



International Center for Alcohol Policies
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**United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa**

Experts Gather in Addis Ababa to Address Road Safety in Africa

Effort builds on collaboration of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP), extending to work with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – 13 November 2014 – The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP) organized a two-day workshop, in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), aimed at raising awareness of UN road safety agreements and reducing drink driving across the African continent.

With more than 1.3 million people killed on roads every year, the road safety crisis in the world has reached an alarming magnitude. However, there are proven means of increasing road safety and reducing fatalities. They are embodied in the UN international agreements and conventions on transport which set standards such as the safety level car manufacturers must meet, or what minimum safety requirements are needed to ship hazardous materials or dangerous goods. The first day of the two day workshop focused on educating decision makers about these conventions, as well as reviewing the progress of the implementation of the African Road Safety Action Plan.

The second day was focused on addressing alcohol-related road traffic crashes involving vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. It will focus on increasing the awareness of government officials about existing UN road safety legal instruments and effective approaches to preventing drink driving.

The workshop is a significant step forward in engaging governments in a discussion of international road safety legal frameworks, best practices, and how they may be effectively implemented.

The Addis Ababa workshop is an extension of a broader cooperation between ICAP and ECE to increase the awareness of government officials in regions outside of Europe about the UN road safety legal instruments and effective approaches to preventing drink driving.

“Together with UN member states the ECE secretariat has been relentlessly working to elaborate legal and technical standards in three main areas of road safety: infrastructure, vehicles, and road user’s behavior,” said Eva Molnar, Director, Transport Division, ECE. “Simply said, through our work, we strive to facilitate the creation of a globally harmonized road traffic system - the system that enhances safety for all road users.”

“Many African nations are particularly hard-hit by road traffic crashes as an unfortunate consequence of otherwise positive rapid economic growth,” said Stephen Karingi, Director, Regional Integration and Trade Division, ECA. “Governments and transportation stakeholders have a critical role to play in reducing road crashes, and effectively implementing the African Road Safety Action Plan as well as UN road safety instruments and other international good practice here in Africa.”

“We are proud to collaborate with both ECE and ECA to encourage practical, hands-on solutions to alcohol-related road crashes,” said Brett Bivans, Senior Vice President, ICAP. “The UN legal instruments are powerful tools for improving road safety. It is our hope that our combined resources, including UN networks and partners, will contribute to advancing the objectives of the UN Decade of Road Safety, particularly in Africa.”

Following the event, a proceedings publication will be shared about the breadth of issues addressed during the trainings. This will be the second joint publication from ICAP and ECE on the issues of alcohol and road safety, following the 2013 release of [Regional Perspectives on Preventing Alcohol-Related Road Crashes Involving Vulnerable Road Users](#).

Road traffic injuries are among the three leading causes of death worldwide for people between 5 and 44 years of age, and the leading cause of death for young people aged 15–29. The UN Decade of Action for Road Safety calls for increased action at the national, regional, and global levels in service to the UN’s goal of stabilizing, and then reducing, the forecast level of road traffic fatalities around the world.

For editors:

*The International Center for Alcohol Policies (ICAP) and the Global Alcohol Producers Group (GAPG) have merged to form the **International Alliance for Responsible Drinking (IARD)**. Continuing and expanding ICAP’s work, IARD will support implementation of the Beer, Wine and Spirits Producers’ Commitments to Reduce Harmful Drinking (www.producerscommitments.org), promote understanding of the positive role of alcohol in society, and contribute to an informed debate by providing balanced and evidence-based science.*

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Background info:

- ECE's Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) is the only permanent intergovernmental body in the United Nations system that focuses on improving road safety. The Conventions on Road Traffic of 1949 and 1968 and on Roads Signs and Signals of 1968, and other UN legal instruments administered by ECE address the main factors of road crashes such as road user behavior, vehicles and infrastructure.
- Many countries around the world have become Contracting Parties to these instruments and benefit from their implementation. The Contracting Parties are also the key driving forces to keeping these international road safety conventions up-to-date.
- **Conventions on Road Traffic of 1949 and of 1968, Convention on Road Signs and Signals of 1968:** These international legal instruments contain a set of internationally agreed road traffic regulations, road signs, signals and markings, uniform safety requirements for motor vehicles and other internationally acceptable regulations, aimed at improving the efficiency and safety of international road traffic. They are regularly revised and updated. These legal instruments provide Governments with the legal basis and technical rules and regulations for their national highway codes.
- **The European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)** provides for uniform norms and requirements aimed at providing a high level of safety of international transport of dangerous goods by road. It identifies and classifies dangerous substances and articles and sets out uniform specific provisions for the various classes of such substances as well as for the transport equipment to be used for their carriage and for the necessary transport operations.

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