



Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Transport**Fifth session**

Bangkok, 19–21 November 2018

Report of the Committee on Transport on its fifth session**I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention**

1. The Committee encourages those member States that have not already done so to consider expediting their respective internal formalities to deposit an instrument of acceptance to annex II bis to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network entitled “Asian Highway Design Standards for Road Safety”.

2. The Committee recommends the continued development of the sustainable urban transport index and its further promotion throughout the region.

II. Proceedings**A. Review of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021)**

(Agenda item 2)

3. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/1 entitled “Review of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021)” and the information document ESCAP/CTR/2018/INF/1 on the activities implemented under the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021) since its adoption by the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its third session held in Moscow in December 2016.

4. The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress in implementing the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021), and expressed its continued support to the secretariat in its further implementation. In that regard, the Committee noted with satisfaction the numerous policy, institutional and technical

complementarities between the Regional Action Programme and a number of national programmes and development principles such as the Pakistan Vision 2025 master plan and other connectivity projects with neighbouring countries or the sufficiency economy policy of the Government of Thailand.

5. The Committee recognized that efficient transport connectivity was critical to enhancing the region's position in global trade and supporting the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It further noted that the activities of the secretariat towards promoting transport connectivity offered synergies with the programmes carried out under the aegis of other subregional groupings or programmes such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation Economic Corridors, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme, the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation and the Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia.

6. The Committee was apprised of national and subregional initiatives and projects being implemented by member States and aimed at achieving sustainable transport connectivity, in particular through activities aimed at further developing the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports of international importance. In that regard, the Committee noted the efforts of the Government of Thailand to double-track sections of the Trans-Asian Railway routes through its territory and enhance rail connectivity with neighbouring countries as well as the upgrading of 80 per cent of Asian Highway routes through Thailand to Primary Class and Class I standards. It also noted the efforts of Governments to develop intermodal facilities as a way of developing efficient modern logistics as well as creating the conditions for a modal shift to environmentally friendly modes of transport. The Committee also noted that the 6th and 7th five-year plans of the Government of Bangladesh provided for corridor-based road development to connect with global supply chains and facilitate access to maritime ports for landlocked countries, including through the signing of motor vehicles agreements for the regulation of passenger, personal and cargo vehicular traffic between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal. It further acknowledged that the initiatives taken by the Government of India to enhance rail connectivity with its neighbours had resulted in a fourfold increase in rail freight volumes with Bangladesh over the past five years and a doubling of rail freight volumes with Nepal over the past four years. Additional cross-border infrastructure projects were also in progress to establish additional cross-border rail and road connectivity through the construction of several rail links such as the Agartala (India) – Akhaura (Bangladesh), Jogbani (India) – Biratnagar (Nepal), and Jayanagar (India) – Bijalpura (Nepal) connections as well as the construction of road bridges over the Feni River between India and Bangladesh, and the Mechi River between India and Nepal.

7. The Committee noted that member States were increasingly adopting corridor-based initiatives in their approach to connectivity. In that regard, the Committee was of the opinion that the integration and transport connectivity for landlocked countries would yield optimal benefits in terms of costs and sustainability if done at the regional level. The Committee noted the offer of the Asian Institute of Transport Development to support related programmes.

8. The Committee stressed the importance of road safety and noted that safety considerations had gained increasing weight in the approval and delivery of infrastructure projects and noted how improved road infrastructure

design had contributed, together with other measures, to a substantial reduction in road crashes and road deaths in the Russian Federation. The Committee further recognized that the collaborative work between the secretariat and the Korea Expressway Corporation had led to the development of infrastructure design standards for road safety along the Asian Highway network and their incorporation into a new annex to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network.

9. The Committee further noted that innovation and the use of emerging technologies could play an important role in achieving sustainable connectivity. It also highlighted that a modal shift to more environmentally friendly modes of transport such as rail and inland waterways could reduce fossil fuel demand in the transport sector, contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, and promote intermodality. In that context, the Committee was informed of ongoing efforts to promote the use of alternative fuels.

10. The Committee was apprised of the important role of intelligent transport systems which contributed to the increased modal share for public transport in urban areas. In that context, the Committee took note of the planned intelligent transport systems policies for the Greater Jakarta area that utilized intelligent transport systems technologies, including electronic road pricing and electronic ticket systems that supported the development of integrated public transport systems.

11. The Committee underscored that the rate of motorization and the growing demand for transport in the region required concerted actions and policies to ensure safe, efficient and intelligent urban transport systems, as well as affordable, accessible and inclusive public transport in urban and rural areas. Against that background, the Committee noted that pilot applications of the sustainable urban transport index had yielded positive results and concrete policy guidance.

12. Recalling the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Moscow in December 2016, the Committee also noted that an interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe would provide a valuable platform for addressing issues relating to enhancing intra- and interregional connectivity. In that connection, the Committee requested the secretariat to enhance cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe towards the establishment and full functioning of that interregional committee. The Committee welcomed the completion by the secretariat of the study report on the “Comprehensive planning of Eurasian Transport Corridors to strengthen the intra- and interregional transport connectivity” as a valuable tool which could facilitate the planning of sustainable and integrated intermodal transport development.

13. The Committee noted the support expressed by the Secretary-General of the International Road Transport Union for the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021), and the International Road Transport Union’s readiness to strengthen its cooperation with ESCAP, in particular in the areas of transport facilitation, new technologies and digitalization, and road safety.

14. Finally, the Committee expressed its appreciation to the Governments of and agencies from China, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation

for the financial support provided to the secretariat in the implementation of the Regional Action Programme.

B. Major issues in transport

(Agenda item 3)

Facilitating transport and logistics in the era of sustainable development

(Agenda item 3 (a))

15. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/2 entitled “Facilitating transport and logistics in the era of sustainable development”.

16. The Committee recognized that improved transport facilitation and logistics were key prerequisites to make seamless transport services across modes, organizations and national borders contribute to realizing the 2030 Agenda. It further acknowledged that the region’s growing international trade put pressure on member States to address sustainability issues inherent to its freight transport sector. Against that background, the Committee expressed its concern about the continued existence of non-physical barriers to efficient freight transport operations, the implementation of transit regimes, and overall logistics performance of the countries in Asia and the Pacific. In that regard, the Committee recognized that efforts were required on several fronts, including enhancing the efficiency of international road transport, strengthening the role of international freight movements by rail, and promoting the development and operationalization of integrated intermodal transport corridors.

17. Noting that transport facilitation and logistics issues were common to most member States, the Committee suggested that they would be best addressed through strengthened cooperation at the bilateral, multilateral and regional levels to (a) design and implement transport facilitation agreements, (b) further harmonize transport rules, regulations and practices, (c) streamline border crossing transport formalities, and (d) promote the use of new technologies.

18. So far as road transport was concerned, the Committee recognized that the region still had considerable work to do towards harmonizing rules pertaining to vehicles’ weights, dimensions and emissions. It also noted that excessive restrictions on road traffic rights continued to inflate transport costs and create delays at borders. Regarding the latter, the Committee voiced concern that excessive delays at borders not only diminished the efficiency of road transport operations but also negatively impacted transport safety and the environmental performance of the sector. In that connection, the Committee recognized the potential of the road transport facilitation tools developed by the secretariat and the ongoing ESCAP project on the harmonization of standards for weights, dimensions and emissions of road vehicles to address those issues and to contribute to much optimized road operation along the Asian Highway network as well as Eurasian Transport Corridors.

19. The Committee was also apprised of numerous initiatives taken by member States to enhance sustainable operational transport connectivity, including through (a) the development and implementation of transport facilitation agreements at the bilateral and subregional levels, (b) the accession to international conventions related to transport facilitation, (c) the establishment of national transport and logistics bodies, and (d) the development of national integrated transport policies and master plans on transport and logistics.

20. In the same light, the Committee acknowledged the specific challenges confronting Central Asian countries and noted that several non-physical barriers still prevented them from realizing their full transport and transit potential. Such barriers ranged from non-harmonized procedures and standards, complex visa procedures for drivers and crews, and inefficient customs formalities. Against that backdrop, the Committee welcomed several initiatives currently under way in some of the concerned countries to strengthen cross-border transport connectivity, including proposals to (a) develop a subregional programme for the development of transport connectivity, (b) establish a subregional council of transport connectivity in Central Asia, (c) further harmonize customs procedures, (d) adopt common standards for weights and dimensions of road vehicles and (e) use new technologies in transport and transit facilitation.

21. As regards rail freight, the Committee took note with satisfaction of the rising volumes of intra- and interregional freight movements by rail. Yet, the Committee stressed that that positive trend would continue only if measures were taken to create seamless rail connectivity through greater interoperability and coordination among all concerned agencies. In that context, the Committee welcomed the studies carried out by the secretariat to review the efficiency of international rail transport. The Committee was also informed of the development of a draft framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond.

22. At the current early stage in the realization of the 2030 Agenda, the Committee shared the view that the effective integration of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks, with connections to inland waterways, seaports, river ports, airports and dry ports, could offer seamless transport solutions to the region's vibrant industry. In that regard, the Committee recognized that waterborne transportation could make valuable contributions to the socioeconomic development of the region and trigger new forms of cooperation.

23. The Committee acknowledged that the development of efficient intermodal transport and logistics required a fresh look at how inland water transport and coastal shipping could be integrated into the transport equation of the region as part of its sustainable connectivity agenda. Moving forward, the Committee noted the readiness of the Mekong River Commission to cooperate more closely with the secretariat in promoting waterborne transportation in the region. The Committee also reiterated the key role of seaports in providing integrated intermodal transport solutions and noted, in that respect, the development in Georgia of a new port at Anaklia in conjunction with railway modernization and the development of modern logistics centres in the country.

24. As Governments strove to enhance the region's economic vitality, address its mobility requirements for people and goods, and bring hinterland and rural areas into mainstream economic development, the Committee shared the view that the planning and operationalization of international intermodal transport corridors offered a pertinent approach to the delivery of regional transport projects that could minimize the environmental impact of the transport sector. However, to ensure that related development followed a shared vision of development, issues of technical standards, operating practices, investment requirements and the alignment of national initiatives with regional priorities needed to be discussed. In that context, the Committee considered the proposal to set up a group of experts on transport corridors to provide necessary policy guidance and instructed the secretariat to conduct further consultations with all relevant stakeholders to define the functioning

modalities and scope of work of that group of experts, including potential sources of funding to cover its establishment and activities.

25. Finally, the secretariat was requested, subject to the availability of resources, to continue to extend support to member States in developing and operationalizing transport facilitation agreements, promoting the use of new technologies and providing capacity-building in the logistics sector with particular focus on least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. In that connection, the Committee encouraged the secretariat to add to its own knowledge base the expertise of non-governmental actors, such as professional transport associations and research institutions, to create wider regional partnerships for sustainable operational connectivity.

Framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond
(Agenda item 3 (b))

26. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/3 entitled “Draft framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond”.

27. The Committee noted that the draft framework was developed on the recommendation of the Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network at its fifth meeting, held in June 2017. It also noted that the draft framework was prepared jointly with the Organisation for Co-operation between Railways and reviewed at the Regional Meeting on Harmonization of Rules and Regulations for Facilitation of International Railway Transport, held in Astana in December 2017 and two Expert Group Meetings on the Harmonization of the Rules and Regulations for Facilitation of International Railway Transport, held in Bangkok in September 2017 and Ankara in May 2018.

28. The Committee welcomed the development of the draft framework addressing inefficiencies in railway border crossing procedures along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond. It recalled that rail transport facilitation was crucial for increasing railways’ share in the international transport of goods, which would not only facilitate intraregional trade but also help to reduce the carbon emissions of freight transport.

29. The Committee took note of the four key areas for action, as identified in the draft framework, including (a) electronic information exchange between railways and among railways and control agencies, (b) harmonizing customs formalities for transit by rail through appropriate arrangement among the member countries, (c) dealing efficiently with the break of gauge and (d) developing comprehensive indicators and methodological tools to deal with the performance of railway border crossings. The Committee considered that a common understanding of the main issues to be addressed in those four areas would be instrumental in ironing out inefficiencies in international rail transport.

30. The Committee underlined that the draft framework constituted a region-wide, non-binding policy guideline to assist member States that wished to introduce measures and projects to facilitate railway border crossings, in particular – but not limited to – routes across the Trans-Asian Railway network. Bearing these considerations in mind, the Committee took note of the “Draft framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond”, as contained in document ESCAP/CTR/2018/3.

31. In that context, the Committee also took note of the recent and ongoing activities undertaken by the member countries to strengthen international railway transport in the ESCAP region, including (a) building missing railway links with neighbouring countries, (b) operationalizing dedicated railway freight corridors, (c) developing bilateral railway transport agreements, (d) acceding to international railway conventions, (e) streamlining intermodal rail road procedures jointly with railway organizations, (f) using a combined Carriage of Goods by Rail Convention-Agreement on International Railway Freight Communications (CIM-SMGS) consignment note on international freight trains between China and Europe, (g) exploring the possible use of an electronic common consignment note, and (h) strengthening cooperation among countries for the promotion of Asia-Europe container trains.

Development and operation of dry ports of international importance

(Agenda item 3 (c))

32. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/4 entitled “Development and operation of dry ports of international importance”.

33. The Committee acknowledged that the development and operation of dry ports played an important role in advancing regional connectivity, enhancing intermodal transport and facilitating the integration of rail, road, airports and seaports. In that regard, the Committee acknowledged the work of the secretariat in promoting the development of dry ports within the framework of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports, which entered into force in April 2016. In that regard, the Committee encouraged member States that had not yet done so to become parties to the Agreement and noted with satisfaction that the Government of Pakistan was considering becoming a party through accession. It also noted that the Government of China had secured financial resources for the development of 12 dry ports in the list in annex I of the Agreement.

34. The Committee expressed its support for the secretariat for its work in promoting the development and operation of dry ports. In that respect, the Committee noted the outcome of the Working Group on Dry Ports at its 2nd meeting, held in Bangkok in November 2017, and welcomed the adoption of resolution 74/2 of May 2018 entitled “Promotion of the regional framework for the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance” by the Commission at its seventy-fourth session.

35. The Committee was apprised of a number of challenges member States faced in their approach to dry port development and operation. Such issues ranged from insufficient policy guidance, lack of harmonization of rules and procedures across different agencies to creating conditions conducive to private sector involvement in the financing and operation of dry ports, as well as adopting modern technologies to enhance the efficiency of dry port operation. In that connection, the Committee acknowledged with satisfaction that the secretariat, in collaboration with partners from the Republic of Korea, had recently initiated a project with the objectives of looking at ways to address those issues in Cambodia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam.

36. Notwithstanding the above challenges, the Committee was apprised of dry port development projects undertaken by member States to promote connectivity with their neighbours. In that regard, the Committee noted that the Government of Thailand was developing several intermodal facilities in its border provinces to serve cross-border trade and enhance transit, while the Government of India had adopted a similar approach through the operation and

development of integrated check posts offering single window operations along its borders with Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. The Committee also noted that the five-year (2016–2020) development plan for the logistics industry in China provided for the construction of more dry ports, and that such facilities were already operating in Pakistan.

37. With the above considerations in mind, the Committee welcomed the Commission’s regional framework for the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance and recognized its potential as a cooperative mechanism to get all stakeholders, whether public or private, working on a similar understanding of (a) what dry ports should do and (b) their respective responsibilities during the development phase as well as during operation.

38. Noting the knowledge gap related to understanding the issues linked to the development and operation of dry ports, and recognizing the ever greater complexity of modern supply chains, the Committee noted with appreciation the past capacity-building activities implemented by the secretariat and requested that such activities be stepped up, in particular to help member States implement the regional framework for the planning, design, development and operation of dry ports of international importance. The Committee further requested the secretariat to continue sharing best practices relating to successful dry port development from within and outside the region with member States.

Developments in transport infrastructure connectivity (2014–2018) in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

(Agenda item 3 (d))

39. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/5 entitled “Developments in transport infrastructure connectivity (2014–2018) in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

40. The Committee reaffirmed the significance of infrastructure connectivity to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. In that regard, the Committee was apprised of various national initiatives to promote integrated and environmentally balanced transport systems with policies aimed at increasing the modal share of rail and inland waterway transport. The Committee was also informed of the activities of countries in the region to address missing cross-border rail infrastructure links and noted that the Government of China expected to complete its missing links under the Singapore-Kunming Rail Link project by 2021. Further, the Committee also noted that the Trans-Asian Railway missing link between Poipet (Cambodia) and Aranyaprathet (Thailand) had been completed and the joint drafting of the cross-border rail traffic agreement for railway operation between the Government of Thailand and the Government of Cambodia was pending. The Committee further noted the efforts of Cambodia to seek the financing required for the construction of the missing link with other countries.

41. The Committee further noted that a region-wide coordinated approach towards the effective integration of transport modes through the implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreements administered by ESCAP would serve the objectives of sustainable connectivity. Against that background, the Committee was informed that the Government of China was planning to submit proposals to amend annex I of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network with a view to formalizing the inclusion of 10 routes in its territory that so far had been designated as potential routes. Further to that, the Committee noted that proposals to amend annex I

of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network were also under consideration by the competent authorities in China.

42. The Committee highlighted that sustainable infrastructure connectivity was imperative for interregional connectivity, in particular between Europe and Asia. In that context, the Committee was informed of ongoing activities in member States to upgrade existing road and rail infrastructure and to improve rail connections to maritime ports.

43. The Committee also considered that the development and implementation of new technologies such as infrastructure monitoring and freight tracking systems could play a significant role in advancing sustainable connectivity and resilience. In that regard, the Committee invited the secretariat to continue to research and analyse innovative approaches, trends and developments in transport infrastructure connectivity with an emphasis on coordination mechanisms and best practices that could promote large-scale multilateral corridor development projects. In that regard, the Committee noted the readiness of non-governmental organizations and research institutions to collaborate with ESCAP on researching the use of technology for improving infrastructure connectivity.

Assessment of urban transport systems and services

(Agenda item 3 (e))

44. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/6 entitled “Assessment of urban transport systems and services”.

45. The Committee recognized the importance of safe and environmentally sustainable public transport systems and services for sustainable urban transport. However, rapid urbanization had led to increased urban transport challenges, such as the substantial growth rate of private motorized vehicles in the region which contributed to increased vehicle operating costs, travel time/distances and land use inefficiency. In that context, the Committee noted that those circumstances required the active participation of city authorities and all levels of governments.

46. The Committee noted its appreciation for the efforts of the secretariat in developing the sustainable urban transport index and the related capacity-building activities. In that context, the Committee recognized that some data were difficult to obtain and recommended the secretariat to consider incorporating additional elements such as environmentally friendly public transport fleets and renewable energy vehicle ratios. The Committee was also informed that similar national indices had been developed by some member States. In that regard, the secretariat was requested to further develop the sustainable urban transport index on the basis of wide application in the future.

47. The Committee noted that as a result of sustainable urban transport index pilot studies, some member States had enhanced their urban transport policies, including (a) the removal of suspended cables in urban areas, improving footpaths, developing cycle tracks, planning flyovers and subways to reduce traffic congestion in Nepal and (b) the development of a transit-oriented land-use and transport-planning approach with successfully implemented priority bus lanes, planned multimodal transport hubs and a planned monorail system. Currently, planning efforts were under way to identify appropriate corridors for rapid transit systems. The development of a railway electrification project was under way to improve capacity and operating speeds in the Colombo metropolitan area. The central government was planning an integrated transport network to improve connectivity between

the Bandaranaike International Airport and the adjacent communities with recreational and commercial centres, and the soon-to-be completed light rail transit system and mass rail transit system were expected to shift modality towards public transport and enhance the integration of multimodal public transport in Indonesia. The Committee requested the secretariat to support the application of the sustainable urban transport index in other major cities, including other cities in Indonesia and Bangladesh.

48. In the area of sustainable urban transport, the Committee was apprised of various activities in several member States, including the following: (a) the operationalization of bus rapid transit systems in Lahore, Multan and Islamabad, the near completion of the Orange Line, the first rail-based mass transit system and construction activities to launch the Green Line bus rapid transit system in Karachi; (b) additional new public transport routes and services and a pre-feasibility study of a light rail transit project in Bhutan; (c) the construction of major public transport projects, including bus rapid transit systems, mass rapid transit systems and expressways, in Bangladesh; and (d) the development of an evaluated rail-based public transport system in urban centres.

49. The Committee recognized the usefulness of the sustainable urban transport index and endorsed the sustainable urban transport index as a tool for assessment and improvement of urban transport policies. In Indonesia, the sustainable urban transport index had been used to conduct an assessment of the transportation system in the Greater Jakarta area and the results had been used to further improve policy for more sustainable transport systems.

50. The Committee noted the potential advantages and challenges regarding the development of intelligent transport system and encouraged the use of intelligent transport systems to improve urban transport systems. In that context, the Committee expressed its support to the secretariat for its work in promoting intelligent transport systems.

51. In that context, the Committee acknowledged endeavours to decarbonize urban mobility through the adoption of low emission vehicles, in particular electric vehicles.

52. Recognizing the important role of intelligent transport systems in addressing urban traffic issues and encouraging a higher use of public transport systems, the Committee was informed of specific actions taken in member States, including the following: (a) strengthening intelligent transport systems in the development of metro rail networks in India; (b) introducing electronic fare systems in railways and bus rapid transit systems, and an electronic user charging system on motorways, expressways and highways in Pakistan; (c) installing bus information systems to provide real-time information on bus location in the Republic of Korea; and (d) monitoring individual vehicles with the satellite positioning system to reduce traffic loads and launching an automatic emergency response system to improve road safety in the Russian Federation. The Committee further took note of the positive impacts resulting from applying intelligent transport systems in public transport systems, such as a significant reduction in traffic violations and an increased number of bus users as a result of the bus information system in the Republic of Korea.

53. Recognizing the importance of improving urban transport systems in the Asia-Pacific region, the secretariat was requested to convene an international conference on safe, effective and sustainable urban transport in Asia and the Pacific as a follow-up to the High-level International Conference

“City and Transport: Safety, Efficiency and Sustainability” held in Khabarovsk, Russian Federation, in 2017.

Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific

(Agenda item 3 (f))

54. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/7 entitled “Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific”.

55. The Committee stressed that road crashes were an issue of serious concern considering their magnitude and substantial negative impact on the economy and general welfare of the people, particularly vulnerable road users and low-income groups. In that regard, it expressed its support to the work of the secretariat in improving road safety.

56. The Committee reiterated its commitment towards achieving road safety-related targets 3.6 and 11.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. It noted that, while the Decade of Action for Road Safety was due to terminate in 2020, issues of road safety needed continued attention beyond that deadline and voiced the opinion that a new ten-year time frame was required to keep the current momentum going towards reducing road traffic deaths and injuries.

57. In that regard, the Committee noted with satisfaction that relentless efforts to combat road crashes had started to bear fruit in several member States despite a rise in motorization. The Committee noted that such progress was the result of a multipronged approach encompassing enhanced road safety management and the adoption of revised road construction standards leading to more forgiving road infrastructure features.

58. In the area of road safety management, the Committee was apprised of the adoption of a “2030 vision zero” strategy by the Russian Federation, the formulation of national road safety policy, strategy and action plan in India, Pakistan and Thailand, and comprehensive measures for transport safety taken by the Republic of Korea, including enhancing collaborations among central and local governments and civil organizations to implement road safety policies and programmes. The Committee also received information on the establishment of national road safety coordination bodies in Bhutan, India, Pakistan and the Russian Federation. The Committee noted that in India, the Government had launched a large-scale programme to provide capacity-building in road safety and develop centres of excellence across the country, and had entrusted that task to the Asian Institute of Transport Development.

59. The Committee also noted measures taken across the region to improve road signs and markings, identify and improve black spots, implement road assessment programmes as well as school zone safety programmes, and enhance policies related to vehicle inspection.

60. In the area of safe infrastructure, against the backdrop of a continued increase in cross-border road traffic, the Committee noted that special measures were required to create a harmonized driving environment throughout the region and noted with appreciation the adoption of a new annex II bis to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network entitled “Asian Highway Design Standards for Road Safety” at the seventh meeting of the Working Group on the Asian Highway in December 2017. In that regard, the Committee encouraged member States to deposit with the Secretary-General an instrument of acceptance of that new annex to secure its early entry into force. The Committee was informed that the secretariat

stood ready to assist member States in completing the necessary legal procedure.

61. The Committee acknowledged the positive impact of deploying existing and new technologies to road vehicles and road traffic management, such as the compulsory installation of an advanced emergency braking system and a lane departure warning system in large vehicles or the use of satellite-based global positioning system technology to monitor safety and improve post-crash response.

62. In that context, the Committee took note of the request made by the Government of Thailand to the secretariat to provide capacity-building assistance in the area of road accident investigation and a feasibility study on road safety improvement.

63. The Committee took note of the call made by the Government of Indonesia regarding the use of intelligent transport systems to relieve traffic congestion and to improve road safety, especially with regard to the regulation and limitation of motorcycle use in urban areas.

64. The Committee also acknowledged targeted actions taken by member States to tackle a range of social behaviours associated with road safety, such as a reduction in the permissible blood alcohol content for vehicle drivers, enhanced traffic law enforcement and an increase in related penalties, as well as the issuance of measures to protect good Samaritans.

65. The Committee welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Road Safety Trust Fund. It noted that the Fund would support the continued implementation of the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011–2020 and bring additional resources towards achieving the updated Regional Road Safety Goals and Targets for Asia and the Pacific 2016–2020 adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Moscow in 2016.

66. The Committee acknowledged with satisfaction that member States had elected. Mr. Alexander Gorovoy, First Deputy Minister of Interior of the Russian Federation, to represent the Commission on the Advisory Board set up to provide the strategic direction of the Fund, review its performance and identify priority areas for funding.

67. In that regard, the Committee expressed its gratitude to Mr. Gorovoy for accepting to voice the region's concerns and needs in the area of road safety.

68. The Committee also thanked Mr. Gorovoy for his briefing on the Fund's goals, areas of work, as well as its operation plans and criteria in selecting project proposals to be submitted to the Fund. The Committee also noted with gratitude the intention of the Russian Federation to contribute \$2 million to the Fund.

69. The representative of the International Labour Organization highlighted the important relationship between the provision of decent working conditions for commercial vehicle drivers and road safety, and stressed the need for governments to ensure the implementation of and compliance with international standards by transport operators. He also informed the Committee on upcoming road safety activities due to be implemented by the International Labour Organization, including a subregional meeting on road transport safety for the Greater Mekong

Subregion to be held in Bangkok in January 2019 and an expert meeting to review and adopt guidelines on road transport safety.

70. The representative of the Asian Institute of Transport Development informed the Committee that road transport systems should be people-centred and road design should be based on the assumption that people would make mistakes. The representative informed the Committee of the establishment of a joint centre by the Asian Institute of Transport Development and the International Road Assessment Programme.

71. The representative of the Institute of Road Traffic Education stated that 11 countries in South and South-East Asia contributed 30.4 per cent of global fatalities, of which 85 per cent were vulnerable road users. The Institute had taken initiatives towards supporting the United Nations in promoting the United Nations road safety conventions in Asia and the Pacific and providing training courses to police officers from India, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka. It offered to provide capacity-building assistance to other Asia-Pacific countries to support the improvement of road safety in the region.

C. Consideration of future programme focus

(Agenda item 4)

72. The Committee considered document ESCAP/CTR/2018/INF/2 entitled "Preparation of the draft programme of work for 2020".

73. The Committee was apprised of the changes adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 72/266 in relation to programme planning and budgeting, in particular of the decision to change the budget period from a biennial budget to an annual budget, effective from the 2020 programme budget.

74. With that change, the United Nations Secretariat would be preparing one programme budget document comprising of three parts, namely (a) a plan outline that endorses the long-term priorities and the objectives of the Organization (to be prepared centrally at United Nations Headquarters), (b) a programme plan for programmes and subprogrammes, including programme performance information (to be prepared at the Commission level), and (c) post and non-post resource requirements for the implementation of the programmes and subprogrammes (to be prepared at the Commission level).

75. The Committee was also informed that the focus of the draft programme plan for the transport subprogramme of ESCAP for 2020 would be on supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by member States across Asia and the Pacific.

76. The representative of the Asian Institute of Transport Development stated that investment in the transport sector should also prioritize the development of human resources through coordinated regional cooperation in the sharing of know-how and best practices and requested the secretariat to take the lead in bridging the existing skills deficit, especially in the light of fast-expanding new technologies. In that regard the Asian Institute of Transport Development, having a special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, stated its willingness to be a committed partner in that endeavour as well as in promoting regional cooperation and sustainable development.

D. Consideration of draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session

(Agenda item 5)

77. Further to introductory remarks by the secretariat, the Committee noted that there were no draft resolutions proposed by member States for submission to the Commission under this agenda item.

E. Other matters

(Agenda item 6)

78. The Committee took note of the strong interest expressed by the International Transport Forum in expanding its membership in the Asia-Pacific region and strengthening its collaboration with ESCAP on sustainable transport issues. The Committee also noted that transport connectivity for regional integration was the topic of the next International Transport Forum Ministerial Summit, due to be held in Leipzig, Germany, from 22 to 24 May 2019. Finally, the Committee expressed its appreciation to the International Transport Forum for co-organizing, together with ESCAP and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan, a special event during the session on sustainable urban mobility in ASEAN cities.

F. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifth session

(Agenda item 7)

79. The Committee adopted the present report on 21 November 2018 for submission to the Commission for endorsement at its seventy-fifth session.

III. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

80. The fifth session of the Committee on Transport was held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok from 19 to 21 November 2018. It was declared open by Mr. Arkhom Termpittayapaisith, Minister of Transport, Thailand. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered a statement.

B. Attendance

81. The session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP: Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; China; France; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Turkey; Uzbekistan; and Viet Nam.

82. The representative of the following Permanent Observer to ESCAP attended: Morocco.

83. The representative of the following office of the United Nations Secretariat attended: Economic Commission for Europe.

84. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended: International Labour Organization; Secretariat of the Greater Tumen Initiative/United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Human Settlements Programme Regional Office for Asia and the

Pacific; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; World Bank; and World Health Organization.

85. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations attended: Asian Development Bank; European Union; International Transport Forum; Mekong River Commission; and Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

86. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities attended: ASEAN Ports Association; Asia Research Initiative Network; Asian Institute of Transport Development; City University of Hong Kong; Global Infrastructure Fund Research Foundation Japan; Institute of Railway Technology (Monash University); Institute of Road Traffic Education; International Road Transport Union; International Union of Railways; Japan Transport Cooperation Association; Korea Expressway Corporation; Korea Railroad Corporation; Korea Transport Institute; and Thai Intelligent Transport Systems Association.

C. Election of officers

87. The Committee elected the following officers:

Chair: Mr. Erdem Direkler (Turkey)
 Vice-Chairs: Mr. Manindra Kishore Majumder (Bangladesh)
 Mr. Bambang Prihartono (Indonesia)

D. Agenda

88. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening statements;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Review of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021):
 - (a) Progress in the establishment of an interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe;
 - (b) Regional transport infrastructure connectivity;
 - (c) Regional transport operational connectivity;
 - (d) Europe-Asia transport connectivity;
 - (e) Transport connectivity for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;
 - (f) Sustainable urban transport;
 - (g) Rural transport connectivity to wider networks;
 - (h) Improving road safety.

3. Major issues in transport:
 - (a) Facilitating transport and logistics in the era of sustainable development;
 - (b) Framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond;
 - (c) Development and operation of dry ports of international importance;
 - (d) Developments in transport infrastructure connectivity (2014–2018) in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - (e) Assessment of urban transport systems and services;
 - (f) Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific.
4. Consideration of future programme focus.
5. Consideration of draft resolutions and decisions for submission to the Commission at its seventy-fifth session.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifth session.

Annex

List of documents

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
ESCAP/CTR/2018/1	Review of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021)	2
ESCAP/CTR/2018/2	Facilitating transport and logistics in the era of sustainable development	3 (a)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/3	Draft framework for enhancing the efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond	3 (b)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/4	Development and operation of dry ports of international importance	3 (c)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/5	Developments in transport infrastructure connectivity (2014–2018) in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	3 (d)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/6	Assessment of urban transport systems and services	3 (e)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/7	Improving road safety in Asia and the Pacific	3 (f)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/8	Report of the Committee on Transport on its fifth session	
<i>Limited series</i>		
ESCAP/CTR/2018/L.1/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/CTR/2018/L.2	Draft report	7
<i>Information series</i>		
ESCAP/CTR/2018/INF/1	Activities implemented under the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017–2021)	2
ESCAP/CTR/2018/INF/2	Preparation of the draft programme of work for 2020	4
<i>Information available online</i>		
www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/committee-transport-fifth-session	Information for participants	
www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/committee-transport-fifth-session	Tentative programme	