

The First World Youth Assembly on Road Safety

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In December 2006, the Honorable Lawrence Cannon, federal Minister of Transport, announced that Transport Canada was looking for five youth between the ages of 18 and 25 to participate in the first World Youth Assembly for Road Safety. The assembly was to take place between April 23rd and 24th 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland.

In October 2005, the United Nations General Assembly resolved to improve global road safety. This culminated in the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week, which was scheduled for the week of April 23rd and 29th in 2007. The World Youth Assembly for Road Safety would coincide with the events of the Global Road Safety Week in an effort to raise awareness about the societal impacts of traffic collisions and to promote safety amongst youth.

Transport Canada eventually selected eight Canadian youth to participate in the assembly: Jennifer Heatley of Halifax, Nova Scotia; Candace Salmon of Maugerville, New Brunswick; Jonathan Beauvais of Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec; Nicole Lacroix of Barrie, Ontario; Morgan Slater of Etobicoke, Ontario; Natalie Rouskov of Toronto, Ontario; Duane Ironstand of Shortdale, Manitoba and William Hui of Vancouver, British Columbia. The Canadian delegation represented one out of approximately one hundred nations at the assembly and was among one of the largest delegations in attendance, second only to the Australian delegation with nine delegates. In total, over four hundred delegates attended the youth assembly.

While many of the nations represented at the assembly had their own road safety programs, the assembly served to rally young people so that a unified voice could call to attention the tragedy that is occurring daily on the world's roads. With some prior work done by the chairing committee, and through the working groups at the assembly, the delegates adopted the Youth Declaration for Road Safety. This document, coupled with the support from the United Nations and the World Health Organization, provides the foundation for youth to promote new road safety initiatives in their home countries. With this, it is the intent of the World Health Organization and the other sponsors of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety that road safety for young people will be improved in the future.

As a first step towards this goal, all members of the Canadian delegation will be traveling to Montreal for the Canadian Road Safety Youth Conference, which will take place between June 6th and 8th, 2007. This will occur in conjunction with the Canadian Multidisciplinary Road Safety Conference. The delegates who traveled to Geneva will share their experiences with forty-five other Canadian youth at the youth conference.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Since the invention of the internal combustion engine over a century ago, nations around the world have become highly motorized. However, with increasing modernization, collisions on the road are occurring more frequently with increasingly serious consequences. The statistics are staggering: a child dies every 3 minutes on the world's roads; 1.2 million die annually in road crashes; and globally, traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for youth aged between 10 and 24 years. If such trends continue, it is anticipated that deaths resulting from road crashes will increase exponentially in the next ten to twenty years. Motivated by these numbers, the United Nations declared the week of April 23 through April 29, 2007 to be the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week.

Traffic collisions affect all spectra of road users: drivers, passenger, cyclists and pedestrians. The consequences of traffic collisions have a significant impact on the society and the economy of a nation. Economically, the cost of road crash injuries is approximately 1.5% of the gross national product in low- and middle-income countries, and can be as high as 2% in high-income countries. Socially, however, the impacts of collisions on the road are less tangible and are often not documented in as great detail as the economic costs of such incidents. Unfortunately, the social impact is often inexorably linked to economic impacts, especially in developing countries. The injury or the loss of life of a family member not only has the potential to cripple the family financially, but also places a great amount of emotional burden on other family members.

However, until recently, there was little attention in the international arena given to the importance of road safety. Although there were some local and national programmes in place to address road safety, the global reception was lacking, despite the fact that road collisions claim lives on the same magnitude as deadly diseases as malaria and HIV/AIDS. It was in 2004, that, with the aid of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations General Assembly, has road safety been recognized as a concern that affects all nations. This was only the first of many steps towards promoting awareness and prevention program around the globe. For example, the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2004 and in subsequent years laid the foundation for the first World Youth Assembly for Road Safety.

It is now widely accepted that road crashes are predictable, a premise that is adopted by the engineering community. Because road crashes are predictable, they should be preventable. As such, this is the basis for the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety: to give youth a voice in the global, national, and local community so as to improve awareness of road safety in an effort to prevent the tragic, needless loss of life due to collisions on the road. Thus explains the slogan adopted by the youth assembly, "Road Safety is No Accident".



**ROAD SAFETY
IS NO ACCIDENT**

3.0 ACTIVITIES IN GENEVA

The Canadian delegates arrived in Geneva on the weekend preceding the conference. On Sunday afternoon, representatives from Transport Canada briefed the delegates on protocol and the upcoming activities during the conference. There was also some discussion regarding current activities undertaken and the goals set out by Transport Canada and the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA). Equipped with the information, the delegates were prepared for the upcoming events that involved addresses from dignitaries, participation in working groups and special presentations from the chairing committee.

3.1 Dignitaries

Throughout the two-day proceedings modeled after the United Nations General Assembly, many dignitaries addressed the delegates attending the assembly. (Some dignitaries delivered their address via written statements and others by video statement.) The dignitaries were of a diverse background and included: Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations; Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Mr. Luis Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Brazil; Mr. Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; Mr. Moby Hall, the world renowned musician; and Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the United Nations General Assembly. The figure below Mr. Etienne Krug during the opening of the assembly. Many dignitaries expressed their concern regarding the seriousness of road collisions and their role as the leading cause of death for young people. Dignitaries also congratulated the assembly for their initiative in this matter and gave their best wishes for the delegates and their efforts in reducing fatalities and injuries related to road crashes. However, the unsaid support from prominent figures in the international arena in recognition of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety was what was most valuable of all.



Figure 1. Dr Etienne Krug, head of VIP-department of WHO opening the ceremony

3.2 Working Groups

The working groups were the primary method in which the delegates were able to exchange ideas for improving road safety in their respective countries. Separated into language groups (English, Spanish, Russian, French and Arabic), delegates discussed examples of national and local road safety programmes and how youth could act as advocates for road safety in their home countries. After the discussions, all groups reconvened and a representative from each group gave a small presentation summarizing the thoughts of their respective groups. Enforcement, education, engineering and advocacy were amongst the major topics on the first day. On the second day, methods of advocacy and youth involvement dominated discussions.

What was most interesting was the diverse background of the delegates. In the English speaking group, there were delegates from all over the world, representing low- and high-income countries alike. The wide range of strategies employed by different nations and the disparity in the availability of resources of these nations served to highlight that promoting road safety cannot be addressed by a single solution. In fact, what was clear from these working groups was that separate programs and goals must be set out for individual countries and that cultural sensitivity is an important consideration.

3.3 Competitions

One of the goals of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety was to engage youth in road safety through non-conventional means. To demonstrate this, two competitions were arranged prior to the Geneva conference. The first was the Global Road Safety Film Competition, where youth were encouraged to produce a film for other youth promoting road safety and best practices. Several entries were received from numerous countries across the globe, and the winner of this competition was a team from Australia. A similar competition was also held for writing, named “Voices for Youth Creative Writing Competition”. Many submissions were also received for this competition. The winner of this competition was a candidate from India.

These presentations showcased how it is possible to involve youth in road safety. With a little ingenuity and creativity, youth will actively participate within road safety programs. Furthermore, it was also shown that this form of advocacy can be far more effective than what many governments and road safety agencies are independently producing at the present time. With this, it encourages delegates to initiate similar programs in their home countries.

3.4 Exhibits

During the conference, a series of exhibits were displayed in the concourse outside of the assembly hall. These exhibits demonstrated the activities undertaken by countries and organizations in an effort to improve road safety. Delegates viewed exhibits from countries such as Canada, France, Italy and Australia. The police force from Geneva and an international agency dedicated to road safety for children also displayed exhibits. Through this opportunity, delegates obtained resources on how to implement road safety programs in their own countries and gained an understanding of what has been attempted and what has actually succeeded. The photographs on the following page depict some of the exhibits that were viewed by the delegates during the course of the conference.



Figure 2. The Australian Exhibit



Figure 3. Posters for Road Safety from the French Exhibit

3.5 Recognition of the Lives Lost Daily on the World's Roads

During the first day of proceedings, the assembly made a symbolic gesture to recognize the 1,049 young lives (age 10 to 24) lost daily on the world's roads. Delegates were given white balloons, each representing one of the 1,049 fatalities. Once the balloons were distributed to delegates and observers, all participants gathered outside the Palais des Nations. After a brief statement made in memoriam of the lives lost, the delegates released the balloons into the air. A photograph of this is shown below.



Figure 4. The Release of the 1,049 Balloons

Source: <http://www.who.int/roadsafety/week/en/>

4.0 ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YOUTH ASSEMBLY

From the working groups and the presentations, the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety made significant achievements during the two days that the assembly was in session. The event was a remarkable success given that the assembly was the first of its kind involving youth and considering the short time frame in which the delegates were gathered. Among the many accomplishments during the assembly, this report will highlight the Youth Declaration for Road Safety and the international recognition received by the youth delegates during the course of the assembly.

4.1 Youth Declaration for Road Safety

The Youth Declaration for Road Safety is a document adopted by the delegates at the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety which highlights the concerns of the delegates regarding road safety and urges action to be taken in order to prevent the tragedies that occurs daily on the world's roads. Drafted by the chairing committee prior to the commencement of the assembly, all delegates had an opportunity to comment on the document so that the final product was based on a truly collaborative effort. The document calls upon parents and guardians, educational institutions, community leaders, policy-makers, community-based organizations, private companies, media, and celebrities and the entertainment industry as a whole to be proactive in road safety, be it by advocating individuals to become better role models, or financially supporting worthy programs that will prevent injury and loss of life.

Furthermore, the document acts as a road map for the delegates, so that they would have a starting point on which to base their road safety initiatives. As the document is available in English, French, Russian, Chinese, Spanish and Arabic, it can be easily circulated to those who have the authority or the funds to make a difference in the field of road safety. An English translation of the declaration is attached at the end of this report. However, the other translations of the declaration can be accessed at the following web address:

<http://www.who.int/roadsafety/week/activities/global/youth/declaration/en/index.html>

4.2 Recognition of the Youth Assembly

Another significant achievement of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety was that it drew international attention to the problem of youth and road safety. Not only were high-ranking UN officials supportive of the cause, but prominent politicians also encouraged the actions and goals of the youth delegates. This alone gave credibility to the activities undertaken at the assembly, and validated the Youth Declaration for Road Safety as discussed in the previous section. The international recognition certainly helped the assembly to achieve one of its major goals, which was to promote road safety awareness.

Perhaps what was even more important was that the support received from such high ranking officials stand to aid youth delegates in their efforts to promote road safety in their home countries. Having the United Nations and the World Health Organization attached to any initiative is a great benefit.

Finally, as a testament to the relative success of publicity and recognition of the World Youth Assembly on Road Safety, a simple Google search would return sites directly mentioning the assembly on its first three pages alone. Also, press releases have also been made by private and public organizations regarding the youth assembly, including major news networks from CNN to Al Jazeera. An example of which is the

press release by Transport Canada, on April 23, 2007 as shown below. It should also be noted that a statement regarding the youth assembly was made in the House of Commons later that week.

OTTAWA -- Today marks the beginning of the first ever Global Road Safety Week, focusing on young road users.

"Road safety is about taking action to prevent fatalities and injuries, and it is everyone's responsibility," said the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities. "Global Road Safety Week is a great opportunity to raise awareness about the leading factors and impacts of road traffic fatalities and injuries, and to promote action toward prevention."

Annually, there are over 1.2 million people killed and another 50 million injured in traffic collisions worldwide. More than 40 per cent of them are under 26 years of age. Road traffic injuries are the second leading cause of death for people in this age group. Young men are nearly three times more likely to be killed or injured on the roads than young women.

"Canada's New Government is committed to improving safety on Canadian roads by working with our safety partners in support of Road Safety Vision 2010, which targets a 30 per cent reduction in fatalities and serious injuries by 2010," added Minister Cannon.

In recognition of Global Road Safety Week, Jennifer Heatley of Halifax, Nova Scotia; Candace Salmon of Maugerville, New Brunswick; Jonathan Beauvais of Rouyn-Noranda, Quebec; Nicole Lacroix of Barrie, Ontario; Morgan Slater of Etobicoke, Ontario; Natalie Rouskov of Toronto, Ontario; Duane Ironstand of Shortdale, Manitoba and William Hui of Vancouver, British Columbia are attending the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety in Geneva, Switzerland on April 23rd and 24th, 2007. All delegates are Canadian youth between the ages of 22 and 26. Among other activities, these delegates will discuss and adopt a road safety declaration expected to be presented to the United Nations. They will also attend the Canadian Road Safety Youth Conference in Montreal from June 6th to 8th, to help engage other young Canadians in improving road safety in their communities.

From <http://www.tc.gc.ca/mediaroom/releases/nat/2007/07-h068e.htm>

5.0 NEXT STEPS

To achieve the goal of promoting road safety awareness amongst youth, it is the intent of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety for the delegates to return to their home countries, so that they can initiate their own programs or begin advocating road safety amongst key agencies and organizations. During the closing of the assembly, Mr. Floor Lieshout, chairing member from the Netherlands, gave some tips on how to attract attention to the cause and gather political and financial support for road safety. The following is a summary of Mr. Lieshout's comments:

1. Translate and disseminate the Youth Declaration: since the declaration is a long document, it may be useful to summarize the salient points so that it can be delivered concisely to an audience who may not have the time to read through the entire document. In other countries, it may be necessary to translate the document.
2. Get message through the media: the media is recognized as the primary method in which the message of road safety can be spread to the general public. It is also the most reliable and credible form of message passing. While the Internet has been cited as a valuable resource, it may not be accessible by certain demographics, especially in low-income countries.
3. Develop ideas and a platform to support your message nationally and get guidance: being organized is an important factor in the success of new projects. The guidance should come from a mentor who has experience in advocacy, so that the delegate can form a well-structured program and establish a network of contacts.
4. Get public service announcements to local, national media: the World Health Organization has made a series of six public service announcements, which can be found at <http://www.who.int/roadsafety/week/resources/multimedia/en/index.html> or on YouTube. Using these or similar announcements promoting road safety, these could be forwarded to media outlets so that the message could be broadcast to the general population.
5. Develop a national plan: if one does not exist in the country, it is important for the delegate to enlist the support of their national government and its relevant agencies so as to establish a commitment for road safety in the country. For Canada, the CCMTA 2010 Road Safety Vision is the national plan.
6. Find funding: monetary considerations are almost always a concern in establishing new projects. It was recommended that delegates seek help from all sources available, including corporations, governments and donations from the local community. While funding usually refers to monetary aid, it was noted that gifts-in-kind or other forms of donations may prove useful as well.
7. Find celebrities that have been personally affected: as youth regard celebrities (sport, entertainment or other backgrounds) as mentors and role models, these persons may be more effective in reaching young people on the subject of road safety. Their involvement may also bring more attention to the cause and may generate publicity.
8. Editorials and opinions: found in newspapers, delegates can use these articles as is. These can lend support to the program in question.
9. Fact sheet to identify problem on national and international level: this is particularly important for countries which do not have statistics readily available for public review. Each country has different road safety issues, and it is essential for delegates to properly disseminate that information so that it could be presented quickly to those who are not knowledgeable of the facts.

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10. Stay in touch with each other to receive news on other projects, to share ideas and to share in the successes of other delegates.

To further the cause of road safety on an international level, the following means were suggested during the close of the assembly:

1. Day for road safety: make the first United Nations Global Road Safety Week a permanent event, even if means limiting the event to only one day a year. This would provide continuous recognition for the importance of road safety and will likely aid delegates in promoting local projects in their home countries.
2. United Road Safety Collaboration: a group to coordinate road safety efforts between countries so that the results of individual programs are not isolated within national boundaries.
3. Electronic newsletters: with the advent of the Internet and the Communications Age, it is now possible to send regular bulletins to the delegates who attended the Geneva conference. This newsletter would keep the delegates informed of developments and successes of programs in other countries.
4. YouTube: This form of media is rapidly growing on the Internet and can be easily used by delegates to promote their road safety initiative. Youtube is a website where video clips can be uploaded by members, so that it could be viewed by the general public. Due to its convenience and accessibility, it may be possible for road safety messages to be promoted using this service, although it may be more difficult for youth who live in lower-income countries.
5. International mentor: this person would guide delegates in their activities. This person can provide expertise to delegates who may need information and resources from more developed nations that might not be available in their home countries.

Regarding the Canadian delegation, the next step is to attend the Canadian Road Safety Youth Conference in Montreal between June 6th and 8th, 2007. This conference will be held in conjunction with the Canadian Multidisciplinary Road Safety Conference, which will take place between June 3rd and 6th in Montreal. The delegates who traveled to Geneva in April will make presentations to the Canadian Association of Road Safety Professionals (CARSP) and to forty-five other Canadian youth in an effort to communicate the lessons learned in Geneva, with the intent that others might become advocates for road safety in their own community. However, at the time this report was written, the involvement of the Canadian delegates to the Geneva conference in the Montreal conference was still in the planning stages. The details of the event will be documented in a later report. However, it is anticipated that by that time, the Canadian delegation to the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety would have begun to formalize plans to involve youth in road safety.

6.0 SUMMARY

From the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety, the following were the major themes of discussion:

- Collisions are the leading cause of fatalities among young people aged 0 to 25 at the present time
- Over 1.2 million individuals are killed annually on the world's roads, and 1,049 young lives around the world are lost daily due to traffic collisions
- Traffic injuries and fatalities can incur costs equivalent to 1.5 to 2 percent of a nation's gross national product
- Over 500 individuals from over 100 countries gathered in Geneva between April 23rd and 24th 2007 to participate in working groups, in an effort to acknowledge the tragedy that is occurring daily on the world's roads and to encourage youth to begin initiatives to improve road safety in their respective countries
- Through working groups, delegates gained an appreciation of the complexity of the issues facing road safety and the diversity of these issues when considering low- and high-income countries
- The delegates at the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety adopted the Youth Declaration for Road Safety, which is a document expressing the issues that challenge road users and urges key individuals, organizations and agencies to promote road safety by being better role models, funding road safety programs or other similar means
- An important goal of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety was to improve awareness for road safety, and this was achieved in part during the conference, as many high ranking United Nations officials and other prominent figures in the international arena addressed the assembly to encourage the efforts of the delegates and to congratulate them on their accomplishments to date
- Another goal of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety was for the delegates to promote and advocate for road safety in their home countries
- The eight-member Canadian delegation will reconvene in Montreal for the Canadian Road Safety Youth Conference during June 6th to 8th, so that the experiences gained from Geneva can be communicated to 45 other Canadian youth in an effort to initiate new youth-oriented road safety programs in Canada

7.0 LINKS TO ONLINE RESOURCES

- Youth Declaration for Road Safety
<http://www.who.int/roadsafety/week/activities/global/youth/declaration/en/index.html>
- Delegates' photos of the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety:
<http://s209.photobucket.com/albums/bb269/WYAdlegates/>
- United Nations Press Release
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2007/pr20/en/index.html>
- Transport Canada Press Release
<http://www.tc.gc.ca/mediaroom/releases/nat/2007/07-h068e.htm>
- Official report of the proceedings at the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety
http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2007/9241595116_eng.pdf

YOUTH DECLARATION FOR ROAD SAFETY

You get a phone call to inform you that your friend has been seriously injured in a car crash on his way home from a late night party. You are one of the first to hear. You rush to the hospital, but by the time you reach there, your friend has already died. You don't even have a chance to say goodbye. You have to tell your other friends that they have lost a buddy but you don't know what to say. They are devastated.

You witness a crash on a rural road. Two little girls are walking along the roadside and are struck by a speeding vehicle. You and a few other passersby frantically try to find them transport to the local hospital. It takes more than an hour for them to reach the hospital and the services there are inadequate. Both little girls die on that same day. You return home traumatized by the incident, wishing you could have done more to save their lives.

You are among a group of school children on a class field trip. The school bus is packed with more than 50 of your excited classmates. The road is long and dangerous, the weather conditions are very poor and seat-belts in the bus are absent. The bus driver, who has been drinking alcohol, loses control of the bus on an embankment, and it swerves off the road into a ditch. Four boys and three girls are killed instantly, among them one of your dearest friends. Many of the children are severely injured.

Think about these tragedies for a moment... Each day, more than 3000 lives are abruptly ended because of a road traffic crash while many more people survive but are left with life-changing injuries. In a split second, a crash transforms lives forever through the loss of beloved fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, grandchildren, colleagues, classmates and friends. Each and every one of these deaths causes immense pain and suffering. Some emotional wounds never heal.

Now imagine that you could turn back time and prevent these tragedies from happening in the first place. If your friend had been wearing his seat-belt, if the vehicle had not been speeding and had been properly maintained, if the little girls had a safer place to walk and had been more visible, if the bus driver had not been driving while under the influence of alcohol, if the state of the road had not been so poor, if appropriate medical services had been available... There are so many actions that could have been taken. We cannot turn back time and save those who have already died on our roads, but we can prevent such needless losses of life occurring in the future. Together we can make road crashes history.

Youth Declaration for Road Safety

Background

Globally road traffic injuries are the second leading cause of death for youth aged between 5 and 25 years. Of the 1.2 million people who lose their lives in road traffic crashes each year, almost a third of them are youth under the age of 25 years. More than 90% of these fatal crashes occur in low-income and middle-income countries. In these settings, road users most likely to be involved in a crash are pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and passengers, while in high-income countries they are drivers. The cost of road crash injuries is estimated to be between 1% - 1.5% of the gross national product in low-income and middle-income countries, increasing to 2% in high-income countries. If no action is taken, road traffic deaths are predicted to escalate exponentially in the years ahead.

Opening

Against this background, we, the youth of the world, the future leaders and hope for tomorrow, have gathered at the World Youth Assembly for Road Safety on 23-24 April 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland. We have written and adopted this declaration to make every young man and woman in the world aware of the global problem of road traffic injuries, show our commitment to address the problem, and urge the world to take action to prevent road crashes. We can no longer accept that the lives of our friends and family members are senselessly destroyed on the road. Because road traffic injuries and deaths can be predicted and therefore prevented, the world has an obligation to stop them.

As potential victims of road traffic crashes, we, the youth of the world, stand up for ourselves and call for the right to travel safely on the world's roads. Being young road users ourselves, we know what is on the minds of our peers, their likes and dislikes and the kind of messages that will reach them. Therefore, we need to be listened to when road safety initiatives are being developed and implemented.

Our commitment

We, the young people of the world, have respect for our lives. Because life is so fragile, we have to do our best to live safely and encourage others to do the same. We realize that road safety has as much to do with a safe road environment as with safe driving behaviour. With respect to road safety in particular, we fully acknowledge the importance of youth involvement to make road safety a reality. We call for awareness among all youth on the high risks they run in becoming involved in road traffic crashes on the world's roads. We call upon all youth to serve as role models on the road and to promote road safety among their friends and families - particularly their younger brothers and sisters. Specifically, we ask all youth to never drive under the influence of alcohol and drugs, shun speeding, refrain from aggressive behaviour on the roads, use helmets when riding on motorcycles and bicycles, wear seat-belts when travelling in motor vehicles, and ensure that they are visible when walking or cycling on the roads. Furthermore, we call upon all youth to stand up and participate in local, national and international road safety campaigns and programmes. It is our responsibility as emerging young leaders to stand up and do our part in demanding our safety on the world's roads.

Our efforts alone do not suffice! We therefore must also call upon our parents and guardians, our schools and universities, the communities where we live, the policy-makers in government throughout the world, community-based organizations active in road safety, private sector companies, the media, celebrities and the entertainment sector, to take responsibility and work together with us.

Parents and guardians

We, the youth of the world, remind our parents and guardians that our risk of dying on the road is very high. You are the ones we completely rely on when we are young. You are not only our parents and guardians, but you are also our heroes and our mentors. However, we call upon you to create a safe environment for us when we are on the road, and to serve as role models for safe road traffic behaviour. Teach the rules of the road and good road safety practice to our younger brothers and sisters and buckle them up in child restraints when you are driving. Teach us from a young age about our vulnerability as pedestrians and cyclists - encourage us to wear seat-belts, reflectors and helmets. Support us as we learn how to drive and provide supervision so that we can gain on-road driving experience under a range of conditions, including in the rain, at night and in traffic. We call upon you to help raise a generation of responsible road users.

Educational institutions

We, the youth of the world, see educational institutions as very important. They give us the knowledge and skills which we need to live happy, healthy and productive lives. Hence, we request you, our school administrators and teachers to include road safety in our school curricula from an early age; to ensure that our surroundings and routes to school are safe; and to encourage the use of safe school buses. We call upon you to organize regular road safety activities at schools, and create opportunities for us to engage in road safety programmes. We further call upon university administrators to promote and develop courses and programmes on road safety and to conduct and publish more research on road traffic injury prevention.

Community leaders

We, the youth of the world, appeal to community leaders to create safe communities for everyone. We believe that local authorities play a leading role in ensuring road safety and in supporting groups that promote road safety. We ask you not to forget the survivors of road traffic crashes but aim to provide better care and services for them and involve them in advocacy campaigns and other road safety initiatives. We also call upon you to encourage youth to be active in community road safety groups and initiatives. We call upon you, the owners and managers of bars, clubs and discos to serve alcohol responsibly.

Policy-makers

We, the youth of the world, demand that governments acknowledge road traffic injuries as a major public health and development problem and place road safety higher on political agendas. We call upon you to take leadership in providing safety and quality in our road infrastructure. Therefore, we call upon you to ensure safe and affordable public transportation options that are accessible by all. We also urge you to create a national plan for road safety, and appoint a lead agency which has leaders responsible for its implementation and coordination. We demand you to enact and enforce road traffic laws, and boost your investment of financial resources to make safer roads. We urge that you provide affordable access to emergency health care and services for victims of road crashes. We further urge you to acknowledge the importance of the involvement of youth in road traffic policy-making and implementation and encourage partnerships with other jurisdictions and road safety organizations.

Community-based organizations

We, the youth of the world, ask community-based organizations including faith-based, sports-related and youth organizations, to create a broader awareness among our families and

friends about the magnitude of the road traffic injury problem and the main factors which place people at risk. Because road traffic trauma affects individuals, friends and families, and ultimately the entire community we live in, we encourage you to promote road safety and adopt the most effective channels to make messages heard, involve road crash survivors and youth in programmes, and promote policies that work. We further call upon you to collaborate as much as possible with other organizations which are active in road safety initiatives.

Private companies

We, the youth of the world, call upon you, the managers of private companies to acknowledge your social responsibility in developing safe products and to market your products responsibly. Being young and more at risk, there is a tendency for some of us to seek sensation including through speeding and drink-driving. When your advertisements glamorize speed and encourage the excessive use of alcohol, you give us the impression that we can afford to take risks! We therefore ask vehicle manufacturers to divert more resources towards the development and promotion of safer vehicles and alcohol companies to increase the promotion of responsible drinking and avoid marketing to the youngest of us. We further call upon insurance companies to promote the benefits of safe road traffic behaviour and develop effective and efficient insurance policies. We also call upon owners of public transport companies to ensure their vehicles and driver behaviour are as safe as possible. We call upon the private sector as a whole to establish joint funding for road safety campaigns and to develop safe driving policies for their employees.

Media

We, the youth of the world, are greatly influenced by media, particularly youth-oriented media, and the lifestyles that the media portrays. As such, we call upon you, the journalists and leaders of the media to address road traffic injuries as a global health and development problem that affects millions of lives each year. We depend on you to make our voices heard. We particularly ask you to report responsibly and accurately on the traumatic consequences of road traffic crashes and to broadcast advertisements for responsible road traffic behaviour as often as you broadcast advertisements to sell products. We call upon you to use the most appropriate media to attract the attention of youth. We also call upon you to promote road safety by featuring stories of young road traffic survivors and their families and by highlighting best practices in road safety. We call upon you to ensure that private companies refrain from showing advertisements or TV shows that glamorize speeding and drink-driving during times when youth might be watching.

Celebrities and the entertainment industry

We, the youth of the world, call upon celebrities and the entertainment world to actively promote road safety. Our behaviour is often influenced by celebrities in the sport, film, music and art industries. We therefore call upon you, artists and celebrities to realize the impact that you can have on youth. We ask you to serve as role models by promoting safe road traffic behaviour, such as always wearing a seat-belt or helmet and not drink-driving and speeding, not only in your professional roles but also in their your lives.

The Life of this Declaration

In conclusion, we, the youth of the world, declare our commitment to actively pursue the demands of this Declaration to ensure its impact. We will not allow it to remain ink on paper. From the moment we adopt the Declaration, it will go around the world like the Olympic flame, carried by youth on all continents, to enlighten countries, one by one, with the voice of

the youth calling for action. We want to make the roads of the world safer and more secure, not only for ourselves, but for everyone and for the generations to come.