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INFORMATION NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Council

Subject: **Any other business**

Road safety

- Information from the Commission and the Czech delegation

Delegations will find attached two information notes from the Commission and from the Czech delegation on the above-mentioned subject for consideration under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 7 June 2016.

Information Note from the Commission

Road safety in the EU

1. Background

The EU has the safest road traffic in the world. For 2015 all Member States report road fatality rates below 100 deaths per million inhabitants; the EU average was 51.5. The number of road fatalities varies greatly across the EU, though the gap is becoming smaller every year.

However, this road safety trend is showing worrying signs of stagnation, in particular in the last two years. Despite efforts at all levels of government, we still have 26,000 people dying on the EU roads in a year. The toll in terms of seriously injured is even higher, with an estimated 135,000 people sustaining serious and life-changing injuries in road accidents annually.

2. State of play

On 7 April 2016, Commissioner Bulc wrote to all EU Transport Ministers to flag this worrying development and to emphasise the need to turn through additional effort.

There is no single "silver bullet" to road safety. Nonetheless, much is already known about the main risks and the most efficient counter-measures. Unsafe behaviour by road users – speeding, drink-driving and failure to wear appropriate safety equipment such as seat belt or safety helmet – is the most common contributing factor to serious road traffic accidents. To address such behaviour, a combination of education and enforcement is important.

For its part, the Commission will deliver on areas of activity which fall within its competence. The focus will be on: 1) extending the knowledge base, facilitating exchange of best practice and building dialogue, collaboration and networks with all stakeholders; 2) monitoring the implementation and relevance of the existing EU-level legislation and finalising the on-going legislative reviews of Directive 2003/59/EC on training and qualifications of professional drivers and of Directives 2008/96/EC on infrastructure safety management and 2004/54/EC on road tunnel safety; 3) ensuring a strong road safety focus in current innovation and technology developments, in particular within the framework of connected and automated driving.

The aspirational target of reducing the number of road deaths by half remains relevant as a policy goal. This is the objective we must strive to achieve.

The high toll of serious road injuries must also be addressed. Already, initial data give an indication of what needs to be done in order to reduce serious road injuries: more attention to road safety in urban areas and to the safety of vulnerable road users. Data reporting still needs to be improved; there are still several Member States not reporting in accordance with the new harmonised EU definition of serious injury.

3. Conclusion

Improving road safety remains a priority for the Commission.

The priority actions and measures needed to improve the situation fall largely under the responsibility and competence of Member States. The Commission acknowledges their significant engagement in promoting road safety. At the same time we encourage them to persevere and further step-up these efforts.

The Commission also calls on all Member States to continue supporting the new data collection on serious road injuries by reporting in accordance with the harmonised EU definition. This will enable better analysis and monitoring of developments in this area.

Information from the Czech delegation

The Czech Republic would like to inform delegations about the outcome of the ministerial meeting of the Visegrad countries, Austria, Slovenia and the European Commission which took place in Prague on 12th and 13th May 2016. The meeting was devoted to the issue of road safety with the aim to further promote cooperation between Member States in this field.

The number of casualties of road accidents in the EU still remains significant. About seventy people die every day and many more are wounded. Although the statistics are not very encouraging, the overall number of casualties is constantly decreasing and measures exist which have proven to be very effective in contributing to this trend.

Representatives of the Visegrad countries, Austria, Slovenia and the European Commission have therefore gathered in Prague to share best practice with regard to the structure of road safety responsible national bodies, financing of road safety policies, and increasing general road safety awareness. As a result, the Prague Declaration was adopted and signed by the representatives of the Visegrad countries and Slovenia.

The participants hope that this event served as a fruitful contribution to the wider debate on improving road safety and as an inspiration for other Member States to get involved in similar initiatives.

The text of the Prague Declaration can be found below.



The Prague Declaration

We, Transport Ministers of the V4 countries and Slovenia,

on the initiative of Mr. Dan Ťok, Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic, gathered in Prague on 13 May 2016 on the occasion of the V4 ministerial meeting together with Slovenia and representatives of the European Commission

STRESS that the rate of road fatalities must continue to decrease given that traffic crashes cause an unacceptable human, social and economic loss and harm physically, psychologically and materially the victims and their relatives;

URGE that it is necessary to consider road safety as priority of transport policies at national and EU levels and to ensure adequate financial and human resources for its implementation;

EXPRESS THE WISH to cooperate closely in order to provide citizens with the optimal traffic safety conditions fulfilling their right mobility;

CONFIRM the aspirational target to achieve an overall reduction in the number of victims in traffic crashes by 50% for death and by 40% for serious injuries between 2010 and 2020.

And **IN ACCORDANCE** with the European Union road safety policy framework for 2011-2020

STRESS that improvement of road safety requires joint efforts, constant and patient work at all levels.

CONFIRM the commitment to pursue further efforts for safer roads, safer vehicles and safer road users, notably by proper enforcement of traffic rules and continued education and training of road users.

TAKE INTO ACCOUNT the urgent need to focus on vulnerable road users, especially on elderly people, and to take appropriate measures to ensure their safe mobility.

DESIRE to cooperate to improve road safety in the future, also during the next V4 Presidencies.

WELCOME other initiatives related to road safety, as well as active participation of other countries willing to follow the objectives of this Declaration.
