



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
28 June 2012

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

Sixty-fourth session

Geneva, 24-27 September 2012

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Decade of Action for Road Safety, 2011–2020

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Outline of a concept for organizing the Global UN Road Safety Week, 6-12 May 2013

Note by the secretariat*

I. Background

1. As requested by the United Nations General Assembly, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations regional commissions are organizing the second Global UN Road Safety Week to raise global, regional, national and local awareness about Road Safety issues, with particular attention to vulnerable road users.

A. Theme

2. During the fourteenth meeting of United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC) in November 2011, it was decided to hold the second United Nations Global Road Safety Week in 2013 with the theme of pedestrian safety.

* In accordance with the programme of work of the Inland Transport Committee for 2012–2013 (ECE/TRANS/2012/9, cluster C, page 9) the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) examines matters and adopts measures aimed at improving Road Traffic Safety. The present document is submitted in conformity with that mandate.

B. Financing

3. The United Nations General Assembly specified that the week be organized within the resources of WHO and the United Nations regional commissions and with voluntary financial assistance from stakeholders, in collaboration with other members of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration. The regional commissions and the WHO are recommended to take steps to ensure availability of necessary funds and to make efforts to raise additional funds by approaching stakeholders that may be interested in participating and cooperating in the organization of events.

C. Location

4. It is proposed that WHO and the regional commissions coordinate holding parallel Road Safety weeks in each region, for example, WHO and ECE, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). It could be envisaged that the Road Safety weeks will have a common theme as agreed, will be held at the same time, but perhaps each location could include activities/events that take into account the peculiarities of the Road Safety situation in each region. National governments and related Road Safety authorities are encouraged to organize events in their capitals and/or other locations, to be held during the week.

D. Target audience

5. The Road Safety week may feature events and activities that will be open to public participation, as well as specialized events targeting policymakers, governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as other interested stakeholders, for example, representatives of private industries.

III. Objectives and project outline

6. In order to ensure a comprehensive approach to pedestrian safety that will produce concrete results, ECE proposes a set of considerations on which events and activities can be based. The objectives will be; firstly to raise awareness on the Road Safety situation globally; secondly to bring together policymakers, experts and other actors to exchange information and best practices on policies and measures, urban design and infrastructure; and thirdly to develop tools and mechanisms that would enhance Road Safety via better data collection and involvement of the public.

A. Objective 1: Raising awareness

1. Streets and roads as living spaces

7. Much can be said about street use different parts of the world. In some countries roads play a major role for peoples' everyday lives — the work place, the play area, transport — all take place on the streets. UNECE proposed the creation of a photo book demonstrating the different ways in which pedestrians use roads in different parts of the world. For this project public involvement would be by means of a photo competition. The photo book would not only demonstrate the differences on the roads of different countries,

but would also assist in drawing the connection between Road Safety improvement and cultural differences and poverty eradication.

ECE contribution: ECE is volunteering to prepare a publication on the theme of roads as living spaces and will welcome contributions from all regional commissions. The publication will complement the photo book and related photo exhibition during the Road Safety week. ECE also proposes a cross-sectoral collaboration with participation of other ECE departments (such as Committee on Environmental Policy and on Housing and Land Management), as well as involvement of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (PEP).

2. Organization of a short film competition for Road Safety awareness raising

8. It may be of interest to collect short Road Safety clips from individuals, schools, NGOs, etc., within the framework of a competition. The winning clip(s) would be presented at the Road Safety week. This would require one coordinating body to collect the material.

ECE contribution: ECE is exploring possible cooperation with Laser Europe.

3. Pedestrian victims of road crashes

9. This could be an additional perspective to pedestrian safety. Pedestrians may also be the victims of road accidents, and post-crash response and care address also those victims. In this context, ECE proposes the organization of an ambulance parade and emergency treatment demonstrations.

ECE Contribution: ECE may explore ways to organize this during the Road Safety week in the ECE region. If agreed, each regional commission will have to organize this locally.

B. Objective 2: Sharing knowledge and best practices

1. Cultural differences and Road Safety

10. While conclusions can be drawn about cultural differences and Road Safety from the photo exhibition, there is much more to this aspect of Road Safety that can be discussed and analysed. It is proposed that a joint round table discussion is organized, where experts and governments can explore the relevance of cultural differences in policymaking.

ECE contribution: ECE has already started preparing a publication on the effects of cultural differences and societal characteristics on Road Safety. It is envisaged that the publication may be presented during the Road Safety week round table.

2. Safety of and accessibility to public transport

11. People often walk in order to access public transport. Walking to the bus stop, crossing the street in order to connect from tram to bus or from bus to train are all situations during which an accident can occur if public transport infrastructure and planning does not incorporate Road Safety parameters. It is proposed that each regional commission organizes a round table discussion on this topic, and to enable experts in the field to exchange information and best practices.

ECE contribution: ECE is exploring the possibility to develop a best practices manual on urban infrastructure and pedestrian conscience, to be presented during the Road Safety week.

3. Safety for handicapped pedestrians

12. Visually and kinetically impaired persons rely on urban infrastructure to get around. They need ramps, sound aids to know when to cross the road, public transport that allows access for wheelchairs, marked sidewalks. There are countries and communities severely lacking in that department. ECE proposes to explore the Human Rights angle of handicapped pedestrian safety, possibly by collaborating with some of the United Nations Human Rights bodies in each region.

ECE contribution: ECE is interested in developing a programme on sidewalks. There are many cities and communities that not only do not have sidewalks designed to assist handicapped pedestrians, but in some cases have no sidewalks at all. UNECE will explore ways to raise publicity on this issue and to encourage the construction of safe sidewalks in as many communities as possible throughout the Decade. The idea may be presented during the Road Safety week with a view towards attracting international cooperation on the project. Other regional commissions are encouraged to join the effort.

C. Objective 3: Developing Road Safety tools and mechanisms

1. Walkability checks

13. Establishing a web-based walkability checklist as an assessment tool on the status of pedestrian safety in different countries and cities is a good way to collect valuable information while allowing individuals to become involved in the Decade of Action for Road Safety. Walkability checks also have strong environmental aspects, therefore allowing for cross-sectoral collaboration.

ECE Contribution: ECE would be willing to initiate discussions for a joint web-based project between regional commissions and UNEP with a view towards launching the global walkability check during the Road Safety week.

2. Vehicle buyers' checklist

14. Vehicles play a role in pedestrian safety. Passive and active vehicle safety standards not only protect drivers and passengers, but also pedestrians. Prospective vehicle buyers would benefit from and contribute to Road Safety if they are fully aware of new vehicle technologies and safety standards before buying a car. Environmental performance of a vehicle is also something that benefits pedestrians.

ECE contribution: ECE may prepare a set of recommendations on what to check with safety and environmental performance when buying a new car

IV. Further considerations

15. From the organizational point of view, there are further issues to be discussed such as for example providing publicity for the Road Safety week: will there be a campaign announcing it?

16. Furthermore, it should be discussed if during the Road Safety week each region will organize a high level event to attract media attention. This could include attendance by high

level speakers or political persons, or a high level reception. Is a press conference in each location envisaged?

17. Finally, there are questions on the appropriate venue. Would it be feasible to have one main venue per region but also arrange for Road Safety week stands in select locations in the city? These stands could hand out Road Safety materials and leaflets, or provide short video clips or workshops.
