



Remarks

by

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at the

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Excellencies, distinguished fellow members of the Advisory Board,

On behalf of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) as a hosting organization of the UN Road Safety Fund (UNRSF), it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the fourth session of the Advisory Board.

We have entered a new decade in the most unexpected manner. On the one hand, at the **Third Global Ministerial Conference for Road Safety in Stockholm**, we reached a defining milestone in renewing and upscaling our commitments at the broadest level to make road safety a reality for everyone, everywhere. With 1,700 delegates from 140 countries, we agreed on the Stockholm Declaration, and called on member States to reduce road fatalities and injuries by at least 50 percent from 2020 to 2030.

On the other hand, **Covid-19** led to an unprecedented impact on our lives, including on transport and mobility everywhere. Although the lockdown led to a different normal with a reduced use of motorized vehicles, use of private cars and bicycles has increased after the lockdown ended. We should now jointly raise our voice to continue our journey for improvement of road safety.

Hence, I am very glad that we are able to convene – even if virtually – to move forward the important work of the UNRSF. This work continues to gain in relevance, especially in light of the Stockholm Declaration and the possibilities revealed by the pandemic.

I have read the documents for today's session with great interest and I am **inspired by the progress under the Fund**:

- For instance, the Fund's Steering Committee has met four times since the Advisory Board last met – and will meet for the fifth time tomorrow.
 - The UNRSF project portfolio has expanded two-fold in line with its unique “system concept”. The Fund is now implementing diverse projects covering a wide array of topics across four regions and 19 countries.
 - Promising results are coming in from the pilot projects and I look forward to hearing more about these during the session.
 - Only in the last two months, the Fund has welcomed two new donors (Essilor and the Government of Mauritius), and received new contributions from two existing donors (FIA Foundation – USD 3 million, Hungary – USD 30,000);
 - The Fund's visibility and communications efforts have vastly improved. I was very pleased to receive a new issue of its newsletter this morning. It is important that the Fund has its identity and takes its space in the road safety world.
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For all these reasons, there is much to celebrate and appreciate as we begin our deliberations today.

The objective of our session today is to provide guidance to the Steering Committee and the secretariat on key policy and strategic matters.

This entails making decisions on a few key elements: **resource mobilization, extension of the Fund's term, 2020 Call for Proposals, and ear-marking**, among others.

This is also the last session of the inaugural Advisory Board that steered the Fund into operationalization. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the outgoing members, for your work and engagement during these critical two years.

I am proud to say that we are now on a strong footing thanks to our joint efforts. But we cannot afford to be complacent.

The Fund, despite its rapid progress, needs many more resources to achieve its vision. Let us take some time today to discuss how we can further **upscale the Fund's resources**.

We are working against a ticking clock to save lives and meet the high expectations placed on us by the Stockholm Declaration. So let us use this session to ratchet up our joint ambitions, and engage constructively and transparently to speed up the achievement of results.

We are in the hands of a dedicated and experienced Chair – and I thank Ms. Iorio in advance for leading our discussion.

I wish to thank you all once again for your virtual presence and look forward to a fruitful and enriching afternoon of discussions.

Thank you.
