

DRAFT – NOT FOR CIRCULATION

Speaking Points for Special Envoy for Ashgabat Conference Thematic Discussion 9: Global Vision Zero: reaching a new era in road safety 27 November 2016 - 16:00-17:30

Location: Hall 2 – Main Conference Hall

Time Limit: 5 Minutes

Statement:

Introduction and Background:

Thank you Minister,
Thank you Madame chair,
Thank you distinguished panelists,

A Global Vision Zero for road safety means that we need to prevent 1.24 million lives from being taken on the road each year. It means we need to stop the number one killer of young people aged 15-29 years. And means that we must build a culture of safety in our countries, in our policies and in our work.

We are making some progress. The Decade of Action for Road Safety was launched in 2011 with a simple but comprehensive Plan. The five pillars of the Safe System approach are based on improved road safety management, infrastructure, vehicles, driver training and post-crash care.

The Plan is one which works and has proved hugely successful in Western countries over the last 30 years. Governments should continue to follow the Safe System approach, as well as accede to UN road safety regulations which protect all road users.

Importance of Policy:

58 such conventions and agreements are in place, governing a huge variety of road safety areas: traffic rules, the standardization of road signs and signals, as well as vehicle standards. The legal instruments are in place: we know how to build safer vehicles; we know how to build safe roads; we know the benefits of advanced and consistent traffic rules and road signs in making people use roads safely.

Yet there remain nations and regions that have not adopted these instruments. If we could get these instituted and correctly policed on a global footing we would see a dramatic improvement in road safety in the most crucial areas of the globe -- the low- and middle-income countries where over 90 per cent of worldwide road deaths occur.

Momentum Being Built:

The momentum for increased priority on road safety has been building ever since the launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety more than five years ago.

- Last September, in a historic decision - and thanks to the joint work of the road safety community and governments - improving road safety was included for the first time as a priority of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In SDG 3.6, we have a very ambitious target to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020,

And in SDG 11.2, a target to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all by 2030.

- In April this year, a new UN resolution for improving global road safety was approved, which is considered as one of the strongest road safety resolution to date.

Among other recommendations, the resolution paves the way for the exploration of the establishment of a first ever UN Global Road Safety Fund

We know we need a dramatic scaling up of funding for road safety is required.

- In the New Urban Agenda adopted this October, road safety was highlighted as never before.
- And finally, a Special Envoy for Road Safety was appointed for the first time early last year by the UN Secretary General.

Since my appointment as Special Envoy – nearly two years ago - I have had the privilege to travel to almost all regions of the world, including to those worst affected by dangerous roads: Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America.

I have met with Ministers of Transport, Investments, Health, and Foreign Affairs to promote our SDG targets.

During my conversations and visits, I have been even more inspired by the progress being made.

Let me give you a few examples of progress:

- During COP21 last year, I met with the **Mayor of Mexico City**, Mr. Miquel Angel Mancera, and encouraged him to put forward a Vision Zero initiative for the city. I was invited in March 2015 for the launch of the programme. A year later the number of road traffic fatalities have dropped by 20 percent in the city.
- Developed cities such as New York City, Minneapolis and Copenhagen have reported safety improvements overall. In addition, they have installed quality infrastructure for

cyclists and pedestrians - protecting the most vulnerable road users while promoting multimodal transport options.

- In other developing cities such as Bogota, Colombia and Ahmedabad, India implementation of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) System – coupled with quality infrastructure- have also seen a marked improvement in safety.

Fortunately, unlike epidemics, we do not need to wait for a vaccine. Our experience in Europe – where fatalities dropped by some 50 per cent over a ten-year period - shows it is possible to achieve positive results, and potentially a Global Zero, with the right policy choices based around the Safe System approach, combined with the necessary resources and political will.

In order to come close to achieving a global zero, road safety must be considered as part and parcel of sustainable transport. Thus it is not yet another additional criterion, but a basic condition for sustainability. Thank you.

Answers Potential Panel Questions:

Questions:

1. What policies could most effectively enable us to achieve the road safety related SDGs and how can UN road safety Conventions be implemented to benefit road safety?

- UN regulations on traffic safety which protect all road users.
- 58 such transport conventions and agreements are in place, governing a huge variety of road safety areas: traffic rules, the standardization of road signs and signals, as well as vehicle standards.
- The legal instruments are in place: we know how to build safer vehicles; we know how to build safe roads; we know the benefits of advanced and consistent traffic rules and road signs in making people use roads safely.
- These legal instruments are the basis for enforcing laws that address top risk factors such as drinking driving, seat belt and helmet use, child restraints and speed which, on their own, can significantly decrease the number of road traffic fatalities.

2. How the various road safety activities could be most effectively financed?

- To succeed there is also an urgent need to dramatically upscale funding for road safety at the national, regional and global levels.
- We know that in comparison to other leading causes of fatality which raise billions of dollars each year in donor support globally, road safety is falling far behind. The World Bank's dedicated fund for road safety has a budget of only some 3 million dollars per year.
- Some private companies and philanthropies are doing a very commendable effort. But clearly this is not enough and very far from what is needed.

- Encouraging more private sector actors to commit to road safety is a key priority and we need to be creative in our approach.
- Imagine for example if for every car sold, a minimal contribution - of let's say just one dollar - went to a new fund for road safety.
- And imagine if the scheme was then extended to other products and services linked to the automotive industry. A contribution as small as one cent could be linked to sales of insurance, tires, helmets, navigation devices, car rentals, and so on.
- With around 75 million cars sold each year that could revolutionize the means we have to tackle the road safety global health and development challenge.
- A focus on raising new resources for road safety actions should be a key part of our strategy at all levels to address road safety.
- As I mentioned earlier, I with UNECE and other partners are exploring the establishment of new UN Global Road Safety Fund, which I hope your government will provide feedback on and support.

3. Is vision zero achievable on the global level? What needs to be done to achieve it?

- We need road safety to become a political priority;
- We need effective legislation, which is enforced;
- We need safer roads, vehicles and drivers;
- We need better post-crash care;
- We need more investment in road safety.