, the number of people killed in road accidents in 2013 was 264, the lowest in the world, although the number of cars in use in the country and the number of miles driven had both doubled since 1970.² These examples show that solutions exist. They must be studied, assessed and, wherever relevant, applied.

3. The present document contains a review of road safety and associated trends as well as the work of the United Nations in assisting member States to tackle road crashes. The substantial undesirable economic and social effects that road crashes have on the economies and people of the region are highlighted, and the importance of good data as a prerequisite for understanding the causality of road crashes is emphasized, along with evidence-based policies and the allocation of resources towards the implementation of practical impact-oriented action. Also recalled is the recent launch of the United Nations global road safety trust fund, which injects added momentum and renews global political commitment towards combating road crashes.

II. Road safety: figures and socioeconomic impact

4. Set against a 4-per-cent increase in global population and a 16-per-cent increase in motorization, the global number of road deaths has plateaued in recent years, suggesting that related measures taken by Governments have had some positive impact.³ Yet, with 97 per cent of global transport-related deaths occurring on roads, improving road safety is key to improving the overall safety record of the transport sector.⁴

5. It is estimated that, worldwide, road crashes kill 1.25 million people each year, of whom 733,000 lose their lives on the roads and highways of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) region. For every 10 lives lost in traffic, nine are lost in low- and middle-income countries.⁵ Given that 40 of the 53 ESCAP member States are in these two income categories,⁶ Governments of the region have a vested interest in pursuing efforts first to stabilize and then to reduce the number of road crashes that occur on their national road infrastructure.

6. In terms of population, road crashes are the leading cause of death among people aged between 15 and 29 years.⁷ More broadly, they also have a substantial impact across the entire spectrum of a country's working-age population. Meanwhile, at the other end of the scale, in a context of ageing

¹ "Traffic deaths fall to below 4,000 in Japan for first time in 67 years", *Japan Times*, 4 January 2017.

² "Why Sweden has so few road deaths", *Economist*, 26 February 2014.

³ World Health Organization (WHO), *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015* (Geneva, 2015).

⁴ World Bank, "Safety: why safety matters for sustainable mobility", December 2017. Available at <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/535391513887066669/ConNoteSeries-No11-web.pdf>.

⁵ World Bank, *The High Toll of Traffic Injuries: Unacceptable and Preventable* (Washington, D.C., 2017).

⁶ World Bank, "World Bank Country and Lending Groups", June 2018. Available at <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>.

⁷ WHO, *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*.

societies and increased mobility among people aged 60 years and above, the share of older person killed in traffic is, in a number of countries, already larger than their share in the total population and keeps growing.⁸ In other words, road crashes are a potential threat to all segments of the population, meaning that there is a range of issues that may each require a different approach.

7. Road crashes also affect road users differently. Worldwide, almost half of road users are vulnerable road users, comprising cyclists, pedestrians and operators of two- and three-wheelers. While no region is untouched, the phenomenon is quite prevalent in the Asia-Pacific region, in particular East and North-East Asia and South-East Asia, where approximately two thirds of road traffic fatalities are vulnerable road users.⁹

8. The overall number of road users killed in crashes has significantly increased in the ESCAP region in recent decades. One of the main reasons is the region's rapid motorization, spurred on by unprecedented economic growth. In 2008, ESCAP estimated that, unless additional measures were taken, about two thirds of the world's road deaths might be in the ESCAP region by 2020.¹⁰ With an estimated 733,000 fatalities – 59 per cent of the world's total – it is likely that the region will soon realize this prediction, unless adequate measures are taken.

9. In a 2015 report, WHO reported that 90 per cent of road traffic deaths occurred in low- and middle-income countries, while just 54 per cent of the world's vehicles were to be found in these countries. The table shows the evolution in the number of vehicles in use in selected member States over the period 2006–2015, with an indication of the motorization rate per thousand inhabitants in 2015.

⁸ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Road Safety Annual Report 2017* (Paris, 2017).

⁹ ESCAP calculations based on data from WHO, *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*.

¹⁰ See E/ESCAP/CTR/4.

Number of vehicles in use in selected member States, 2006 and 2015, and motorization rate, 2015

Country	Number of vehicles (thousands)		Motorization rate, 2015 (vehicles per thousand inhabitants)
	2006	2015	
China (MI)	36 974	162 845	118
France (HI)	36 681	38 652	598
India (MI)	11 520	28 860	22
Indonesia (MI)	10 784	22 513	87
Japan (HI)	75 859	77 404	609
Kazakhstan (MI)	2 132	4 397	249
Netherlands (HI)	8 295	9 395	555
Pakistan (MI)	1 843	3 220	17
Republic of Korea (HI)	15 895	20 990	417
Russian Federation (MI)	32 547	51 355	358
Thailand (MI)	8 805	15 491	228
United Kingdom (HI)	34 935	38 220	587
World	926 642	1 282 270	182

Source: International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers, “World vehicles in use – all vehicles”, 2005–2015. Available at www.oica.net/wp-content/uploads//Total_in-use-All-Vehicles.pdf.

Abbreviation: HI, high-income country; MI, middle-income country.

10. Figures indicate that in developed countries, the number of vehicles in use evens out at around 550 to 600 vehicles per thousand inhabitants. Given that most countries of ESCAP are far from reaching this figure, it is reasonable to expect that the number of road crashes will rise further if the impact of action to improve the road safety situation cannot keep up with the pace of growth in motorization.

11. This observation is particularly relevant for the region’s five most populous middle-income countries,¹¹ whose combined population represents 75 per cent of that of Asia as a whole, but whose motorization rate fluctuates between 17 (Pakistan) to 118 (China) vehicles per thousand inhabitants, well below the threshold of 550 to 600. This assumption is further corroborated by recent statistics showing that the ESCAP region is the world’s leading market for new cars. In 2017, the number of passenger cars sold in the Asia-Pacific region was an estimated 40.8 million units, up from 18.4 million units in 2008.¹² That same year, new car sales in six major South-East Asian nations

¹¹ In decreasing order: China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh (World Bank, “World Bank Country and Lending Groups”).

¹² See www.statista.com/statistics/590425/asia-pacific-passenger-car-sales.

rose 5 per cent year on year to approximately 3.36 million units.¹³ These figures give added urgency to the need for policymakers in the region to carefully monitor their national road safety situation to identify issues and take remedial measures.

12. Data suggest that road traffic deaths and injuries in low- and middle-income countries are estimated to cause across-the-board economic losses of up to 5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP).¹⁴ On top of this alarming economic figure, crash victims, their families and society also bear significant social cost.

13. In a 2014 study by the Korea Transport Institute, it was found that the majority of road crash survivors experienced social and economic difficulties after recovery, with a large number of victims losing their jobs or experiencing a loss of income, and almost half of those with permanent disabilities losing their homes.¹⁵ In addition, more than a third experienced divorce owing to economic difficulties and mental frustration. Moreover, road crashes have a serious knock-on effect on hospital systems, especially in developing countries. A 2013 study carried out in Viet Nam showed that at the Thai Binh General Hospital, in the north-eastern coastal province of the country, more than half of patients admitted with injuries were road crash victims.¹⁶ In New Zealand, the average social cost resulting from a loss in quality of life, reduced productivity, and medical and other resource costs was reported to be as high as US\$ 786,000 per reported serious injury.¹⁷

III. The United Nations and road safety

A. United Nations road safety action at the global level

14. Since 2003, the General Assembly has adopted no fewer than 10 resolutions calling on Member States, WHO and the regional commissions to address the global road safety crisis.¹⁸ The General Assembly called for increased attention and resources to be directed towards road safety efforts, and stressed the need for better international cooperation.

15. In symbiosis with the General Assembly resolutions, two global ministerial conferences on road safety were organized, by the Governments of the Russian Federation (Moscow, 2009) and Brazil (Brasilia, November 2015), each of which adopted a declaration urging Governments, international

¹³ Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam (Nikkei Asian Review, "Southeast Asia's new car sales up for second straight year", 3 February 2018).

¹⁴ WHO, *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*.

¹⁵ Namji Jung and Jaehoon Sul, *Handbook of Measuring Socio-economic Consequences of Traffic Crashes* (Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea, Korea Transport Institute, 2014).

¹⁶ Ha Nguyen and others, "The economic burden of road traffic injuries: evidence from a provincial general hospital in Vietnam", *Injury Prevention*, vol. 19, No. 2 (April 2013).

¹⁷ New Zealand, Ministry of Transport, "Social cost of road crashes and injuries 2017 update: December 2017" (Wellington, 2017).

¹⁸ General Assembly resolutions 57/309, 58/9, 58/289, 60/5, 62/244, 64/255, 66/260, 68/269, 70/260 and 72/271.

organizations, non-governmental organizations and philanthropic foundations to cooperate in addressing related issues.

16. In March 2010, acting on the Moscow Declaration of 20 November 2009,¹⁹ the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/255 proclaiming the period 2011–2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety, with a goal to stabilize and then reduce the forecast level of road traffic fatalities around the world. Yet when the Decade reached its midterm review, in 2015, there was little change to be observed in the number of global annual road traffic deaths so much so that the Secretary-General decided to designate a Special Envoy for Road Safety,²⁰ with the following mission:

(a) To promote a global partnership to support the design and implementation of strategies and activities to improve road safety;

(b) To advocate, with Governments, civil society and the private sector, for the promotion of road safety, particularly in countries with high levels of road fatalities and injuries;

(c) To participate in global and regional conferences and meetings on road safety;

(d) To advocate accession to and more effective implementation of United Nations road safety legal instruments.

17. Further, in recognition of the importance of good data collection as a basis for the definition of sound policies in curbing road crashes, the Brasilia Declaration of 19 November 2015 invited WHO to further standardize definitions, indicators and reporting practices, including on road traffic fatalities, injuries and risk factors with a view to producing comparable information, and building on existing best practices in that area.²¹

18. Most importantly, in adopting General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the international community clearly placed road safety as a global development issue, alongside infectious diseases, by setting the ambitious target of halving the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents by 2020 as part of Sustainable Development Goal 3, on good health and well-being. The issue of road safety is also reflected in Sustainable Development Goal target 11.2, in which the aim is to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

19. With a view to achieving this ambitious target of attaining a 50-percent reduction in the number of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2020, it is estimated that an additional \$260 billion of programme financing will be required to achieve Goal targets 3.6 and 11.2 related to road safety in low- and middle-income countries over the coming decade.²² It was within this context that the General Assembly, in April 2016, adopted resolution 70/260, which

¹⁹ See www.who.int/roadsafety/ministerial_conference/declaration_en.pdf.

²⁰ The Special Envoy for Road Safety is Mr. Jean Todt of France, President of the International Automobile Federation.

²¹ See www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/Final_Brasilia_declaration_EN.pdf.

²² See www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/road_Safety/Documents/Draft_proposal_for_the_establishment_of_a_UN_Road_Safety_Fund_Feb_2017.pdf.

requested the Secretary-General to consider the possibility of establishing, from voluntary contributions, a road safety trust fund to support the implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 and the road safety-related Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the same resolution requested WHO, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies and the United Nations regional commissions, to assist interested countries in developing voluntary global performance targets on key risk factors and service delivery mechanisms to reduce road traffic fatalities and injuries. The status of the development of voluntary global performance targets and of the establishment of the road safety trust fund is highlighted below.

Global road safety performance targets

20. The meeting of WHO member States to conclude the work on the development of voluntary global performance targets for road safety risk factors and service delivery mechanisms, held in November 2017,²³ finalized a comprehensive set of 12 global road safety targets (reproduced in full in annex I to the present document). The General Assembly, in its resolution 72/271 of 12 April 2018, welcomed the approval by consensus of the targets. To acknowledge the approaching end of the Decade of Action, the majority of the global targets are set for 2030, reflecting the long-term coordinated and integrated action necessary to achieve the road safety targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The United Nations global road safety trust fund

21. Despite being among the top causes of death with potential undesirable advancement in its ranking, the allocated resources to improving road safety have so far been well below the funds invested on fighting other global health issues such as malaria or HIV/AIDS. While no one would deny the urgent need to mobilize resources towards the eradication of infectious diseases, it is critical to put issues in order of importance relative to one another. In 2016, there were an estimated 445,000 deaths from malaria globally and a total of \$2.7 billion was invested in malaria control and elimination.²⁴ That same year, 990,000 people died of HIV/AIDS-related infections and a total of \$19.1 billion was invested in the disease.²⁵ Meanwhile, road crashes killed 1.25 million people and current funding is nowhere near the estimated amount required to achieve the road safety targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

22. Tasked by the Secretary-General with acting as lead entity, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), in consultation with the Special Envoy for Road Safety, the regional commissions, WHO and other United Nations system entities, developed the proposal for establishing a United Nations road safety trust fund and presented it to the Secretary-General for consideration in September 2017. The Secretary-General formally expressed his support for the establishment of the trust fund in December 2017, and

²³ See www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/Report-of-the-meeting-of-member-states.pdf?ua=1.

²⁴ WHO, *World Malaria Report 2017* (Geneva, 2017).

²⁵ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, “Fact sheet – July 2018”. Available at www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_FactSheet_en.pdf.

requested that all necessary steps should be taken to establish it in line with the submitted proposal.

23. Subsequently, the fund was formally launched on 12 April 2018 at Headquarters in New York, with the aim of supporting a coordinated and holistic approach to improving global road safety as well as increased action and enhanced impact in addressing critical road safety challenges. The fund will focus on strengthening the capacity of government agencies, local governments and city authorities to develop and implement road safety programmes, prioritizing projects in low- and middle-income countries.²⁶

24. The governing structure includes an advisory board, in which all regions are represented by a Member State selected by each regional commission,²⁷ and a steering committee tasked with implementing the strategic directions provided by the advisory board. All participating United Nations agencies are also represented on the steering committee. In June 2018, the ESCAP secretariat convened a special meeting of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission to provide a briefing on the fund and to request the selection of the member State that would represent the Commission on the advisory board.

25. Responding to the spirit of the fund, a group of the founding donors have already stepped forward with contributions that have brought the amounts pledged to the fund to \$11.85 million,²⁸ with further contributions expected from private and public sector donors in the coming months.

26. The first meetings of the advisory board and the steering committee were held in Geneva on 9 and 10 August 2018 respectively. At the meetings, key issues were discussed concerning the establishment of the fund, including funding criteria and priorities and the global framework plan of action for road safety, which will be further refined and tabled for consideration at the next meetings, tentatively planned for November 2018.

27. It is expected that the newly established fund will provide an important medium through which the ESCAP region will be able to attain its road safety goals and targets, not only by presenting the opportunity to ensure coordinated responses through collaboration with other United Nations entities and stakeholders, but also by providing an important supplementary source of much-needed funding to address specific technical and capacity challenges in a number of ESCAP member States. It will provide an opportunity for member States to approve and take drastic action at the highest level of Government to approach road safety from a new perspective.

28. The secretariat's assessment is that an overwhelmingly high number of road crashes in Asia and the Pacific are dominantly attributable to socioeconomic characteristics that are specific to the region. In this context,

²⁶ See www.unece.org/info/media/presscurrent-press-h/transport/2018/launch-of- united-nations-road-safety-trust-fund/doc.html.

²⁷ Member States of ESCAP selected the Russian Federation as its representative, while those of ECE, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) selected Sweden, Lebanon, Nigeria and Argentina respectively.

²⁸ FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, Pirelli, Total Corporate Foundation and 3M. See www.unece.org/info/media/presscurrent-press-h/transport/2018/un-road-safety-trust-fund-gears-up-for-action/doc.html.

remedial actions will have their intended impact only if they are based on a fundamental understanding of the root causes of road crashes and if member States feel fully empowered in terms of their implementation modalities. As the Executive Secretary was tasked by the Commission, in its resolution 74/3, to continue to monitor the progress made in meeting the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020 and to continue the activities aimed at supporting the implementation of the objectives and goals of the Decade of Action for Road Safety and of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development targets related to road safety, the secretariat stands ready to facilitate member States' efforts with regard to accessing, developing and submitting project proposals for funding, as well as contributing to the fund.

B. ESCAP activities in promoting road safety

29. In 1992, ESCAP recognized that some of the global legal instruments could have value added for transport development in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission, in its resolution 48/11, recommended that ESCAP member States that had not yet done so should consider the possibility of acceding to seven such conventions and agreements, including the following two dealing with road safety:

(a) The Convention on Road Traffic of 1968²⁹ which provides rules on various aspects of international road traffic and safety, and serves as a reference for national legislation. It describes all road users' behaviour, such as what drivers and pedestrians must do at crossings and intersections, and promotes safe behaviour by road users;

(b) The Convention on Road Signs and Signals of 1968,³⁰ which provides over 250 commonly agreed road signs, signals and markings, and specifies the norms for traffic lights. It also classifies road signs into three classes (danger warning, regulatory and informative), defines them and describes their physical appearance to ensure visibility and legibility.

30. These two conventions provide flexible implementation frameworks and can yield immediate and medium-term benefits for improving road safety in the ESCAP region.

31. Further to the above, the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in November 2006 adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Improving Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific, in which the ministers (a) observed the rapid growth of road transport infrastructure development and motorization in the region, which implied concomitant growth in road traffic fatalities and injuries, and (b) resolved to save 600,000 lives and to prevent a commensurate number of serious injuries on the

²⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1042, No. 15705. The ESCAP member States that are parties to this convention are: Armenia; Azerbaijan; France; Georgia; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Mongolia; Netherlands; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Tajikistan; Thailand; Turkey; Turkmenistan; United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Uzbekistan; and Viet Nam.

³⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1091, No. 16743. The ESCAP member States that are parties to this convention are: Armenia; Azerbaijan; France; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Mongolia; Netherlands; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Tajikistan; Thailand; Turkmenistan; United Kingdom; Uzbekistan; and Viet Nam.

roads of Asia and the Pacific over the period 2007 to 2015. Although this objective was not reached in absolute terms, when expressed in relation to the increase in population and in the number of vehicles in use, the number of road deaths recorded over the period showed that policies implemented by Governments in the region were having a positive impact, although a country-based analysis may show a contrasting picture.

32. Since 2015, and taking note of the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020,³¹ ESCAP has endeavoured to promote road safety by working, among other issues, on (a) the institutional side of road safety, and (b) the infrastructure-related aspects associated with road crashes.

33. In line with the Brasilia Declaration and the road safety-related Sustainable Development Goals, the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its third session, held in Moscow in December 2016, adopted the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020, with the overall objective of a 50-per-cent reduction in fatalities and serious injuries on the roads of the region in the run-up to the end of the Decade of Action for Road Safety. These goals (reproduced in full in annex II to the present document), which are aimed at guiding policy formulation and implementation and providing tools to assess progress in improving road safety at the national and regional levels, are as follows:

- (a) Making road safety a policy priority;
- (b) Making roads safer for vulnerable road users, including children, older persons, pedestrians, non-motorized vehicle users, motorcyclists and persons with disabilities;
- (c) Making roads safer and reducing the severity of road crashes (“self-explaining” and “forgiving roads”);
- (d) Making vehicles safer and encouraging responsible vehicle advertising;
- (e) Improving national and regional road safety systems, management and enforcement;
- (f) Improving cooperation and fostering partnerships;
- (g) Developing the Asian Highway network as a model of road safety;
- (h) Providing effective education on road safety awareness to the public, young people and drivers.

34. While a comprehensive set of goals are in place to guide policy formulation and implementation, in many countries of the region the efficiency of policies aimed at improving road safety is often hampered by limited availability and reliability of data. Good data are critical to acquiring knowledge and understanding of the types of road crashes that individual countries face and their causes, contributing factors, local contexts and the characteristics of the individuals involved. The result is that policymakers lack the information that would yield the best policy advice and help them allocate scarce resources where they are most needed.

35. In the area of infrastructure, it is well recognized that road engineering and design influence the likelihood and severity of crashes. Indeed, in 2016,

³¹ The five pillars are: road safety management, safer roads and mobility, safer vehicles, safer road users and post-crash response.

when the number of road deaths in Japan fell to less than 4,000 for the first time in decades, the National Police Agency recognized that better road conditions had been a contributing factor.³² This is further corroborated by the Asian Highway database maintained by ESCAP.

36. According to the 2017 update of the Asian Highway database, primary-class Asian Highway routes have the best safety record, at 4.09 fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres, while those below class III have the worst record, at 129.25 fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres. This suggests that the upgrading of roads across all classes, especially to meet the minimum required standards for class III, would likely result in a reduction in fatalities on the Asian Highway network. The average fatality rates for the other classes of Asian Highway routes are 25.69 fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres for class I, 58.41 fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres for class II and 62.87 fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres for class III.³³ The upgrading of roads to access-controlled primary class and other higher classes produces a significant reduction in fatalities. Substantial improvement in terms of safety can also be achieved when roads below class III are upgraded to the minimum required standards.

37. With the above in mind, and with a view to promoting regional road safety standards along the Asian Highway network, the secretariat, in close collaboration with the Korea Expressway Corporation, initiated a three-year programme aimed at harmonizing road safety infrastructure facilities along the Asian Highway in 2015. The programme was in recognition of the fact that as regional transport connectivity improves, more road traffic is expected to cross national borders between countries with different road signs, signals and markings. At the same time, as tourist arrivals increase, more visiting drivers rent vehicles in their holiday destination country. Both situations pose a heightened risk of crashes from drivers who are unfamiliar with the local driving environment and highlight the urgent need for harmonized driving conditions across the region.

38. Under the programme, a number of consultative meetings were held with international consultants and road safety experts from the region, who recognized that the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network provided a good institutional platform for the coordinated development of road safety infrastructure facilities following harmonized standards, and recommended that a set of standards applying to commonly agreed road safety facilities should be incorporated in a new annex to the Intergovernmental Agreement.

39. This new annex – annex II bis, entitled “Asian Highway design standards for road safety” – was adopted at the seventh meeting of the Working Group on the Asian Highway, held in Bangkok in December 2017. As per article 8 (5) of the Agreement, this new annex II bis will enter into force 12 months after two thirds of the parties to the Agreement have deposited an instrument of acceptance with the Secretary-General, either directly or through the ESCAP secretariat, which stands ready to assist in the process.³⁴ Annex III to the present document contains a model instrument of acceptance. The entry into force of annex II bis to the Agreement is important as it would trigger in

³² “Traffic deaths fall to below 4,000 in Japan for first time in 67 years”, *Japan Times*.

³³ ESCAP, “Asian Highway Database – 25 September 2017”, Status of the Asian Highway in Member Countries database.

³⁴ The necessary instrument may be sent to the ESCAP secretariat, which will then liaise with the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat in New York.

future an interactive process among member States to amend it to accommodate new facilities as deemed appropriate.

40. To facilitate more effective implementation of the United Nations road safety legal instruments, the secretariat, in collaboration with ECE and ECLAC, implemented a project entitled “Strengthening the national road safety management capacities of selected developing countries and countries with economies in transition”. The project targeted four low- and middle-income countries in which there was a need to improve the national road safety situation and develop road safety management systems.³⁵ For each country, the project (a) identified limitations in capacities, financial and human resources, necessary statistical capabilities and other pressing economic or social problems that had prevented them from establishing or upgrading their road safety management systems, and (b) assessed gaps in the national legal and regulatory framework, compliance with international road safety instruments and coordination of road safety stakeholders. Under the project, the secretariat held national capacity-building workshops in Viet Nam on the implementation of road safety-related legal instruments (Hanoi, 12 and 13 January 2017, and Ho Chi Minh City, 16 and 17 January 2017) as well as road safety audits (Hanoi, 12 to 18 June 2017, and Ho Chi Minh City, 19 to 25 June 2017).

41. Recently, with a view to helping member States achieve the road safety-related Sustainable Development Goals, the secretariat started implementing a project on tackling the main causes of road traffic crashes, fatalities and injuries in Asia-Pacific countries, with a focus on drink-driving and speeding, through the development and implementation of comprehensive road safety policies and plans.

IV. Issues for consideration

42. The Committee may wish to invite delegations to provide information on progress made in individual countries with respect to addressing road safety in their countries, highlighting specific challenges.

43. The Committee is further invited to consider the present document and to share views, national experiences and practices on improving road safety. In particular, the Committee may wish:

(a) To urge member States to deposit with the Secretary-General an instrument of acceptance of annex II bis to the Intergovernmental Agreement as a matter of urgency;

(b) To provide the secretariat with guidance on its future work to assist member States in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals relating to road safety and the implementation of the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020;

(c) To provide the secretariat with guidance on its future work towards improving the quality of road safety data and its collection;

(d) To encourage member States that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention on Road Traffic of 1968 and the Convention on Road Signs and Signals of 1968;

³⁵ The four countries were the following: Albania; Dominican Republic; Georgia; and Viet Nam.

(e) To encourage member States to work with the secretariat in identifying the most pressing road safety needs and embedding action to address them into the priorities of the global road safety trust fund.

Annex I

Voluntary global road safety performance targets: approved by the meeting of States members of the World Health Organization held in Geneva on 20 and 21 November 2017*

- Target 1: By 2020, all countries establish a comprehensive multisectoral national road safety action plan with time-bound targets.
- Target 2: By 2030, all countries accede to one or more of the core road safety-related United Nations legal instruments.
- Target 3: By 2030, all new roads achieve technical standards for all road users that take into account road safety, or meet a three-star rating or better.
- Target 4: By 2030, more than 75 per cent of travel on existing roads is on roads that meet technical standards for all road users that take into account road safety.
- Target 5: By 2030, 100 per cent of new (defined as produced, sold or imported) and used vehicles meet high-quality safety standards, such as the recommended priority United Nations regulations, Global Technical Regulations, or equivalent recognized national performance requirements.
- Target 6: By 2030, halve the proportion of vehicles travelling over the posted speed limit and achieve a reduction in speed-related injuries and fatalities.
- Target 7: By 2030, increase the proportion of motorcycle riders correctly using standard helmets to close to 100 per cent.
- Target 8: By 2030, increase the proportion of motor vehicle occupants using safety belts or standard child restraint systems to close to 100 per cent.
- Target 9: By 2030, halve the number of road traffic injuries and fatalities related to drivers using alcohol, and/or achieve a reduction in those related to other psychoactive substances.
- Target 10: By 2030, all countries have national laws to restrict or prohibit the use of mobile phones while driving.
- Target 11: By 2030, all countries to enact regulation for driving time and rest periods for professional drivers, and/or accede to international/regional regulation in this area.
- Target 12: By 2030, all countries establish and achieve national targets in order to minimize the time interval between road traffic crash and the provision of first professional emergency care.

* See the annex to the meeting report, available at www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/Report-of-the-meeting-of-member-states-Annex.pdf?ua=1.

Annex II

The updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020 (adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its third session, Moscow, December 2016)

<i>Goals and targets</i>	<i>Indicators for monitoring achievements</i>
Overall objective: 50-per-cent reduction in fatalities and serious injuries on the roads of Asia and the Pacific over the period 2011 to 2020	
(a) Reduce the fatality rates by 50 per cent from 2011 to 2020.	(1) Number of road fatalities (and fatality rates per 100,000 inhabitants).
(b) Reduce the rates of serious road injuries by 50 per cent from 2011 to 2020.	(2) Number of serious road injuries (and injury rate per 100,000 inhabitants).
Goal 1: Making road safety a policy priority	
(a) Create a road safety policy/strategy, designate a lead agency and implement a plan of action.	(3) Information on existing national road safety policy, strategy, plan of action, and their implementation. ^a
	(4) Name of designated lead agency on road safety. ^a Description of responsibilities of local, regional and national government organizations, including related coordination mechanism at the national level.
	(5) National road safety reports or impact evaluation reports of government programmes.
(b) Allocate sufficient financial and human resources to improving road safety.	(6) Information on the amount of funding and number of qualified human resources allocated to road safety projects and programmes (public, private and donors) and research and development to create a safer road environment.
Goal 2: Making roads safer for vulnerable road users, including children, older persons, pedestrians, non-motorized vehicle users, motorcyclists and persons with disabilities	
(a) Reduce by one third the pedestrian death rate in road crashes.	(7) Numbers of pedestrian deaths. ^a
(b) Increase the number of safe crossings for pedestrians (e.g. with subway, overhead crossings or traffic signals).	(8) Number of new safe crossings or improvements constructed or planned.
(c) Make the wearing of helmets the norm and ensure minimum helmet quality, in order to reduce the motorcyclist death	(9) Number of motorcyclist deaths and motorcyclist deaths per 100,000 inhabitants. ^a

<i>Goals and targets</i>	<i>Indicators for monitoring achievements</i>	
rate by one third (or reduce it to below the average motorcyclist death rate of the region).	(10)	Existing laws or administrative rules for the mandatory use of helmets and specifying minimum helmet quality standards. Information on helmet use (percentage). ^a
(d) Ensure minimum child safety measures, in order to reduce the child death rate by one third.	(11)	Number of child fatalities in road crashes.
	(12)	Existing laws or administrative rules on measures for child safety in cars (child restraints) and on motorcycles (child helmets). ^a
	(13)	Use of child seat restraints and child helmets (percentage). ^a
(e) Equip all school children with basic road safety knowledge.	(14)	Existing or planned education programmes on road safety in school, starting class and its coverage.
(f) Ensure safe transportation access for older persons and persons with disabilities.	(15)	Information on safe transportation access for older persons and persons with disabilities.
Goal 3: Making roads safer and reducing the severity of road crashes (“self-explaining” and “forgiving roads”)		
(a) Integrate a road safety audit into all stages of road development starting at the design stage, conduct road safety inspection, carry out necessary improvement works, and improve hazardous locations.	(16)	Number of, and information about, road safety audits carried out for road design, new road construction and major improvements. ^a
	(17)	Number of improvement programmes carried out to make roads “forgiving” (e.g. addressing black spots, removing or cushioning roadside obstacles).
(b) Increase separate/secure road space for pedestrians and cyclists in urban and suburban areas (where space permits).	(18)	Existing length of pedestrian and bicycle tracks in kilometres per 100,000 people or per 10,000 kilometres of roads (along highways and city roads). Programme to construct pedestrian and bicycle tracks.
Goal 4: Making vehicles safer and encouraging responsible vehicle advertising		
(a) Make regular inspections of road vehicles mandatory and ensure enforcement of inspections (starting in urban areas).	(19)	Existing laws or administrative rules on vehicle inspection, frequency of inspections (annual), number of vehicle inspection facilities and organizations.

<i>Goals and targets</i>	<i>Indicators for monitoring achievements</i>
(b) Ensure that safety requirements for new vehicles are in line with international standards.	(20) Existing laws and regulations specifying vehicle safety standards and implementation.
Goal 5: Improving national and regional road safety systems, management and enforcement	
(a) Accession/ratification and implementation of the United Nations instruments on road safety.	(21) Information on accession/ratification of United Nations instruments on road safety. ^a
(b) Implement a national (computerized) database, including a mobile reporting system where possible, that provides information on road crashes.	(22) Information on existing integrated road safety database and responsible organizations.
	(23) The existence of definitions of road fatality and serious injury being used for data collection, with an indication as to whether they are based on internationally accepted definitions.
(c) Aim to provide road safety at the stage of road network planning.	(24) Information about the incorporation of road safety at the stage of road network planning.
(d) Introduction of laws and regulations regarding the mandatory use of helmets and seat belts, drinking and driving, the use of mobile phones and speed limits.	(25) Information on laws or administrative rules on compliance regarding helmet use (including percentage use). ^a
	(26) Information on laws or administrative rules on compliance regarding seat-belt use and use of mobile phones (including percentage use). ^a
	(27) Information on laws or administrative rules on compliance regarding drinking and driving and speed limits. ^a
(e) Allow alcohol tests for prosecution (breathalyzer and/or behavioural tests).	(28) Information on existing alcohol-level testing rules and types of tests and alcohol limits used and allowed for prosecution. ^a
(f) Make it the general practice to keep motorcycle headlights on at all times.	(29) Information on existing laws or administrative rules on keeping motorcycle headlights on while driving.
(g) Increase responsiveness to post-crash emergencies and improve the ability of health and other systems to provide appropriate emergency treatment and early rehabilitation for crash victims.	(30) Information on a single nationwide telephone number for use in case of emergencies including road crashes. ^a
	(31) Information on rehabilitation services.

<i>Goals and targets</i>	<i>Indicators for monitoring achievements</i>
(h) Apply new technologies in traffic management and intelligent transport systems, including navigation systems, to mitigate the risk of road traffic crashes and maximize response efficiency.	(32) Information on the use of intelligent transport systems in improving road safety.
Goal 6: Improving cooperation and fostering partnerships	
(a) Encourage and recognize initiatives sponsored by the private sector.	(33) Number of major partnerships in the area of road safety, and funding (private sector and public-private initiatives).
(b) Create new and deepen existing partnerships with non-governmental organizations.	(34) Number, scope and funding of major partnerships with non-governmental organizations.
Goal 7: Developing the Asian Highway network as a model of road safety	
(a) Reduce the total number of fatalities and road crashes on the Asian Highway network.	(35) Total number of fatalities and road crashes on the Asian Highway network in each country per year. ^a
(b) Reduce the number of fatalities on all Asian Highway network segments to less than 100 per billion vehicle-kilometres.	(36) Number of fatalities per billion vehicle-kilometres for each Asian Highway network segment per year. ^a
(c) Increase resource allocation for measures related to road safety along the Asian Highway network.	(37) Amount of resources allocated to safety-related works for Asian Highway network segments from Governments and donors.
(d) Improve Asian Highway network segments to be forgiving to road users if a crash occurs; demonstrate best practice.	(38) Information on road safety assessment and rating programme for the Asian Highway network.
Goal 8: Providing effective education on road safety awareness to the public, young people and drivers	
(a) Carry out targeted awareness campaigns and training programmes.	(39) Information on the number of national road safety awareness campaigns and training programmes carried out.
(b) Introduction of policies to reduce work-related road traffic crashes.	(40) Information on policies to regulate and improve professional drivers' work conditions.

^a Available fully or partially in the *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2015*, (Geneva, World Health Organization, 2015), the Asian Highway database or United Nations records.

Annex III

Model instrument of acceptance of amendment

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

WHEREAS the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network was adopted at Bangkok on 18 November 2003, and **[ratified, accepted, approved, definitively signed or acceded to]** by **[State]** on **[date of deposit of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, etc.]**,

WHEREAS the Working Group on Asian Highways at its seventh meeting, held in Bangkok from 13 to 15 December 2017, adopted the following amendments in accordance with article 8 of the Agreement:

Article 10, title: *after annexes II add II bis*

Article 10, paragraph 1: *after annexes II add II bis*

Article 17: *after Annexes I, II add II bis*

WHEREAS these amendments, resulting in the introduction of a new annex II bis entitled “Asian Highway design standards for road safety”, were communicated by the Secretary-General to all parties by depositary notification C.N.53.2018.TREATIES-XI.B.34.a of 26 January 2018,

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

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

[Signature]
