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*Panel Debate – Defining the challenges
of land transport security*

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From my experience as chairman of the Expert Group and the Discussion Forum on inland transport security within UNECE, I could describe the main challenges of land transport security as follows:

1. While ships navigate from port to port and aircraft fly from airport to airport – which are delimited land zones and consequently protectable areas – land transport is disseminated all over the land on roads, railways and waterways, among all other human activities, often in an open environment.
2. Land transport encompasses very different transport modes. Security measures are to be completely different whether passengers or goods have to be protected and whether they are transported on roads, railways or waterways.
3. The main threat hanging over the different transport modes is completely different for each of them. And this is true for the different inland transport modes as well. The main threat for civil aviation is piracy and bomb attacks against passengers' flights. This risk is present – albeit at different degrees – at all airports all over the world.
The main threat for maritime transport is piracy against cargo shipping, specifically along the coasts in some regions of the world.
Rail transport and urban transport have been confronted with terrorist attacks against crowded trains, subways or busses. But the threat varies from country to country and from place to place, according to the political situation, the population density, and so on.

As a matter of fact, the most occurring security problem in rail transport and urban transport is the struggle against day-to-day serious or petty crime: protecting individual passengers from assaults or mugging, preventing vandalism or chasing fare-dodgers.

The main security problem for road transport is theft of vehicles or cargo. This is not only a security problem, but a real economic problem, more and more caused by organized crime.

Inland water transport is less confronted with security problems. The carriage of dangerous goods within critical zones is probably the most risky aspect.

This variety of situations among the different transport modes has lead to the idea of securing the whole supply chain in order to secure the transport of goods. But this is an ambitious project that allows no weak link in the chain and goes far beyond the transport sector, as manufacturers, vendors, end users, etc., are included in the process.

4. The absence of international governmental bodies dealing specifically with land transport is another handicap for an international approach of land transport security.

For civil aviation and maritime transport, the governments of all involved States all over the world are represented in dedicated policy-making international organisations, respectively ICAO and IMO. Security rules and standards are defined and decided within these organisations and are to be applied worldwide by the transport authorities.

This is not the case for land transport. There are initiatives, both from public and private sectors, to cooperate at international level, mainly by sharing good practices, but land transport security remains largely a national policy matter.

5. Finally, different players are involved in land transport security: police, justice, customs, transport authorities, and so on, all have responsibilities in this field and all can contribute to improving the situation. Collaboration between these different players is a necessity.

For all those reasons, it is important to have the opportunity to debate on land transport security problems within multi-disciplinary organisations like UNECE or OSCE. Today's Conference brings together major players of land transport security and gives the opportunity to present initiatives, to share best practices and to discuss the way to collaborate for improving collectively land transport security.