

279 (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 Agreement on the 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 through border crossings, the provision of safe transport, the availability of an information system and a methodological framework for the formulation and analysis of policies,

Affirming the importance of activating the national committee on trade and transport facilitation and establishing them in those member countries where they have not yet been set up;

Referring to subsequent resolutions related to the application of certain components of ITSAM and, in particular, resolutions 235 (XXI) of 11 May 2001 concerning adoption of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq; 243 (XXII) of 17 April 2003 concerning adoption of the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq; 256 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 concerning adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Transport Cooperation in the Arab Mashreq; and 265 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 concerning regional cooperation in the field of road traffic safety,

Referring also to the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly concerning road safety and, in particular, resolution 60/5 of 26 October 2005 on improving global road safety, which welcomed the organization of the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week, to be held in Geneva 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 undertaken to facilitate 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 Mashreq¹ 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 the implementation of ITSAM components and the effective participation of member countries in the Global Road Safety Week,

1. *Urges* member countries to take practical steps to complete implementation of the plan of action for the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq² by the time specified;

¹ E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.2.

2. *Also urges* member countries to initiate the implementation of the plan of action for the Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq;³

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,⁴ 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; and implement and apply its articles at the national and regional levels once the Memorandum enters into force;

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

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

- (a) The Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq;⁵
- (b) Priority routes M40 and M45;
- (c) The Agreement on International Railways in the Arab Mashreq;⁶
- (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.

7th plenary meeting
11 May 2006

² E/ESCWA/GRID/2004/1/Rev.1.

³ E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.2.

⁴ E/ESCWA/GRID/2006/IG.1/3(Part I)/Add.4.

⁵ E/ESCWA/TRANS/2001/3.

⁶ E/ESCWA/TRANS/2002/1.