UNECE

Road Map for Accession to and Implementation of the United Nations 1998 Agreement





TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	INTRODUCTION	3
A.1:	U <mark>nited Nations Ec</mark> onomic Commission for Europe	3
A.2:	Transport in UNECE	4
В.	PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ROADMAPS	5
C.	THE 1998 AGREEMENT ON UN GLOBAL TECHNICAL REGULATIONS	6
C.1:	Construction of Safer and more Environmentally Friendly Vehicles	6
C.2:	The 1998 Agreement	9
C.3:	Main provisions of the 1998 Agreement	10
C.4:	Format and contents of UN GTRs annexed to the Agreement	12
C.5:	Benefits of acceding to the 1998 Agreement	13
C.6:	Main web-links for information on the 1998 Agreement and its UN GTRs	14
D.	THE ROAD MAP FOR ACCESSION TO AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1998 AGREEMENT	15
STEP	1: PREPARING FOR ACCESSION	16
1.1:	Coordination and responsibilities at national level	16
1.2:	Overall coordination and supervision	16
STEP	2: ADDRESSING STRATEGIC ISSUES PRIOR TO ACCESSION	16
2.1:	Studying the 1998 Agreement and related national legislation	16
STEP	3: ACCESSION TO THE 1998 AGREEMENT	17
3.1:	Accession documentation	17
3.2:	Actions upon bec <mark>oming a Contracting Party</mark>	18
STEP 4: REGULATORY PROCESS UNDER THE 1998 AGREEMENT		
E.	SUMMARIZED ROAD MAP TABLE OF ACTIONS CONCERNING THE 1998 AGREEMENT	20

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Page 7: UNECE, World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29);

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A. INTRODUCTION

A.1 UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is one of the five United Nations regional commissions, administered by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was established in 1947 with the mandate to help rebuild post-war Europe, develop economic activity and strengthen economic relations among European countries, and between Europe and the rest of the world. During the Cold War, UNECE served as the unique forum for economic dialogue and cooperation between East and West. Despite the complexity of this period, significant achievements were made, with consensus reached on numerous harmonization and standardization agreements.

In the post-Cold War era, UNECE acquired not only many new member States, but also new functions. Since the early 1990s the organization has focused on analyses of the transition process, using its harmonization experience to facilitate the integration of Central and Eastern European countries into the global markets.

UNECE is the forum where the countries of western, central and eastern Europe, central Asia and North America – 56 countries in all – come together to forge the tools of their economic cooperation. That cooperation concerns economics, statistics, environment, transport, trade, sustainable energy, timber and habitat. The Commission offers a regional framework for the elaboration and harmonization of conventions, norms and standards. The Commission's experts provide technical assistance to the countries of South-East Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. This assistance takes the form of advisory services, training seminars and workshops where countries can share their experiences and best practices.



A.2 TRANSPORT IN UNECE

The UNECE Sustainable Transport Division is the secretariat of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and the ECOSOC Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. The ITC and its 17 working parties, as well as the ECOSOC Committee and its Sub-committees are intergovernmental decision-making bodies that work to improve the daily lives of people and businesses around the world in measurable ways and with concrete actions that enhance traffic safety, environmental performance, energy efficiency and the competitiveness of the transport sector.

The ECOSOC Committee was set up in 1953 by the Secretary-General at the request of the Economic and Social Council to elaborate recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods. Its mandate was extended to the global (multisectoral) harmonization of systems of classification and labelling of chemicals in 1999. It is composed of experts from countries which possess the relevant expertise and experience in the international trade and transport of dangerous goods and chemicals. Its membership is restricted in order to reflect a proper geographical balance between all regions of the world and to ensure adequate participation of developing countries. Although the Committee is a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, the Secretary-General decided in 1963 that the secretariat services would be provided by the UNECE Transport Division.

The ITC is a unique intergovernmental forum that was set up in 1947 to support the reconstruction of transport connections in post-war Europe. Over the years it has specialized in facilitating the harmonized and sustainable development of inland modes of transport.



The main results of this persevering and ongoing work are reflected among other things (i) in 58 United Nations conventions and many more technical regulations which are updated on a regular basis and provide an international legal framework for the sustainable development of national and international road, rail, inland water and intermodal transport, as well as the transport of dangerous goods and the construction and inspection of road motor vehicles; (ii) in the Trans-European North-South Motorways, Trans-European Railways and the Euro-Asia Transport Links projects that facilitate multi-country coordination of transport infrastructure investment programmes; (iii) in the TIR system (Transports Internationaux Routiers), which is a global customs transit facilitation solution; (iv) in the tool called For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS) which can assist national and local governments to monitor carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions coming from inland transport modes and to select and design climate change mitigation policies based on their impact and adapted to local conditions; (v) in transport statistics - methods and data - that are internationally agreed on; and (vi) in studies and reports that help transport policy development by addressing timely issues based on cutting-edge research and analysis. The ITC also devotes special attention to Intelligent Transport Systems, sustainable urban mobility and city logistics, as well as to increasing the resilience of transport networks and services in response to climate change adaptation and security challenges, including cyber-security and interconnectivity of automated vehicles.

B. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ROAD MAP





The implementation of vehicle regulations related activities demonstrated that, through accession to and implementation of the 1998 Agreement, vehicles safety will be increased considerably. However, the main issue for many countries remains how to prepare for accession and implementation of this Agreement so that they can benefit from its provisions, ensuring that safer and less polluting vehicles are used in their countries.

This brochure, prepared by the secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), presents the main steps and several sub-steps that countries worldwide wishing to accede to and fully implement the 1998 Agreement, are advised to follow (the Road Map).

The first two steps deal with the preparatory work for accession, including coordination and responsibilities and highlight the strategic issues that need to be considered before accession. Step three exclusively deals with accession to the agreement, eligibility and related procedures. Step four lays out the process for the development and establishment of UN Global Technical Regulations (GTRs).

All related legislative and explanatory documents are annexed. However, due to their volume, most of them are made available in electronic form only.

C. THE 1998 AGREEMENT ON UN GLOBAL TECHNICAL REGULATIONS

C.1 CONSTRUCTION OF SAFER AND MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY VEHICLES

Road transport plays an essential role in the economy and, jointly with the automotive industry, contributes considerably to the gross domestic product. On the other hand, road traffic has two main negative aspects: road accidents as well as noise and pollutant emissions.

The World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), was established by the ECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) in 1952 to address and seek remedies for these two negative aspects and to facilitate international trade by eliminating technical barriers to trade of vehicles. At the turn of the century it expanded its geographical coverage to include any country or region of the UN system that wants cooperate in increasing vehicles' safety and environmental performance.

The World Forum services three UN Agreements, the 1958 Agreement on the approval/certification of Vehicles, the 1997 Agreement on Periodic Technical Inspections (PTI) and the 1998 Agreement on Global Technical Regulations, and their annexed UN Regulations, UN Rules and UN GTRs.



In addition to the Governments of the contracting parties (CPs) to the three agreements, Governmental Organizations (GOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) can participate in the work of the World Forum, but in a consultative capacity.

The World Forum's work is transparent: agendas, working documents, reports, informal documents as well as the agreements and their UN Regulations, UN Global Technical Regulations and UN Rules as well as all the documents of their Informal Working Groups are freely accessible on the WP.29 website: http://www.unece.org/trans/main/welcwp29.html.

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