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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**

Committee on Transport  
Seventh session  
Beirut, 17-19 April 2006

**REPORT**

**SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT  
BEIRUT, 17-19 APRIL 2006**

**Summary**

The seventh session of the Committee on Transport was held in Beirut from 17 to 19 April 2006. Consideration was given to the items included on the session agenda. This report contains a brief account of the discussions that were held on each item and the recommendations that were made by the session. The report was adopted by the Committee at its final meeting, which took place on 19 April 2006.

The focus in the course of the discussions was on follow-up to the implementation of the recommendations of the sixth session of the Committee; progress made in implementing transport-related activities in the period between the sixth and seventh sessions of the Committee, including regular programme budget activities and consultancy services and technical cooperation; and activities funded by extra-budgetary resources.

The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) should adopt the plan of action for the implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq and a draft resolution concerning follow-up to implementation of components of the Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq, for submission to the twenty-fourth ESCWA session. The Committee also made a number of other recommendations, some of which were general, while others made specific reference to various issues covered by the agenda items.

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## Introduction

1. The seventh session of the Committee on Transport was held pursuant to Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) resolution 213 (XIX) of 7 May 1997 concerning the establishment of a committee on transport in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 1997/11 of 18 July 1997; and in accordance with ESCWA resolution 229 (XXI) of 11 May 2001 concerning the frequency of the sessions of the ESCWA Committee on Transport.
2. The Committee on Transport wishes to thank H.E. the Minister of Public Works and Transportation of Lebanon, Mr. Mohammad Safadi, for his keynote address, in which he referred to the successes achieved by the Committee and the transport team of the ESCWA Globalization and Regional Integration Division (GRID), and said that the resolutions adopted by the most recent session of the Council of Arab Transportation Ministers are solid evidences that the work undertaken within the framework of the Committee provided exemplary achievements that deserve to be followed by the whole Arab world.

### I. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

#### A. DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED TO ESCWA FOR ADOPTION

3. The Committee recommended that ESCWA should adopt the following draft resolution:

#### DRAFT RESOLUTION (XXIV): FOLLOW-UP TO IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPONENTS OF THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SYSTEM IN THE ARAB MASHREQ

*The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,*

*Referring* to the adoption by ESCWA at its twentieth session in May 1999 of the Declaration on the Adoption of an Integrated Transport System in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM),

*Referring also* to the aim of ITSAM, namely, to increase the flow of goods and persons through the borders of the ESCWA region,

*Recognizing* that the main components for implementation of ITSAM include the improvement of infrastructure, the facilitation of goods and passenger flows on that infrastructure and through border crossings, the provision of safe transport, an information system and a methodological framework for the formulation and analysis of policies,

*Referring* to subsequent resolutions related to the application of certain components of ITSAM and, in particular, resolutions 235 (XXI) concerning adoption of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq; 243 (XXII), concerning adoption of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq; 256 (XXIII) concerning adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Transport Cooperation in the Arab Mashreq; and 265 (XXIII) concerning regional cooperation in the field of road traffic safety,

*Recalling* the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly concerning road safety and, in particular, resolution 60/5, Improving global road safety, which gave approval for the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week, to be held in April 2007,

*Noting with satisfaction* the steps that have been taken by some member countries towards applying the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, particularly on routes M40 (Iraq-Jordan-Occupied Palestinian Territory-Southern Mediterranean Coast) and M45 (Syrian Arab Republic-Jordan-Saudi Arabia-Yemen), and the steps that have been taken with a view to

facilitating the passage of goods through borders and, in particular, the formation of national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade,

*Referring* to the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq which was adopted by the seventh session of the Committee on Transport, held in Beirut from 17 to 19 April 2006,

*Recognizing* that proper implementation of the above-mentioned resolutions and integrated ITSAM activities will contribute to regional integration and the economic development of member countries,

*Recognizing also* the need to provide the human capacities and sufficient resources to ensure follow-up by ESCWA to implementation of components of ITSAM and the effective participation of member countries in Global Road Safety Week in April 2007,

1. *Urges* member countries to take practical steps to complete application of the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq by the time specified;

2. *Also urges* member countries to begin putting into effect the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq;

3. *Further urges* member countries which have not yet appended a final signature to the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq, deposited an instrument of ratification thereto, or approved or acceded thereto, to do so at the earliest possible opportunity, thereby ensuring that the Memorandum enters into force; once the Memorandum enters into force, member countries should also implement and apply its articles at the national and regional levels;

4. *Encourages* member countries to increase efforts aimed at facilitating the passage of goods through border crossings and, in particular, by activating the work of existing national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade or establishing such committees in countries where they do not yet exist;

5. *Requests* the secretariat to play a leading role in publicizing the issue of road safety in the region, including capacity-building and consciousness-raising, and by coordinating the activities that ESCWA will undertake during Global Road Safety Week;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat to follow up and submit an annual report to the Committee on Transport on the progress made in the following fields:

- (a) The Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq;
- (b) Priority routes M40 and M45;
- (c) The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq;
- (d) The Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq;
- (e) The national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade;
- (f) Road safety.

#### B. OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

4. The Committee made other recommendations that focused on the issues set forth below:

1. *The Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq*

5. Each country should review the data on it that is set forth in the report on follow-up of implementation of the recommendations of the sixth session of the Committee on Transport

(E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)) and the report on follow-up to implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq (E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.1) and convey comments and updated information to ESCWA by 31 May 2006 at the latest. Should no remarks be received from any country, the data contained in those two reports will be considered to have been adopted.

6. Each country should be invited to review the report of the ESCWA consultant on follow-up to the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement with respect to priority routes M40 and M45, and convey amendments and updated information to ESCWA by 31 May at the latest.

7. Those countries, namely, Kuwait and Oman, which have not yet signed the Agreement, are urged to accelerate their accession thereto, while those which have signed but not yet ratified the Agreement, namely, Bahrain, Iraq, Palestine and the United Arab Emirates, are urged to accelerate the ratification thereof.

8. Countries which have not yet completed tables 1 and 2 of the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq are requested to convey that information to ESCWA by 30 June 2006.

9. While priority has been given to routes M40 and M45, all member countries are invited to accord the requisite attention to implementation of the plan of action for other routes.

#### *2. The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq*

10. The plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq should be adopted as it appears in E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.2, after the insertion of the amendments that were requested to table 1.

11. Those countries, namely, Iraq, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which have not yet signed the Agreement, are urged to do so forthwith, while those which have signed but not yet ratified the Agreement, namely, Bahrain, Kuwait, Palestine, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, should do so promptly, with a view to implementation.

12. Countries are requested to complete tables 2 and 4 of the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement and convey them to ESCWA by 30 September 2006 at the latest.

#### *3. National committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in the countries of the ESCWA region*

13. The importance is underlined of the role of national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade. The Committee invites countries which have not yet established such committees to be guided by the manual on the establishment of national transport and trade facilitation committees which ESCWA prepared in 2003 and make use of the technical support with which ESCWA provides countries that have established those committees.

14. Member countries are urged to facilitate and simplify procedures at border crossings with fellow member countries.

#### *4. Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq*

15. Member countries which have not yet appended a final signature to the Memorandum, lodged an instrument of ratification thereof, approved or acceded thereto are urged to do so at the earliest possible opportunity, in order to allow the Memorandum to enter into force and enable its provisions to be implemented at the national and regional levels.

16. ESCWA should prepare a draft plan of action for implementation of the Memorandum, which should be circulated to member countries for comment, in preparation for discussion thereof at an expert group

meeting that is scheduled for 5-7 September 2006, and submission to the eighth session of the Committee on Transport.

#### *5. Regional road transport information system*

17. Member countries that have not yet done so should, by 30 September 2006 at the latest, provide the data on road transport requested on the CD.

#### *6. Road safety*

18. Member countries should be informed of the content of General Assembly resolution 60/5, Improving global road safety, which is contained in annex III.

19. Member countries are invited to form a local committee to prepare national activities for the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week.

20. ESCWA should be invited to study the feasibility of preparing a Web page on road safety-related member country activities by the end of 2006, using national Internet sites.

21. Countries that have not yet completed the questionnaire on safety belts and means of protecting children are requested to provide ESCWA with their replies by 30 June 2006.

22. ESCWA should be requested to establish a regional technical cooperation programme in the field of road safety that involves all national organizations and institutions as well as United Nations specialized agencies.

#### *7. General recommendations*

23. The secretariat should be commended for its success in implementing the programme of work for the biennium 2004-2005 in the field of transport and requested to implement the programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007 in the field of transport that was adopted by the Committee at its sixth session, and was included in the ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007 that was adopted in document E/ESCWA/23/7.

24. It should be emphasized that the Committee on Transport should continue to hold its sessions annually as well as the other relevant meetings, given the importance of continuing regular follow-up of the agreements, recommendations and plans of action related to the ESCWA programme of work in the field of transport.

25. By 30 September 2006, member countries should provide ESCWA with two reports, the first on follow-up to implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Transport at its seventh session and the second on follow-up to the most important transport-related developments in each country during the period from 1 October 2005 to 30 September 2006.

## **II. ISSUES CONSIDERED**

### **A. GENERAL DEBATE ON TRANSPORT ISSUES IN THE ARAB MASHREQ: THE PLANS OF ACTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENTS ON INTERNATIONAL ROADS AND RAILWAYS IN THE ARAB MASHREQ (Agenda item 5)**

26. In accordance with what was agreed at the sixth session of the Committee on Transport, the above debate was included on the agenda, and participants agreed to focus on the plans of action for implementation of the agreements on international roads and railways in the Arab Mashreq.

27. A representative of the secretariat gave a detailed presentation to the Committee on the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq and the draft plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq. He made note of the countries that signed and ratified the former Agreement and the extent to which the seven countries that had ratified the Agreement had carried out the plan of action for its implementation. He also explained the draft plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq, set forth in E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.2, which countries should consider and comment upon before it is adopted.

28. A representative of the delegation of Saudi Arabia gave a detailed presentation of all Agreement-related work that had been completed on routes within that country, and the extent to which the executive steps taken were in conformity with the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement. He said that all articles of the Agreement would be completed in 2006 and that the widening, improving and upgrading of all routes would be completed by the end of 2009.

B. REVIEW OF TRANSPORT-RELATED ACTION TAKEN SINCE THE SIXTH SESSION  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT  
(Agenda item 6)

29. The Committee considered this item on the basis of document E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3, which comprises two parts. The first part deals with follow-up to implementation of the recommendations made at the sixth session of the Committee on Transport, while the second reviews progress made in implementing transport-related activities between the sixth and seventh sessions of the Committee.

1. *Follow-up of implementation of the recommendations of the sixth session  
of the Committee on Transport*

30. The Committee considered this part on the basis of document E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I), which reviews the progress made in implementing the recommendations made at the sixth session of the Committee on Transport and the activities relevant to the main issues considered. Proposals were put forward in respect of each of those issues.

(a) *The Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq*

31. The Committee reviewed the progress that had been made in following up ratification and implementation of the Agreement on the basis of E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.1.

32. Participating delegations considered Agreement-related developments in each country: according to the reports received by ESCWA, certain countries have taken many steps towards implementing the Agreement. Saudi Arabia was commended for its exemplary implementation of the Agreement.

33. The ESCWA representative presented a brief review of the action plans that have been implemented with a view to developing the priority routes.

34. The secretariat representative implored those countries that have not yet signed the Agreement to accelerate the relevant procedures, and countries that have signed but not ratified it to complete ratification procedures. He commended those countries that have taken steps to apply the plan of action for implementation of the Agreement and urged them to continue their endeavours and implement the Agreement in full.

(b) *The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq*

35. The Committee reviewed the draft plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on the basis of E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.2. The draft plan was discussed exhaustively and adopted after the amendments to table 1 proposed by member countries had been made.

36. Participating delegations considered Agreement-related developments: some explained that their countries are making progress towards accession and ratification, in preparation for beginning implementation.

37. The ESCWA representative asked those countries that have not yet signed the Agreement to accelerate accession procedures, and requested those that have signed but not yet ratified it to rapidly complete ratification procedures.

(c) *National committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in the countries of the ESCWA region*

38. The Committee reviewed the progress made in establishing national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade in ESCWA member countries and activating such committees as already exist, together with the technical support provided to member countries by ESCWA in that field.

39. Heads of delegation presented a review of the steps that have been taken by each country in respect of the establishment and activation of those committees.

40. Participants expressed the view that it was important to coordinate the work of the national committees because the facilitation of transport and trade was a regional and international issue. The secretariat representative explained that ESCWA was coordinating the work of the national committees at the regional level within the ESCWA region, and that there was a need to establish national committees responsible for overcoming all local obstacles and problems, with a view to joint regional action at the level of all the Arab countries in cooperation with the League of Arab States.

41. Participants affirmed the need to make use of the expertise that had been acquired in the course of establishing the national committees that had been set up and the need to interchange experience in that field. In that context, this work will be guided by the manual on the establishment of national transport and trade facilitation committees which ESCWA had prepared in 2003.

(d) *Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq*

42. The Committee considered E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.4, and the secretariat representative presented a detailed review of follow-up and implementation of the Memorandum and the procedures for its adoption and signature. Four countries, namely, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic, had either appended a final signature to or ratified the Memorandum.

43. The secretariat representative also brought to the attention of the Committee the resolution adopted by the Council of Arab Transportation Ministers at its eighteenth session, which reads as follows: "The Council has taken note of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq which was prepared by ESCWA and of the endeavours to extend the work related thereto, under the aegis of the League of Arab States, to include all the Arab countries, and invites all those countries that have not yet signed the Memorandum to study it with a view to acceding thereto". The fruitful cooperation between the League of Arab States, the Arab Sea Ports Federation and ESCWA, which led to the submission of the Memorandum to the Council of Arab Transportation Ministers, was commended.

44. The representative of the secretariat put forward some suggestions for action to be taken by Governments and private sector companies in implementation of the goals and provisions of the Memorandum, and proposed that the seventh session of the Committee should recommend that countries that had not yet signed the Memorandum should be urged to do so and that procedures for its implementation should be initiated.

45. The discussion covered the importance of putting the Memorandum into effect on the ground and of preparing a plan of action for its implementation that would be distributed to member countries for comment before being finalized at the expert group meeting scheduled for 5-7 September 2006. It was also considered

important to involve the private sector and for the Government to make suitable arrangements with it with respect to application. Further items should be added to the Memorandum, including research, marine rescue and piracy, and countries should be assisted in forging twinning links between similar and neighbouring ports and in providing maritime training.

(e) *Regional road transport information system*

46. The representative of the secretariat said that ESCWA had received completed CDs from six countries. The remaining member countries were reminded of the need for the CD to be completed, because the information would subsequently be used on the geographical information system that ESCWA is preparing.

(f) *Road safety*

47. The representative of the secretariat presented a review of road safety in which he noted successive General Assembly resolutions on road safety and, in particular, resolution 60/5, which includes a number of specific steps. He also referred to the resolution on road safety adopted by the twenty-third ESCWA session and the outcomes of the Workshop on the Implementation of Good Practices in Road Traffic Safety, which was held in Muscat on 28 and 29 November 2005, with particular respect to the choice of safety belts and the relevant international resolutions as joint themes. He further reviewed the outcomes of the questionnaire on safety belt use and means of protecting children, to which seven countries have to date responded. The activities of the transport team with respect to road safety were also reviewed, together with the numerous activities that are being prepared for the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week in April 2007, in which ESCWA is playing the role of regional coordinator. The representative of the secretariat concluded by presenting specific recommendations on road safety.

48. An extensive debate took place on the issue of road safety and, in particular, with reference to the identification of black spots, emergency services and the treatment of injured persons. A further focus was the role of traffic control: some of the best practices adopted by certain countries were reviewed, including the study of road safety procedures and the use of electronic control systems to capture traffic violations in Bahrain; and a traffic calming guide and a traffic control system to identify the sites of road traffic accidents in the United Arab Emirates. It was agreed that those practices should be presented at a workshop on best practices that is scheduled to be held in Jordan at the end of 2006. It was emphasized that safety conditions should be imposed on public transport vehicles and that a road safety committee should be established in the ESCWA member countries. The meeting took note of the fact that the Arab Union of Land Transport is in the course of preparing a database on road safety in the Arab region.

*2. Progress made in implementing transport-related activities between the sixth and seventh sessions of the Committee on Transport*

49. The Committee considered this part on the basis of document E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part II), reviewing the progress made in implementing transport-related activities in the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium and, in particular, those that were carried out between the sixth and seventh sessions of the Committee.

C. DATE AND VENUE OF THE EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE  
(Agenda item 7)

50. The Committee on Transport decided to convene its eighth session in Beirut in March 2007.

D. OTHER BUSINESS  
(Agenda item 8)

*1. Sources of finance*

51. A representative of the Saudi Bin Laden Group presented his ideas on how ESCWA transport projects could be funded and what help his Group might be able to provide.

52. A representative of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development gave an outline of the Fund and the way it finances projects, saying that the Fund was prepared to consider requests from member countries to finance transport projects carried out under the aegis of ESCWA.

## *2. Frequency of Committee on Transport sessions*

53. At the request of the ESCWA secretariat, participants discussed the above issue exhaustively. The majority (12) of member countries thought that Committee sessions should continue to be held annually, given the number and importance of the issues, agreements and recommendations that require regular follow-up: if sessions were to be held in alternate years, the implementation of agreements and recommendations would be negatively affected.

### **III. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT**

(Agenda item 9)

54. At its final meeting, held on 19 April 2006, the Committee on Transport adopted the report on its sixth session as contained in E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/L.4, on the understanding that all the agreed amendments would be made thereto.

### **IV. ORGANIZATION OF WORK**

#### **A. DATE AND VENUE OF THE SESSION**

55. The seventh session of the Committee on Transport was held at ESCWA headquarters in Beirut from 17 to 19 April 2006. Five meetings were held during the session.

#### **B. OPENING OF THE SESSION**

56. At the beginning of the inaugural session, Mr. Nazem Abdalla, Chief of the Globalization and Regional Integration Division (GRID), welcomed participants and invited H.E. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa, Under Secretary for Transportation of Bahrain and Chairman of the sixth session of the Committee, to make a statement.

57. Mr. Al-Khalifa thanked heads of delegation and all those in ESCWA for their earnest endeavours and wished them every success. He conveyed to participants the greetings of H.E. Sheikh Ali Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain and Minister of Transportation, and his gratitude for the cooperation extended to his country by all member countries during Bahrain's chairmanship of the sixth session of the Committee. The Under Secretary reviewed the action that Bahrain had taken with respect to the resolutions and recommendations of the sixth session of the Committee. He concluded by wishing the country that had assumed chairmanship of the seventh session of the Committee every success and expressing his willingness to assume the position of Vice-Chairman, in accordance with the practice applied by the Committee.

58. Ms. Mervat Tallawy, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCWA, made a statement in which she welcomed participants and referred to the positive developments that had taken place in the transport sector since the sixth session of the Committee on Transport and, in particular, with respect to implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq, the entry into force of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq and the adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq. She called for a review of the steps or programmes of work for implementation of those agreements. She also raised the question of how countries could be encouraged to respond to ESCWA's enquiries as to follow-up of implementation of the agreements, the difficulties they faced in that regard, and the role of the national committees. She requested participants to discuss the feasibility of holding Committee sessions biennially rather than annually.

59. Ms. Tallawy affirmed the importance of the issue of road safety, which was of international concern, and referred to the resolution on that matter that had been adopted at the twenty-third ESCWA session, in which member countries were called upon to participate in the activities that ESCWA would undertake in preparation for the Global Road Safety Week. She also referred to the study that ESCWA had prepared on the question; the Workshop on the Implementation of Good Practices in Road Traffic Safety, which was held in Oman; and ESCWA endeavours as regional coordinator of member countries' preparations for the Global Road Safety Week scheduled for April 2007.

60. She outlined the cooperation and coordination undertaken between ESCWA and the other United Nations regional commissions with a view to facilitating international transport and linking the continents of the world and, in particular, Asia, Europe and Africa, by means of land and sea transport networks, as part of a joint capacity-building project aimed at developing such links. ESCWA was the coordinator between the five regional commissions in that respect. It was important to agree on the land and land-sea transport links between the three aforementioned continents that ran through the ESCWA region. Ms. Tallawy concluded her statement by thanking participants for attending, wishing them every success, welcoming Mr. Mohammad Safadi, Minister of Public Works and Transportation of Lebanon, and thanking him for his sponsorship of the session and attendance at the inaugural meeting.

61. Mr. Safadi made a statement in which he welcomed the country representatives who had come to participate in the work of the session. He thanked Ms. Tallawy and the GRID task force for their efforts to strengthen cooperation between ESCWA member countries in various fields and, in particular, transport. He also commended the achievements that had been realized by the Committee, which included the adoption of the agreements on international roads and railways in the Arab Mashreq, the Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the field of maritime transport in the Arab Mashreq, and the establishment of national committees for the facilitation of transport and trade.

62. He said that in Lebanon, the Ministries of Public Works and Transportation and Economy and Trade had worked together to prepare a resolution on the establishment of the national committee for the facilitation of transport and trade. The resolution had been conveyed to the Prime Minister's office in preparation for its submission to the Parliament, adoption and subsequent implementation.

63. Mr. Safadi reviewed the resolutions that had been adopted by the Council of Arab Transportation Ministers at its eighteenth session, which had been held in Damascus on 23 and 24 November 2005 and the extent to which they were related to the work of the ESCWA Committee on Transport. He noted the importance of multimodal transport and its impact on the movement of international trade, and the importance of devising a legal framework that would identify the joint bases for overseeing the operation of such transport between ESCWA member countries, especially in view of the fact that the 1980 United Nations Convention on International Multimodal Transport of Goods did not enter into force. He concluded by renewing his welcome to participants and wishing the session every success.

#### C. PARTICIPANTS

64. Taking part in the seventh session of the Committee were representatives of the following 13 ESCWA member countries: Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

65. Also attending the session as observers were representatives of the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Union of Land Transport, the Arab Union of Railways, the Arab Federation of Shipping, the Arab Federation of Chambers of Shipping, the Arab Sea Ports Federation, the General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries, the Saudi Bin Laden Group and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development. The list of participants comprises annex I of this report.

#### D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

66. In accordance with rule 18 of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which provides that member countries shall assume the chairmanship

of the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations, Ms. Ihab Almawaldi, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, assumed the chairmanship of the session. In accordance with the practice followed at previous sessions of the Committee, Mr. Mohammed Bin Khalifa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa, representative of Bahrain, and Mr. Atta Nabil Hussein Atta, the representative of Iraq, assumed the positions of Vice-Chairmen, and Mr. Hassan Bin Sulaiman Salah Al-Majaini, representative of Oman, the position of Rapporteur.

67. A drafting committee was formed under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, comprising representatives of the secretariat and Mr. Mahmoud Abdel Salam (Jordan), Mr. Muhammad Rasasi (United Arab Emirates), Mr. Ali Jabra Al-Ghuban (Saudi Arabia) and Mr. Abdul-Karim Muhammad Salih (Yemen).

#### E. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

68. At its first meeting, the Committee on Transport adopted the agenda for its seventh session in the amended form in which it appears in E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/L.1, as set forth below:

- “1. Opening of the seventh session of the Committee on Transport;
2. Election of officers;
3. Adoption of the agenda;
4. Proposed organization of work;
5. General debate: transport issues in the Arab Mashreq: plans of action for the implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq and the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq;
6. Review of transport-related actions taken since the sixth session of the Committee on Transport:
  - (a) Follow-up of implementation of the recommendations of the sixth session of the Committee on Transport, in particular with respect to land transport, railways, maritime transport and road safety;
  - (b) Progress made in implementing regular budget transport-related activities in the 2004-2005 biennium, consultancy services and technical cooperation; and extrabudgetary activities.
7. Date and venue of the eighth session of the Committee on Transport;
8. Other business:
  - (a) Sources of finance;
  - (b) Frequency of Committee on Transport sessions.
9. Adoption of the report of the Committee on Transport on its seventh session”.

69. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the proposed organization of work as it appears in E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/L.2/Rev.1 after having been amended in accordance with the agenda.

#### F. DOCUMENTS

70. Annex II of this report comprises the list of documents that were submitted to the Committee on Transport at its seventh session.

## Annex I

### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### A. ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

##### Bahrain

Mohamed Bin Khalifa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa  
Under Secretary  
Ministry of Transportation

Mr. Rasheed J. Ashoor  
Assistant Under Secretary for  
Telecommunications and  
Land Transport  
Ministry of Transportation

Mr. Essa Abdulla Yateem  
Director of Maritime Affairs  
Directorate General of Ports Customs,  
Ports and Free Zones  
Ministry of Finance

Ms. Huda Abdulla Fakhro  
Director, Roads Planning and Design  
Ministry of Works and Housing

Mr. Khalifah H. Al-Amari  
Specialist of Coordination and Follow-up  
Ministry of Communications

##### Egypt

Mr. Muhammad Abdul-Aziz Fawda  
Chief, General Authority for Roads, Bridges  
and Land Transport

Mr. Hassan Ahmed Selim  
Vice-Chairman of Transport Planning Authority  
Ministry of Transport

##### Iraq

Mr. Atta Nabil Hussein Atta  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Kareem Kadhem Hussien  
Director General of Private Transport Company

Mr. Omran Radhi Thani El-Lami  
Sea Captain, Branch Director  
Representative of Iraqi Public Maritime Transport  
Company

Ms. Azza Ahmad Hussien  
Director of International Affairs Department  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Matti Yacoob Matti  
Head Senior Engineer  
Iraqi Republic Railways Company

Mr. Bahaa Abdul Aziz Hussien  
General Director  
Directorate of Transport and Communications  
Ministry of Planning and Corporation  
Development

##### Jordan

Mr. Laith H. Dababneh  
Director, Multi-Transport Department  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Mahmoud Abdel Salam  
Head of Maritime Transport  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Inmar Khasawneh  
Director Traffic Safety Division  
Ministry of Public Works and Housing

Mr. Tayseer Ahmed Al-Kayed  
Head of Geometric Design Section  
Ministry of Public Works and Housing

##### Kuwait

Mr. Mubarak S. Al-Gareeb  
Controller Studies and Research  
Land Transport Department  
Ministry of Communications

Mr. Nabil Basha M. Al-Basha  
Controller Marine Registration  
Ministry of Communications

Mr. Fouad Ibrahim Al-Tirkit  
Controller Maritime Transport  
Ministry of Communications

##### Lebanon

Mr. Mohammed Al-Safadi  
Minister of Public Works and Transportation

Lebanon (continued)

Ms. Rafif Kobeiss Berro  
Advisor to the Minister of Economy and Trade  
Ministry of Economy and Trade

Mr. Joseph Zaki Bou Samra  
Head of Design and Projects Department  
General Roads Directorate

Mr. Nabih Muhammad Ali Al-Barji  
Secretary of Administrative Council  
Joint Rail and Transport Department

Mr. Tony Assaf  
Head of Studies and International Agreements  
Department  
Directorate of Marine and Land Transport  
Ministry of Public Works and Transportation

Mr. Robert Khoury  
Chief Maintenance Engineer  
Civil Aviation  
Beirut International Airport

Mr. Fawwaz Adib Murtada  
Chief, Civil Aviation Legal Studies  
Beirut International Airport

Oman

Mr. Hassan Bin Sulaiman Salah Al-Majaini  
Director of Marketing and Development  
Directorate  
Ministry of Transport and Communications  
Directorate General of Port and Marine Affairs

Mr. Salah Bin Khalifa Ashekaili  
Deputy Director of Studies and Planning  
Department  
Ministry of Transport and Communications

Ms. Suad Mohammed Al-Fadhel  
Director of Technical Corporation Department  
Ministry of National Economy

Mr. Saeed Bin Rashed Al-Qatabi  
Economic Research  
Ministry of National Economy

Palestine

Mr. Ziad Al-Zaza  
Minister of Transport and Communications

Mr. Ali Sha'at  
Deputy Minister of Transport

Qatar

Mr. Eid Saleh Al-Kuwari  
Deputy Chief, Maritime Affairs and Land  
Transport Department  
Customs and Ports General Authority

Mr. Shafi' Muhammad Said Al-Fahida  
Chief, International Affairs Unit  
Customs and Ports General Authority

Mr. Mubarak SI Al-Gareeb  
Controller of Studies and Research  
Land Transport Department  
Ministry of Communications

Mr. Nabeel Basha M. Al-Basha  
Controller, Marine Registration  
Ministry of Communications

Mr. Fuad Ibrahim Al-Tarkit  
Controller, Land Transport Project  
Ministry of Communications

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Ali Abdullah Al-Nuaim  
Deputy Minister for Planning and Follow-up  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Hamad Bin Abdulgader  
Vice President for Operation Affairs  
Saudi Railways Organization

Mr. Mohammad Al-Suwaiket  
General Director of Maintenance Department  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Ali Jabra Al-Ghuban  
Consultant to the Deputy Minister of Transport  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Yousef Bin Ismail Jado  
Director General of Studies Department  
Ministry of Transport

Mr. Saber Al-Harbi  
Civil Engineer  
Ministry of Transport

Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. Ihab Almawaldi  
Director of Planning and International  
Relationships  
Public Establishment for Road Communication  
Ministry of Transport

United Arab Emirates

Mr. Salem Ali Al Zaabi  
Assistant Under Secretary  
Land and Maritime Affairs  
Ministry of Communications  
Dubai

Mr. Mohammed A. Al-Marzooqi  
Director Land Affairs Department  
Ministry of Communications  
Abu-Dhabi

Mr. Ibrahim Abdulla Al-Wahabi  
Acting Director of Roads and Utilities  
Dubai

Mr. Mohammed Saleh Samhan Al Nuaimi  
Mazyed Customs Manager  
Customs Department  
Abu-Dhabi

Mr. Badr Matar Al-Siri  
Traffic Engineering Manager  
Department of Roads and Communications

Mr. Fahad Abdul Aziz Bin Ishaq  
Senior Civil Engineer  
Department of Planning  
Abu-Dhabi

Mr. Gaith Hassan Al-Zaabi  
Director of Road and Police Division  
Ministry of Interior  
Abu-Dhabi

Mr. Mohammad Abdul Ghani Al-Rasasi  
Senior Director Al-Owiar Customs Department  
Customs Department  
Dubai

Yemen

Mr. Ali Muhammad Muta'fi  
Deputy Minister of Transport for Land and Air  
Transport Affairs

Mr. Sharaf Abdul-Wahab Al-Shami  
Deputy Minister of Public Works and Roads

Mr. Yahya Ahmed al-Kohlani  
Advisor to the Minister of Transport  
Chairman, General Land Transport Corporation

Mr. Hussein Muhammad Haida  
Technical consultant, Road Sector  
Ministry of Public Works and Roads

Mr. Abdul-Karim Muhammad Salih  
General Director, Land and Air Transport Policies  
Ministry of Transport

B. REGIONAL ARAB ORGANIZATIONS

League of Arab States

Ms. Mawahib Abdul-Muni'im Khalaf  
Minister Plenipotentiary  
Head of Department of Tourism, Transport  
and Electricity

Gulf Cooperation Council

Mr. Sultan Ghanim Al-Ghanim  
Director of Transportation Department

Arab Union of Land Transport

Mr. Mahmoud H. Abdallat  
Secretary-General

Arab Union of Railways

Mr. Mourhaf Sabouni  
General Secretary

Arab Federation of Shipping

Mr. Farid Karabibar  
Lebanese Shipowners Association  
General Manager  
Diana "K" Shipping Company

Mr. Amin Ahmed El Habbal  
Technical Manager  
Diana "K" Shipping Company

Mr. Hasan Shams  
Secretary  
Lebanese Shipowners Association

Mr. Raymond Agl Farhat  
Legal Advisor  
Lebanese Shipowners Association

Arab Federation of Chambers of Shipping

Mr. Elie Emile Zakhour  
First Deputy President  
International Chamber of Navigation

General Union of Chambers of Commerce,  
Industry and Agriculture for Arab  
Countries

Ms. Nahid El Zein Naamani  
Economic researcher

Arab Sea Ports Federation

Mr. Essam Aly Badawi  
Secretary

Mr. Ahmad Haytham Fouad El Wali  
Director  
Tripoli Port

Saudi Bin Laden Group

Mr. Hassan M. Bin Laden  
Senior Vice President

Mr. Tahsin F. Jarrah  
Strategic Planning Director

Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development

Mr. Mohammed S.Y. Al-Hadidi  
Engineering consultant

Annex II

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

Symbol	Item	Title
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/L.1/Rev.1	3	Provisional agenda
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/L.1/Add.1	3	Annotated provisional agenda
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/L.2/Rev.1	4	Proposed organization of work
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3	6	Review of transport-related action taken since the sixth session of the Committee on Transport
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)	6 (a)	Follow-up of implementation of the recommendations of the sixth session of the Committee on Transport
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.1	6 (a-i)	The Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.2	6 (a-ii)	Draft plan of action for implementation of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.3	6 (a-vi)	Road safety
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.4		Report of the follow-up and implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Transport Cooperation in the Arab Mashreq
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part II)	6 (b)	Progress made in implementing regular budget transport-related activities in the 2004-2005 biennium; consultancy services and technical cooperation; and extrabudgetary activities
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/INF.1/Rev.1		Aide-memoire
E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/INF.2		List of documents

### Annex III

#### **RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY** [without reference to a Main Committee (A/60/L.8 and Add.1)]

##### **60/5. Improving global road safety**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 57/309 of 22 May 2003, 58/9 of 5 November 2003 and 58/289 of 14 April 2004 on improving global road safety,

*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General on the global road safety crisis,<sup>1</sup>

*Commending* the World Health Organization for its role in implementing the mandate conferred upon it by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/289 to act, working in close cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions, as a coordinator on road safety issues within the United Nations system,

*Also commending* the United Nations regional commissions and their subsidiary bodies for having responded to the above-mentioned resolutions and to the report of the Secretary-General by accelerating or expanding their road safety activities,

*Noting with satisfaction* the progress made by the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration as described in the report of the Secretary-General,<sup>2</sup> as well as the road safety initiatives undertaken by relevant United Nations agencies and international partners,

*Underlining* the importance for Member States to continue using the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* as a framework for road safety efforts and implementing its recommendations by paying particular attention to the five risk factors identified, namely, the non-use of safety belts and child restraints; alcohol; the non-use of helmets; inappropriate and excessive speed; and the lack of infrastructure,<sup>3</sup>

*Welcoming* the proposal of the Economic Commission for Europe to host the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week, in Geneva in April 2007, targeted at young road users, including young drivers,

*Also welcoming* the proposal to designate the third Sunday in November as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, in recognition of road traffic victims and their families' loss and suffering,<sup>4</sup>

*Convinced* that responsibility for road safety rests at the local, municipal and national levels,

*Recognizing* that many developing countries and countries with economies in transition have limited capacities to address these issues, and underlining, in this context, the importance of international cooperation towards further supporting the efforts of developing countries, in particular, to build capacities in the field of road safety and of providing the financial and technical support associated with such efforts,

1. *Expresses its concern* at the continued increase, in particular in developing countries, in traffic fatalities and injuries worldwide;

2. *Reaffirms* the importance of addressing global road safety issues and the need for the further strengthening of international cooperation, taking into account the needs of developing countries, by building capacities in the field of road safety, and providing financial and technical support for their efforts;

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<sup>1</sup> A/60/181 and Corr.1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., para. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., para. 37 (f) and (g).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., para. 37 (i).

3. *Encourages* Member States and the international community, including international and regional financial institutions, to lend financial, technical and political support, as appropriate, to the United Nations regional commissions, the World Health Organization and other relevant United Nations agencies for their efforts to improve road safety;

4. *Invites* the United Nations regional commissions, relevant United Nations agencies and international partners to continue the existing road safety initiatives, and encourages them to take up new ones;

5. *Encourages* Member States to adhere to the 1949 Convention on Road Traffic<sup>5</sup> and the 1968 Convention on Road Traffic<sup>6</sup> and Convention on Road Signs and Signals,<sup>7</sup> in order to ensure a high level of road safety in their countries, and also encourages them to strive to reduce road traffic injuries and mortality in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;

6. *Stresses* the importance of the improvement in the international legal road traffic safety norms, and welcomes in this regard the work of the Working Party on Road Traffic Safety of the Inland Transport Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe in the elaboration of a substantial package of amendments to the 1968 Conventions on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals;

7. *Invites* Member States to implement the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, including those related to the five main risk factors, namely, the non-use of safety belts and child restraints; the non-use of helmets; drinking and driving; inappropriate and excessive speed; as well as the lack of appropriate infrastructure;

8. *Also invites* Member States to establish a lead agency, on a national level, on road safety and to develop a national action plan to reduce road traffic injuries, by passing and enforcing legislation, conducting necessary awareness-raising campaigns and putting in place appropriate methods to monitor and evaluate interventions that are implemented;

9. *Invites* the United Nations regional commissions and the World Health Organization to organize jointly, within their resources as well as with voluntary financial assistance from concerned stakeholders from government, civil society and the private sector, the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week to serve as a platform for global and regional, but mainly national and local, activities to raise awareness about road safety issues and to stimulate and advance responses as appropriate for these settings, and to convene a second road safety stakeholders' forum in Geneva as part of the Global Road Safety Week to continue work begun at the first forum held at United Nations Headquarters in 2004;

10. *Invites* Member States and the international community to recognize the third Sunday in November of every year as the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims as the appropriate acknowledgement for victims of road traffic crashes and their families;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session on the progress made in improving global road safety;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session the item entitled "Global road safety crisis".

38<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
26 October 2005

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 125, No. 1671.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1042, No. 15705.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1091, No. 16743.