

**Edited Remarks by Lord Andrew Adonis, UK Secretary of State for Transport, at the UK launch of the Make Roads Safe campaign's 'Call for a Decade of Action for Road Safety', House of Commons, London, 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

Can I begin by congratulating the FIA Foundation for the support it has given for this work, and also thank my fellow parliamentarians. Peter Bottomley is a former roads minister and Louise Ellman, who I am delighted to see here, chairs the Transport Select Committee of the House of Commons. It is of course a great pleasure to have Lewis Hamilton here lending his huge support and prestige to this campaign. He has already established a phenomenal position for himself, not only in the world of international sport, but also as a role model here in Britain and internationally, and it is great to have him associated with this campaign today.

The best lead that we here in Britain can give to this campaign for global road safety is to be a great example, and Peter was too modest about his own achievements as roads minister. He started a lot of the campaigning work we do on road safety, including the setting of road safety targets in terms of reductions in fatalities, and this has been phenomenally successful over the course of the last twenty years. Over the last ten years alone the numbers killed on our roads has gone down by nearly a third. It is still too high, but it is now under 3000, which is the lowest figure since the 1930s - when of course there were only a fraction of the number of cars that there are now.

We are aiming to reduce that number by another third over the next ten years, and on the basis of the work that is underway that seems entirely credible. We've published recently our road safety strategy which includes all the elements that also need to be implemented internationally: safer vehicles, more responsible road use, emphasis on setting targets which can drive policy at every level, safer standards of road construction, and much better education of motorists and education in schools than we've often had in the past. It is those elements that have enabled us to make such big advances in road safety here, and they are the elements that will enable us to make big advances internationally.

So far as the Moscow Declaration is concerned, it has all of the elements we regard as important. We strongly support it. We will give high level support to it. We have helped to support this work internationally. The Secretary of State for International Development, Douglas Alexander, is a former Transport Secretary and I look forward to discussing this support with him. So this afternoon I want simply to congratulate you on this outstanding work you have done, pledge the government's full support for it and to say as we take this work in Moscow forward we will look to see how we can continue to support it in future, so that the example that we have been able to set internationally, in really big reductions in fatalities and serious accidents on the roads, becomes an international model too.

We have very different ways of approaching accidents on different modes of transport in the UK. We expect our railways to be so safe that no one is killed, but we still, as a society, tolerate accidents on the road network which we would not tolerate on the rail network. The numbers are going down in the UK dramatically in terms of deaths on the roads but 3000 killed each year is, of course, 3000 too many. We need to continue our action to reduce that number nationally, but when you think that the international number is 1.3 million killed - more than die each year of malaria - and that number, far from decreasing over the next ten years, is projected to increase as we get so many more drivers in developing countries, particularly in China and India, then the importance of this campaign cannot be overstated.

The 1.8 or 1.9 million who are forecast to die from accidents on the roads each year within the next ten years is an international state of affairs that none of us should regard as tolerable. We should do all within our power to help tackle it. We have a duty to set an example here in the UK but we also have a duty to support international action and on behalf of the government I pledge that we will fulfil those duties over the coming years.