



United Nations

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## United Nations partners meet to improve global road safety

Road traffic crashes are the primary cause of death for young people aged 14 to 25. Current numbers suggest that if the situation remains unchanged, road traffic crashes will become one of the biggest killers worldwide, for all age groups, by 2020. A future without action will see a 66% global increase in road traffic fatalities by that time.

Just like HIV/Aids, Tuberculosis and other diseases, unsafe roads have reached epidemic proportions and as is the case for these illnesses, developing countries are the hardest hit.

Road traffic crashes are not accidents. They can be prevented through awareness building and political will. A joint meeting between the UNECE Working Party on Road Traffic Safety (WP.1) and the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC) is aimed at strengthening ties to better address the current crises.



The *Working Party on Road Traffic Safety* is the UNECE body responsible for addressing road safety. It has developed, and continues to maintain, the *Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and on Road Signs and Signals of 1968* as well as two sets of best practices (Consolidated Resolutions 1 and 2) for implementing the conventions. These instruments, formalized or not through ratification procedures, lay the foundations for traffic rules and the harmonized use of road signs, signals and markings throughout the world.

### The United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

*Note: the following is an excerpt from the article by Dr. Etienne Krug (WHO) on UNRSC for UNECE Transport Review, issue 1. To read the full article, please refer to this publication which you can find on the website <http://www.unece.org/trans>, or by sending an email to [infotransport@unece.org](mailto:infotransport@unece.org).*

"In April 2004, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank launched the World report on road traffic injury prevention on the occasion of World Health Day. The report—compiled with support from many agencies and hundreds of experts from all over the world—provided a review of the global situation and presented a set of recommendations for action.

In the following days, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/58/289 Improving global road safety which endorsed the recommendations of the report and invited WHO, working in close cooperation with the UN Regional Commissions, to act as the coordinator of road safety across the UN system.

As a result, the UN Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC) was created as a means to operationalize this mandate.

The UNRSC is an informal network of more than 40 partners including UN agencies, government ministries of health and transport, non-governmental organizations, private companies and foundations. The Collaboration's goals are to facilitate international cooperation and to strengthen global and regional coordination in order to support countries' road safety policies and programmes. The UNRSC's members meet twice a year to share information and develop



## WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS



World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

ON 16 NOVEMBER 2008 – THE THIRD SUNDAY OF NOVEMBER

WORLDWIDE ANNIVERSARY OF A SPECIAL DAY TO REMEMBER ROAD VICTIMS

Road crashes are the leading cause of violent deaths and injuries worldwide and the World Day of Remembrance is drawing attention to their enormous scale.

Each year, millions of newly bereaved and injured people from every corner of the world are added to the many millions already suffering as the result of a road crash. This special Remembrance Day responds to this global disaster by recognizing publicly the loss and pain of road crash victims and the impact on communities and countries.

Initiated and observed by victim organizations for a decade, WHO and UN promoted the Day's global recognition, which resulted in UN resolution 60/5 of 26 October 2005 adopting the day as World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

For more information visit <http://www.worlddayofremembrance.org>.



continued

and discuss implementation of its projects which so far have focused mainly on advocacy, policy, and the dissemination of knowledge.”

### Collaboration so far and the way forward

The UN partnership has so far produced many awareness raising activities, the most prominent of which was the First United Nations Global Road Safety Week on 23-29 April 2007, with a second Week planned for 2010.

These and similar large-scale events have been successful in catching the attention of various target groups, but for road safety to become a reality a few one-off campaigns are not enough. Road safety promotion is on-going work.

The joint meeting will explore whether and how the Partnership can be more effective in achieving its objective: has everything possible has been done or is there room for improvement? How well does knowledge sharing and pooling of resources work in reality? Can we promote our partners' products better for the benefit of those most affected by the road safety crisis? ✨

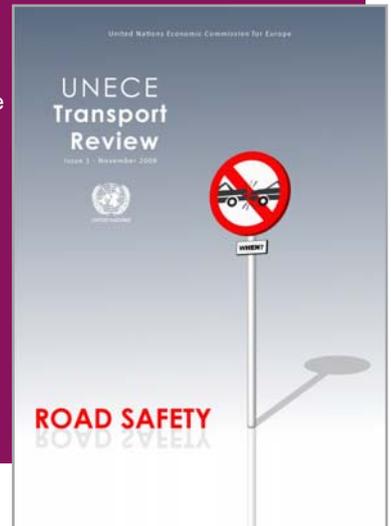
## TRANSPORT REVIEW (JUST PUBLISHED)

UNECE is launching a Transport Review this week as a medium to explore global transport challenges with and among transport experts. The first issue, dedicated to road safety, is being published in conjunction with the first joint meeting on road safety between WP.1 and the UN Road Safety Collaboration.

Prominent road safety experts from around the world have contributed with articles in their domain of expertise for this publication. It covers a range of topics, from modern technologies in road signs and signals, to the role of vehicle regulations and intelligent transport systems and to regional and national case studies, to name but a few.

The Review will be published three times a year. The next issue will tackle the topic of Trade and Transport and will come out in February on the occasion of the *Conference on Trade and Transport* during the Inland Transport Committee's annual session on 24-26 February 2009.

To see the Transport Review go to <http://www.unece.org/trans>. For subscriptions or any further information, contact [infotransport@unece.org](mailto:infotransport@unece.org).



## Facts and figures

### Setting national and regional road casualty reduction targets

Road safety is determined by the complex interplay of road users, vehicles and road infrastructure, and thus requires governments to take an evidence-based systems approach that ideally makes use of specific goals and targets. Road safety targets help to highlight the extent of the road safety problem and help to prioritize steps towards their achievement. Agreeing on national targets will require ministries and relevant agencies to work together towards a common goal.

Road safety strategies that include targets are more successful and have really worked for developed countries. However, to date, few low and middle income countries have agreed on government-wide road safety targets because of their limited financial resources and weak statistical capabilities, and because of other pressing economic or social problems.

Regional casualty reduction targets include:

- European Union and European Conference of Ministers of Transport agreed to reduce fatalities by 50% by 2010 and 2012 respectively
- Within the regional goal additional steps are possible e.g. Belarus (-100 accidents/year), Russian Federation (-10% injured every year, on a province basis)
- Transport Ministers in Asia and the Pacific agreed to cut deaths by 600,000 (about 20%) by 2015
- Ministers of Health and Transport in Africa agreed to reduce road fatalities by 50% by 2015
- Australia: 40% fewer fatalities by 2010, Japan: fewer than 5,750 fatalities in 2012, United States: fewer than 1.0 fatalities/100 million vehicle miles by 2008

Compared to the EU where the average number of deaths per million inhabitants is 93 with a cost of 0.42% of GDP, and the traffic density and vehicle ownership are significantly higher than in Central Asia, the Road Traffic Deaths per million inhabitants and as percentage of GDP in some countries of Central Asia looked as in the table.

Country	Deaths (2005)	% GDP	Deaths/million inhabitants
Kazakhstan	3347	1.74	222
Kyrgyzstan	893	5.2	175
Tajikistan	415	2.75	64

Source: GOPA-TRADEMCO

The five regional commissions are working together in a joint United Nations Development Account project to assist developing countries throughout the world in setting and achieving national and regional road traffic casualty targets. This common project is a recognition of road safety as a matter of common concern within the United Nations entities.