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Strategic questions of a horizontal policy or regulatory nature:

Road safety

**Activities of the United Nations Secretary-General's
Special Envoy for Road Safety****Report for the Inland Transport Committee 2019:
February 2019 – December 2019**

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

Recognizing the need to take urgent action towards addressing one of the most pressing sustainable development challenges of our time, the United Nations Secretary-General appointed on 29 April 2015, Mr. Jean Todt as his Special Envoy for Road Safety.

Taking 1.35 million lives annually and leaving 50 million more seriously injured and often disabled for life, the ever-growing road safety crisis leads to multidimensional and irreversible consequences. A leading cause of death among 5–29 years old, road crashes undermine economic growth, contribute to growing inequality and present a serious threat to youth, disproportionately affected in low- and middle- income countries. Moreover, increased motorization, population growth and rapid urbanization contribute to the gravity of the issue even further.

This report from the Special Envoy contains the activities which contribute to the four key priorities of his mandate, as implemented between February and December 2019.

* This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



The Committee is invited **to take note** of this report and **to express its support** for the continuation of the important work and momentum built so far by the Special Envoy to improve road safety.

I. Background

1. The severe impact of road traffic crashes on the well-being of all people and the huge economic consequences for societies, particularly in low- and middle-income countries prompted the United Nations Secretary-General to appoint on 29 April 2015, Mr. Jean Todt as his Special Envoy for Road Safety, with secretariat hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE); the mandate was further extended by the newly elected Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres.

2. In response to the worrying situation of road safety on the development agenda, specific goals on road safety were included in the Sustainable Development Goals in September 2015. Target 3.6 calls for halving of the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020, and target 11.2 aims to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all by 2030.

3. United Nations resolution A/RES/72/271, "Improving Global Road Safety" was adopted on 12 April 2018: it further highlights the need to address road safety globally and the important role of the Special Envoy, of ECE, of other United Nations regional commissions and of the United Nations road safety legal instruments, in achieving the road safety targets set by the Sustainable Development Goals, especially considering the approaching deadline of 2020 for target 3.6. It recognized the need to define a new time frame for reducing road traffic deaths and injuries in the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, the resolution also welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Road Safety Fund, the secretariat of which is hosted at ECE.

4. To date, the Special Envoy visited 85 Member States, where he held bilateral meetings with 25 Heads of States and 172 Ministers.

5. This report of the Special Envoy contains the activities as they contribute to the four key priorities of his mandate (see Annex) implemented since the Special Envoy's previous report (ECE/TRANS/2019/13).

II. Summary and Highlights of Activities Implemented by the Special Envoy

A. Promoting Global Partnerships to Support the Design and Implementation of Strategies and Activities to Improve Road Safety

6. This goal has been high on the agenda of the Special Envoy, and in concrete terms, was addressed by the Special Envoy through more than 200 meetings, consultations, and participation in various awareness-raising initiatives, such as the following.

1. United Nations Road Safety Fund

7. The establishment of a first-ever United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF), aimed at supporting Member States in their efforts towards strengthening their road safety systems, was a remarkable achievement in 2018. Since then, the Special Envoy has supported fundraising efforts, informed the Secretary-General about the progress in its operations, and

served in his role as Advisory Board member. The UNRSF Advisory Board held its third session in September 2019, during which the Special Envoy provided guidance on the business plan, call for proposals, branding and fundraising priorities. The first call for proposals was held from 10 October through 4 December 2019, with grantees expected to be announced during the Third Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in February 2020.

2. Establishment of the Friends of Road Safety Network in Geneva and New York

8. The delegation of the European Union in Geneva and the delegation of Italy in New York launched an informal network of Friends of Road Safety, in March and June 2019 respectively. The aim of the network is to increase engagement of the diplomatic corps and relevant organizations in both locations through awareness-raising, mobilizing funding and increasing development cooperation for road safety.

9. Activities are being planned on a regular basis. This includes two meetings of Geneva Friends for Road Safety Network which were held at the office of the delegation of the European Union delegation in Geneva on 4 and 12 July 2019 respectively. At both meetings, the Special Envoy's Secretariat and ECE presented an overview of activities and priorities of the Special Envoy, including progress and timelines for UNRSF activities. Furthermore, a workshop organized in November 2019 to inform the diplomatic corps in Geneva and other local stakeholders about the UNRSF call for proposals and guidelines. The workshop was followed by an exhibition "Our children, our roads, our responsibility" and reception, was co-hosted by Special Envoy for Road Safety and European Union Ambassador, in the presence and with the support of Dr. T. Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Ms. O. Algayerova, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the UNRSF secretariat. More than 60 countries were represented at the November workshop and reception.

10. In summary, the diplomatic corps are encouraged to contribute by: (a) promoting the UNRSF call for proposals towards the capitals and respective national bodies, particularly to submit project ideas according to the provided guidelines; (b) supporting a strong presence at and outcome from the Third Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Stockholm in February 2020, followed by a General Assembly resolution on improving road safety in April 2020, (c) proactive engagement with capitals, colleagues and international and national actors on the issue of road safety, and linking international efforts with national initiatives, including accession to the United Nations legal instruments and implementation thereof, and (d) promoting greater mobilization of funds for road safety, both to support of UNRSF and also to place a higher priority on road safety in development cooperation spending.

11. The upcoming activities are planned for January 2020 in New York and during the sidelines of the eighty-second session of ITC in February 2020 in Geneva.

3. Automotive Industry Voluntary Commitment

12. The Special Envoy along with ECE hosted three Sherpa meetings in 2017 and 2018, to help facilitate the Automotive Industry Voluntary Commitment (AIVC). The aim is self-commitment from the vehicle industry to produce only vehicles that comply with a minimum set of safety standards as provided by relevant United Nations vehicle regulations. A road map on implementing AIVC was presented during the third Sherpa meeting, which led to a milestone with the automotive industry as announced in the Manifesto underlining its appreciation of minimum vehicle standards, under the leadership of OICA (International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers) in October 2019. The Special Envoy welcomed the Manifesto while underlining that the automotive industry must make stronger commitments to ensure that all of their consumers are protected by a minimum level of safety regardless of where the vehicles was purchased.

13. Representatives from the following manufacturers participated in the meeting(s): BMW (represented by Daimler), Daimler, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, General Motors, Honda Motor, Hyundai Motor Europe Technical Centre, PSA Group, Renault Group, Tata Motors, Volvo Cars, Volvo Group.

4. United Nations Partnership Meeting for Road Safety

14. Twenty United Nations organizations and agencies were represented during the third United Nations Partnerships Meeting (previously named United Nations Coordination Meeting), hosted by the Special Envoy in October 2019. These meetings aim to facilitate deeper engagement within the United Nations system on the cause of, and to coordinate actions to amplify, impact. The Partnerships Meeting was an opportunity to share progress on global initiatives, such as the UNRSF, the internal United Nations Road Safety Strategy, the Third Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, and the second United Nations Sustainable Transport Conference. Participating organizations and agencies also reported on major global road safety initiatives that they are undertaking.

15. High-level participation included the personal participation of the Executive Secretary of ECE, Executive Secretary of ESCWA, ASG of WHO and the Secretary-General of WMO. ILO, UNITAR, DESA, UN Habitat, UNODC, UNDP, WFP, UNDSS, UNEP, ESCAP, UNICEF, UNHCR, ECA, OCHA and ITU.

B. Advocating with Governments, Civil Society and the Private Sector for the Promotion of Road Safety, particularly in Countries with a High Rate of Road Fatalities and Injuries

1. Advocacy with governments and other stakeholders for increased attention on road safety

16. The Special Envoy meets with high-level government officials in mostly low- and middle-income countries with poor road safety records. Since 2015, the Special Envoy has held meetings with government officials and relevant stakeholders in 85 countries: 20 countries in Asia/Eurasia/Oceania, 15 countries in Africa, five countries in the Middle-East, 24 countries in Europe and North America, and 21 countries in Latin American and the Caribbean. These discussions focused on the status of the road safety situation in each country and encouraged accession to and implementation of the United Nations road safety conventions. The Special Envoy continues to keep the United Nations road safety conventions, the importance of strong governance and the need to build complete national road safety systems on the agenda of his bilateral meetings and messages in his speeches at conferences.

17. Furthermore, during his visits to high-income countries, the Special Envoy has been persistently encouraging contributions to the UNRSF.

2. Joint Missions with the European Union Commissioner of Transport and the Vice-President of World Bank South Asia

18. In January 2019, the Special Envoy, jointly with the European Commissioner for Transport, travelled to Amman on an official mission. In the course of the visit, they met with key road safety stakeholders at the highest level, including the King of Jordan and the Prime-Minister. Among key discussion topics was recently developed draft national road safety strategy 2019–2023 with a target to reduce road traffic fatality rate by 20 per cent, the importance of strong and accurate road data collection and applying safe system approach.

19. The Government of Jordan was strongly encouraged to improve data management and consider accession to United Nations road safety conventions. The Special Envoy and

Commissioner Bulc had meetings with the following officials: King Abdullah II of Jordan, Prince Faisal bin Hussein, Mr. Omar Razzaz, Prime-Minister, Mr. Ghazi Mansour Al-Zaben, Minister of Health, Mr. Falah Al Omoush, Minister of Public Works and Housing, Mr. Inmar Fouad Moh's Khasawneh, Minister of Transport, Dr. Mary Kavar, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, and Dr. Yosef Al-Shawarbeh, Mayor of Amman.

20. In September 2019, the Special Envoy, together with Mr. H. Shafer, Vice-President of the World Bank for the South Asia region, travelled to Bangladesh and Nepal to jointly promote road safety among the Governments, United Nations and media. In Bangladesh, they met with the Finance Minister, Road Transport and Bridges Minister, and other senior government officials of Bangladesh as well as participated in a public event entitled, "Road Safety for All" where the United Nations and World Bank jointly launched a video competition "Road Safety Champions" that solicited solutions to make Dhaka roads safer; the competition is targeted towards the Bangladeshi youth between 18–23 years old. The World Bank is an important stakeholder to improving road safety as it was among the first development partners to support Bangladesh following its independence. Since then, the World Bank has committed more than \$30 billion in grants, interest-free, and concessional credits to the country.

21. In Nepal, the Special Envoy and Mr. Shafer met with the Honourable Minister of Physical Infrastructure and Transport, Mr. Raghubir Mahaseth, and senior officials at the Ministry and Road Safety Council. The meetings deliberated on the road safety agenda of Nepal and important progress in the drafting of the Road Safety Bill, formation of the National Road Safety Council, updating of the Road Safety Action Plan and accession to the United Nations legal instruments. A meeting with civil society organizations was also held, with fruitful discussion on bicycle safety and road safety for women. This mission also served as a follow-up to the Special Envoy's support of a national road safety capacity-building workshop which was held in Kathmandu in March 2019. These visits were covered on local and regional media stations, including BBC Nepal.

3. Preparations for the Third Ministerial Conference on Road Safety and its Declaration

22. The Special Envoy is a member of Steering Committee in the preparations of the Third Ministerial Meeting for Road Safety, to be hosted in Stockholm on 19 and 20 February 2020. The Special Envoy participated in or had been represented at all Steering Committee meetings and provided feedback during the consultative process of drafting a declaration for the Conference. More specifically, the Special Envoy has advocated for adequate visibility of the UNRSF and United Nations legal instruments, as well as for solid political commitments to be announced by governments and private sector during the conference. The Special Envoy will host a Ministerial lunch on 19 February 2020.

C. Participation in global and regional conferences, and meetings on road safety

23. The Special Envoy participated in meetings and conferences in efforts to highlight road safety, including events where road safety may not have been previously covered. These include:

- Briefing to Permanent Representatives of the European Union, Geneva
- The opening session of the eighty-first session of the Inland Transport Committee of 2019, where the policy segment was dedicated to "Role and trends of Automation in Transport: Safety, efficiency and sustainability", Geneva

- Launch of the internal United Nations Road Safety Strategy: “A Partnership for Safer Journeys” with UNDSS, New York
- Working Parties of the Inland Transport Committee: Global Forum for Road Traffic Safety (WP.1), Geneva
- World Economic Forum 2019, Davos, Switzerland
- ITU-ECE: Future Networked Car event on the occasion of the Geneva Motor Show 2019
- Round the World Round Table, organized by the Global Alliance of NGOs, Viet Nam
- Sixth Global Meeting of the Alliance of NGOs for Road Safety and Road Victims, Greece
- ECE Day of Cities event, Geneva
- International Transport Forum 2019, Germany
- Global Road Safety Partnership twentieth Anniversary Event, Geneva
- Round the World Round Table, organized by the Global Alliance of NGOs in Ecuador
- European Mobility Week, Tashkent
- European Union Road Safety Exchange Launch event alongside Commissioner Violetta Bulc, Brussels

D. Advocating the Accession To, and More Effective Implementation of the United Nations Road Safety Legal Instruments

24. This objective has been addressed at meetings of the Special Envoy with governments, representatives of international organizations and United Nations system organizations, as well as civil society representatives in countries he visited in his capacity as the Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety, as highlighted above. For this purpose, for each mission, the Special Envoy’s secretariat, hosted by ECE, prepared a briefing package with the road safety profile of the country, the main road safety legal instruments, specially designed and customized policy messages, and other details relevant for the meetings of the Special Envoy with the officials.

1. Promotion of United Nations Road Safety Conventions

25. The Special Envoy produced brochures which summarize seven of 58 United Nations transport-related legal instruments which specifically focused on improving road safety, and are being translated into French, Spanish and Portuguese. The brochures overview the seven, core United Nations road safety conventions, the accession status of each Member State and the steps needed for accession. The brochures are distributed and used at meetings worldwide. As a result of the Special Envoy’s advocacy, Myanmar acceded to the 1968 conventions on road traffic and road signs and signals in June 2019 and the secretariat has received a number of requests in 2019 for technical assistance from Argentina, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Nepal, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

2. Capacity-building

26. The Special Envoy hosted a series of capacity-building workshops for government officials and supported performance reviews to further achieve this objective, including:

- National Capacity-Building Workshop in Nigeria (March 2019): Following its accession in October 2018 to the five core United Nations road safety conventions, Nigeria is stepping up efforts to ensure their swift implementation, with help from ECE and ECA. At the request of the Government of Nigeria, the Special Envoy supported a capacity-building workshop, which was hosted by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) of Nigeria from 19 to 22 March 2019, with the support of ECE and ECA experts, and focused on the activation of the Convention's practical provisions – which cover road signs and road markings, road traffic, the transport of dangerous goods and vehicle safety, helping to key elements to strengthen national road safety system.
- National Capacity-Building Workshop in Nepal (March 2019): Following requests for technical assistance from the Nepalese government, the Special Envoy supported a national-level capacity-building workshop in Kathmandu from 19 to 22 March, in collaboration with ECE and ESCAP. The workshop focused on international best practices, including United Nations legal instruments as well as review and recommendations to the national road safety strategy and the action plan of Nepal, including national helmet standard. The technical assistance stemmed from the participation of Nepal during the Motorcycle Safety Regional Workshop held in Kuala Lumpur with ECE, ESCAP and the Special Envoy in 2017.
- Caribbean Road Safety Regional Workshop in Jamaica (August 2019): On 8 and 9 August 2019, the Special Envoy, jointly with ECE, ECLAC, IDB and WHO/PAHO, organized a regional road safety workshop, hosted by the Jamaican Ministry of Transport and the National Road Safety Council. The workshop brought together representatives from 11 English-speaking countries of the Caribbean to discuss their experiences, share potential ways to enhance road safety governance as well as improve data management, vehicle safety, law enforcement and road user behaviour. The United Nations road safety conventions were covered in detail, considering their role in building effective national systems.
- National Vehicle Safety Workshop in Argentina (July–August 2019): On 31 July–1 August, at the request of the Government of Argentina, a two-day workshop was hosted by the National Road Safety Agency in Buenos Aires, and co-organized by ECE, ECLAC and the Special Envoy's Secretariat. The workshop brought together over 40 national stakeholders for an in-depth discussion of United Nations legal instruments, notably, the 1958 and 1998 Agreements on vehicle constructions administered by WP.29. An overview of the legislation and the regulatory framework in Argentina as well as opportunities for improvement were also discussed, along with recommended next steps and a plan of action. A road map is being developed following the workshop to enhanced regional dialogue, which encourages adoption of minimum vehicle safety requirements in the country and region.
- Two additional United Nations Road Safety Performance Reviews are being supported in Africa, namely Ethiopia and Zimbabwe at the request of the respective Governments. The reviews, supported by the Special Envoy, are carried out by the Special Envoy Secretariat in collaboration with ECE and ECA, as well as other partners. These were in synergistic relationship with the United Nations Road Safety Performance Reviews implemented in the framework of the UNDA¹-funded project led by ECE in collaboration with and ESCAP and ECLAC.
- The United Nations Road Safety Performance Reviews pay special attention to regulatory governance for road safety, and they start with an assessment of the needs

¹ United Nations Development Account

of the country in review, using the UNRSF Global Framework Plan of Action for Road Safety. In practice, a Road Safety Performance Review assesses the current status of the national road safety system in place, helps the Government to identify the most critical safety aspects and recommends actions to be taken to address the gaps. Based on the identified priority needs, capacity-building seminars and workshops are organized for national road safety stakeholders. The project thus raises general awareness of road safety issues by sensitizing experts as well as the public sector and non-governmental sectors, of the need to set ambitious road safety targets and to implement specific measures to improve road safety. Following the finalization of the road safety performance review reports, the Special Envoy, jointly with the Executive Secretary of ECA, are expected to publicly launch the reports in 2020, to promote findings and recommendations with the highest levels of Government and to provide capacity-building to support the recommendations of the report.

- The Road Safety Performance Reviews which are supported by the Special Envoy, also include the WHO Emergency Care System Assessment, that helps to assess national or regional emergency care systems, identify gaps and set priorities for system development.

III. Conclusion

27. The Special Envoy has effectively deepened engagement and increased visibility of the cause among governments, the private sector, the United Nations system and other stakeholders, through evolving strategies such as the informal Friends of Road Safety Networks, partnership meetings and joint missions with high-level representatives. Furthermore, through regional and national capacity-building workshops as well as in-country missions, the Special Envoy has successfully raised the visibility of road safety and of the United Nations road safety legal instruments and inspired stronger interest from governments to address road safety, as evidenced by technical assistance requests received from Member States. Additionally, the Special Envoy continues to build stronger relationships with partners and Member States, encourages their support for critical long-term initiatives – such as UNRSF, supports the implementation of Road Safety Performance Reviews in developing countries, supports capacity-building for Member States with great needs, and raises the profile of road safety on the global development agenda.

Annex

Priorities of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety (extract from the Terms of Reference)

1. Promoting a global partnership to support the design and implementation of strategies and activities to improve road safety

The Special Envoy will support the attainment of the overall goal of the Decade, by leveraging his or her professional expertise and experience. In this regard, the Special Envoy is expected to develop a global partnership with a particular emphasis on raising levels of political commitment. The Special Envoy will work with key funding partners – including governments, financial institutions and the private and non-governmental sectors – to secure adequate resources to implement the global partnership strategy.

2. Advocating with governments, civil society and the private sector for the promotion of road safety, particularly in countries with high level of road fatalities and injuries

The Special Envoy will advocate for road safety, identifying achievements and challenges at the global, regional and national levels, as appropriate. He or she will highlight the challenges and needs for technical and/or other assistance which may be required, particularly by low- and middle-income countries, to improve road safety.

3. Participating in global and regional conferences and meetings on road safety

The Special Envoy will participate in global and regional conferences on road safety, including the second high-level global conference on road safety to be held in November 2015 in Brasilia, Brazil. On specific request and case-by-case consideration by the Secretary-General, the Special Envoy may represent the Secretary-General in relevant meetings.

4. Advocating the accession to, and more effective implementation of, United Nations road safety legal instruments

The Special Envoy will raise the visibility and awareness of the United Nations road safety legal instruments, including the Conventions on Road Traffic, and Road Signs and Signals, and the 1958, 1997 and 1998 Vehicle Regulations Agreements as well as other related instruments including driving times and rest periods for professional drivers and transport of dangerous goods. The Special Envoy will also promote the accession to and the improved implementation of these legal instruments by Contracting Parties.