

DRAFT
SPEECH FOR HRH PRINCE MICHAEL OF KENT
INTERNATIONAL ROAD SAFETY AWARD
Por Amor Costa Rica Seatbelt Campaign

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It is a great pleasure to be with you all here tonight and to be able to join your important meeting which will find ways of collaborating to build on the recommendations of the World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention.

We here are all agreed that to reduce road fatalities and injuries we need effective action at many levels - from government, from industry, from NGOs and from communities themselves. Action is required nationally, especially in the developing world, and internationally through the United Nations and its relevant agencies, donor governments and the development banks.

The automobile clubs have real responsibility in this work and I am delighted that so many are represented at this important meeting and are represented here tonight. The FIA American Congress held today and the Latin American and Caribbean Road Safety Stakeholders Forum tomorrow are vital steps in this process.

Since I first started my road safety awards in the United Kingdom in 1987 I have been impressed by the unstinting work of so many individuals often struggling with limited resources to bring the governments' attention to the terrible toll of death and injury on our roads. For some years I have been particularly keen that my awards should be available more widely particularly to recognise the essential work of many 'lone voices' in the developing world where, as we all know, there is a huge challenge. I am therefore pleased to once again pay tribute to the WHO, who were winners of my International Award in 2005 and whose World Report was a landmark in putting road safety onto the global political radar.

In just a few short years much has been achieved. The UN Road Safety Collaboration, led by WHO, and the new Global Road Safety Facility, hosted by the World Bank, now provide an institutional framework for effective action. Make Roads Safe, the report of the Commission for Global Road Safety published earlier this year, provides a compelling argument for why governments should provide the resources to enable this action on global road safety.

I also know just how much the FIA Foundation has done to support, encourage or lead these initiatives. I am sure that you will all agree that its work since its creation only five years ago has been quite remarkable. My thanks go not just to David Ward and his excellent team, but to Max Mosley for having the foresight to lead in the establishing of the Foundation and for his unstinting work in supporting the cause of road safety.

Last year I was delighted to be able to present one of my awards to the Foundation during the UN Road Safety Collaboration meeting in London.

The award was for its Seat Belt Toolkit which includes a manual providing advice on enforcement, awareness raising and legislating for seat belt use. The toolkit is an essential resource for any road safety professional in the developing world, or indeed in any state which does not yet have an effective seat belt regime.

The advice manual and its associated toolkit were developed from real life experiences in many places, but the acid test of the foundation's successful approach was the Por Amor seat belt campaign here in Costa Rica during 2003/04 which was a collaborative venture led by The Ministry of Transport in association with The National Safety Council, The National Insurance Institute, the Costa Rican Automobile Club and indeed the FIA Foundation.

As many of you will know, following a challenge to the law in the 1990s seat belt wearing had fallen to some 24 per cent. Yet by the summer of 2004, through a combination of new legislation, awareness raising and effective enforcement the seat belt wearing level was raised to 82 per cent.

The partnership led by transport ministers Javier Chaves and Karla Gonzalez, together with Ignacio Sanchez of the traffic police and Carlos Macaya from the Automobile Club effectively changed the behaviour of thousands of drivers and as a result saved many lives.

This example is one which should be replicated all over the world and it is for this reason that I am delighted to be here tonight to present my international award to the Por Amor campaign team.