

**25<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS ROAD SAFETY COLLABORATION**  
**12.20 THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2018**

My Dear colleagues,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to speak to the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration. Since 2004 the organisation has played a key role co-ordinating the United Nation's response to the loss of thirty-five hundred lives every day on the world's roads. Your activities have provided important strategic direction to the Decade of Action for Road Safety. Most important, the Global Plan for the Decade developed by the UNRSC has encouraged countries to adopt more effective policies for road injury prevention. Your meetings bring together a powerful coalition of UN agencies, development banks, researchers, non-government organisations, philanthropies and private sector companies.

Going through the list of participants for this meeting I can see that the UNRSC membership reads like an alumni association for my International Road Safety Awards. For over thirty years now, my awards have recognised excellence in road injury prevention, and it is good to see so many winners here today. I am pleased also that the awards are on the agenda of your meeting, because our judging panel is always interested to receive more international nominations. Recognizing achievement and good practice is essential, and enables us to put our road safety successes under the spotlight. This demonstrates leadership and encourages others to take action; at a time when the urgency of effective road injury prevention has never been more pressing.

It is deeply shocking that since the beginning of this century over twenty million people have lost their lives in road crashes. And another 850 million have been injured. This is not only a tragedy for millions of families but an appalling cost to countries the world over. We know that the vast majority of these deaths and injuries can be prevented. This motivated the UN to call for a Decade of Action in 2011 and then to include road safety in the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. But we also know that the scale of response so far has been far from adequate.

The Decade of Action was launched with the aim to "stabilize and then reduce" the level of road fatalities. Today we can say that at best there has been some stabilization but not yet any significant reduction. As you all know very well, the SDG Goal for Health includes the target to halve road deaths and injuries by 2020. Unfortunately, it is clear now that this will not be achieved. Against this disappointing background, it is surely time for some strategic reflection on how to inject more urgency into improving road safety globally.

In the resolution just adopted by the General Assembly I am very encouraged that the Government of Sweden has offered to host a Third High Level Global Ministerial Meeting on Road Safety. This important event will mark the end of the UN Decade of Action, but it must also lead to a new level of global commitment to road injury prevention. In many ways the Decade of Action has served as a useful period

of preparation. We have a stronger level of engagement by the UN, the development banks, the private sector and civil society. We have a better understanding of effective road policies and a range of measures included in the World Health Organization's Save LIVES technical package. And crucially compared to ten years ago, there are many more countries ready to take action to make roads safe.

So, we are poised now to deliver on the Decade of Action's promise to do more than just stabilise the level of road fatalities. In order now to achieve substantial reduction in lives lost, I suggest, we need three complimentary initiatives.

First, we need to establish a new UN road safety target for 2030 to halve road deaths and serious injuries. This will reinvigorate the road safety ambition of the SDGs and provide a framework for accountability and action. Of course, our vision is for a world free from road traffic fatalities but we have intended this target as a benchmark for progress rather than the final destination. The serious risk is that, without such a new casualty reduction target, the road safety performance of UN Member States will be weakly measured and consequently poorly managed.

Second, we need to mobilise new resources to finance road injury prevention programmes. Here I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of Jean Todt, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy and the Secretariat of the UNECE. Today their proposal for a UN Road Safety Trust Fund has been approved. This fills a major institutional gap and provides a new opportunity to ensure that road safety attracts the funding it so clearly deserves. I hope that donors will respond generously.

Third we need much stronger political commitment to road safety. We know that the countries with the best road safety performance have benefitted from strong and sustained political support. In that contest it is important that today's General Assembly resolution acknowledges the key role of legislators in passing effective road safety policies and laws, and allocating budgetary support. That is why, I am especially pleased to welcome here today a delegation of MPs from the Global Network for Road Safety Legislators. Hosted by the Towards Zero Foundation, of which I am patron, the Global Network was first proposed at the 2nd High Level Global Conference on Road Safety in Brasilia. Launched in London in 2016, the Global Network aims to encourage more engagement from parliamentarians worldwide in road safety. Its dedicated and energetic chairman, Barry Sheerman MP, will be describing their work to you shortly.

The three propositions I have made today, to set a new UN target for 2030, to boost funding and to increase political commitment for road safety are inter-related. A target is needed to measure performance, funds are needed for effectiveness, and political commitment is needed for action. All three are about leadership. The work of the UNRSC, is at its best when providing a platform for road safety leadership. So please continue your important role co-ordinating the UN systems work on road safety. And I fervently hope that together we can use the last two years of the UN Decade to set a new path of road safety progress for 2030. Millions of lives depend upon it.

Thank you very much.

**HALVE** ROAD DEATHS  
& SERIOUS INJURIES  
**BY 2030**