



Chairman: Rt. Hon. Lord Robertson of Port Ellen KT. GCMG

## **Speech by Rt. Hon. Lord Robertson of Port Ellen**

### **First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, Moscow, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009** (Check against delivery)

I would like to begin by paying tribute to the leadership demonstrated by President Medvedev and his government in hosting this first global ministerial conference on road safety. It is an example of the best kind of international collaboration, for which Russian Federation should be justly proud.

I am also proud, on behalf of my fellow members of the Commission for Global Road Safety, to be part of this conference today. For it was our report in 2006 that first made the proposal for a global ministerial conference. And it was at our Commission meeting just over a year ago in St Petersburg that we first urged the Moscow Ministerial to support, and the United Nations to adopt, a Decade of Action for Road Safety. I am grateful to the FIA Foundation and the Make Roads Safe campaign's global ambassador, Michelle Yeoh, for doing so much to promote this policy agenda.

And among the main recommendations made by our Commission we called for road safety to become a priority for the multilateral development banks that finance so much of the developing world's road construction and rehabilitation. So the Commission for Global Road Safety is delighted to welcome the major statement issued last week by the World Bank and the six leading regional development banks in which they place road safety firmly at the heart of the banks' road sector operations. We look forward to seeing this powerful and unequivocal pledge translated into operational practice as soon as possible.

This conference provides an unprecedented opportunity for global road safety. The Declaration that will be adopted tomorrow contains many important recommendations. Yet without political leadership and encouragement and the deployment of real resources they will remain just words on a page.

We have the tools and the knowledge. We know that we can cut road deaths through attention to safe road design and speed management; legislating for and enforcing the use of helmets and seat belts; tackling drink driving and improving vehicle design; and ensuring that vulnerable road users are treated as equal partners in the road space we all share. We know the importance of putting in place effective data and management systems and delivering these policies as part of a holistic safe systems approach.

We know this. We have the benefit of many examples and experiences of road safety improvement across both the developed and developing world.

We have the vaccines to combat this epidemic. What we need now is to see the political will from you necessary to deliver these vaccines to the people who so desperately need them.

The official theme of this Moscow Conference is 'Time for Action'. And Moscow can be the turning point, the fork in the road where we choose to take a new direction for road injury prevention.

The world's leading road safety experts believe that with the right action we could save five million lives over the coming decade: five million people whose potential can be realised, and not wasted. Five million families who need never know the sudden shock and lifelong grief that comes from losing a loved one in a road crash.

So let us commit today to work together for a Decade of Action and start to make roads safe for us all.