

The Rationale for a Regional Actor for Road Safety in Latin America and the Caribbean

I. It is both important and urgent that all the nations of the Latin American and Caribbean region work together to stop the growing epidemic of deaths and injuries on our roads.

Road traffic injuries constitute a major but neglected public health problem that claims 1.2 million victims a year, equivalent to the disease burden of tuberculosis or malaria, with considerable social and economic costs up to 1.5% of GDP in addition. The tremendous burden of death and disability resulting from road traffic crashes falls primarily on low- and middle-income countries. In addition, the loss of the family breadwinner through death or disability often forces the families of these victims into poverty.

Latin America and the Caribbean Region (LAC) had the highest average road traffic deaths per capita in the world for the year 2000 (26 deaths/100,000 people). And although road traffic injuries are a very preventable problem, in the absence of specific targeted actions the rates for this region will increase markedly, with the highest projected rate of any region for the year 2020 (31 deaths/100,000 people). This suggests that by 2020 the projected deaths per capita in LAC could be up to 6 times higher than the current rate in the countries with the best rates in the world (UK, Sweden, Netherlands).

We can accelerate our response to this epidemic threat by working together. Road safety has not been a political priority for any of our countries, but by pooling our resources we can do together what none of us can afford to do alone. None of our countries have sufficient resources to do everything that needs to be done, but by pooling our resources—our knowledge, our human resources, and our financial resources—for targeted projects we can do a better job together than any of us can do alone. We will also end up being able to communicate with each other and share data and understanding. In addition, there is additional value in being able to sharing information about best practices, and developing common standards for safe road and vehicle design. Working together and speaking with a common voice helps us get the attention, political support, and resources that we need to save lives.

II. But we do not have a mechanism to promote collaboration and manage our joint projects in road traffic safety.

Our response requires a coordinated and multi-sectoral approach, from all relevant parts of *government* (including transportation, health, law enforcement, education, finance, and urban planning), *civil society* (including advocacy organizations, academia, foundations, automobile clubs, and professional organizations), and the *private sector* (including road builders and road maintenance organizations, automobile manufacturers, motor vehicle product manufacturers, insurance companies, and commercial road users). We will need to be able to support and manage our joint efforts so that we can work efficiently and effectively to develop explicit products and meet very specific targets

III. Therefore we propose to work together to develop a regional organization that will draw upon all relevant sectors of government, civil society, and the private sector to promote a region-wide approach to road safety. Its goals will be to:

- a. Organize a region-wide road safety data and information system,**
- b. Share road safety information and best practices across the region,**
- c. Promote harmonization of laws for road and vehicle safety.**

To work effectively together, we will need to agree on our vision and shared goal, membership, structure, strategy, and roles. Our hope is that through the Declaration of San Jose we can develop a consensus for the notion of regional actor with the three specific goals noted above. With this consensus we can then start on the process of designing the regional actor and generating support for it through these steps:

1. Establish Need for LAC Regional Actor

- Demonstrate that it is in the interest of the countries, organizations, and individuals of the region to have a Regional Actor; develop explanatory and simple marketing materials for the regional actor
- Research LAC region to determine scope and effectiveness of road traffic safety efforts and show the value added that a Regional Actor could bring

2. Identify Purpose and Goals for LAC Regional Actor

- Promote bilateral collaboration as well as sub-region and region-wide collaboration
- Identify and discuss specific, measurable objectives established by key working groups: Political Will, Information Systems, Knowledge Sharing, Communication and Culture Change, and Infrastructure.
- Develop shared road safety information system, knowledge sharing network, and process for developing shared standards for road and vehicle safety.

3. Develop project plan with key targets

- September 2006: San Jose, Costa Rica
 - Sign Declaration of San Jose, assure signatures of key regional and global organizations
 - Identify temporary home for person(s) who would help develop proposal for the Regional Actor
 - Develop preliminary budget and identify source of support for proposal development phase
 - Appoint committee to decide among range of proposals
- September 2006—September 2007
 - Identify institutional “home” for LAC Regional Actor
 - Propose organizational goals, structure, membership, strategy, and roles
 - Identify financial needs and mobilize resources for initial and subsequent periods
 - Discuss the proposal with wide range of stakeholders, generating support and gathering suggestions, using suggestions to improve proposal
 - Solidify Institutional support by gathering additional signatures for Declaration of San Jose to mobilize additional support for the regional actor

Appendix A: The Role of Regional Actors in Global Road Safety

Regional Actors for Global Road Safety Elsewhere in the World

- The organizational leadership for road safety (Regional Actors) in most regions of the world is housed within one of the five Regional Commissions established by the United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council. Some regions also have “*Subregional Actors.*” Large and varied differences exist in road safety activities throughout the world, particularly in high-income versus low-to-moderate income regions.
 - EUROPE
 - Regional Actor: UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Transport Division (www.unece.org); 56 member states
 - Formulated comprehensive “European Transport Policy for 2010,” which includes major initiatives in virtually every aspect of road safety. Refer to European Commission road safety publication website: www.ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/publications/index_en.htm
 - WESTERN ASIA
 - Regional Actor: UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Committee on Transport (www.escwa.org.lb); 13 member states
 - Significant road safety activities are ongoing in this region, including a workshop on the implementation of good practices for road traffic safety that held in Muscat on 10/28-29/2005
 - Oman, one member country, has launched a culturally sensitive child safety campaign entitled “Salim and Slimah, Safe and Sound” (www.salimandsalimah.org)
 - ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
 - Both Regional and *Sub-Regional* Actors are active in this region
 - Regional Actor: UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) (www.unescap.org); 53 member states
 - Organized meeting on how to finance highway infrastructure and improve road safety on 8-10 May 2006 in Bangkok
 - Will host “UNESCAP Ministerial Conference on Transport 2006” 6-11 November 2006 in Busan, Republic of Korea in which a ministerial declaration containing specific regional and national goals and targets will be considered. (www.mct2006.or.kr/00main/main.htm)
 - Sub-Regional Actor: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (www.aseansec.org); 11 member countries in Southeast Asia
 - 11/23/04: Approved a subregional declaration on road safety (Phnom Penh Ministerial Declaration on ASEAN Road Safety; www.aseansec.org/16588.htm)
 - Adopted the ASEAN Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan 2005-2010
 - AFRICA

- Potential Regional and Subregional Actors, yet neither appear to currently provide active leadership in road safety within Africa. No action plans or measurable outcomes for regional road safety appear to exist for Africa.
 - UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (www.uneca.org); 53 member states
 - New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (www.nepad.org); 19 member states

Previous Global Road Safety Activities in LAC Region (partial listing)

- UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (www.eclac.org); 42 member states
 - October, 2004: Issued Bulletin No. 218, which described the UN action regarding the “urgent worldwide problem” of road safety
- Inter-American Development Bank—Brazilia Meeting and Declaration of Brazilia 1998
- Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) (www.paho.org)
 - 2004 Meeting in Brazilia—Responding to the World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention
 - 2005 Meeting in Brazilia—Strengthening the capacity of the health sector to promote road safety
- Global Road Safety Forum (www.globalroadsafety.org)
 - January 2006: Held planning meeting for LAC regional stakeholders forum (Santiago, Chile)
 - April 2007: Geneva--Second UN Global Stakeholders Forum (as part of UN Global Road Safety Week)

Appendix B: Declaration of San Jose: We Must Stop the Epidemic of Death on the Roads Version 13 Revised August 10, 2006

Background: We are running out of time

Road traffic injuries constitute a major but neglected public health problem that claims 1.2 million victims a year, equivalent to the disease burden of tuberculosis or malaria, with considerable social and economic costs up to 1.5% of GDP in addition. The tremendous burden of death and disability resulting from road traffic crashes falls primarily on low- and middle-income countries. In addition, the loss of the family breadwinner through death or disability often forces the families of these victims into poverty.

Latin America and the Caribbean Region (LAC) had the highest average deaths per capita in the world for the year 2000 (26 deaths/100,000 people) and the highest projected rate for the year 2020 (31 deaths/100,000 people), in the absence of any further action. This suggests that by 2020 the projected deaths per capita in LAC could be up to 6 times higher than the current rate in the countries with the best rates in the world (UK, Sweden, Netherlands).

This is a very preventable problem. The *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, a landmark publication prepared jointly by the World Bank and the World Health Organization, provides a framework for addressing this problem and the basis for a common approach to a regional road safety policy.

Road traffic injuries have been recognized as an extensive and serious global health problem by the United Nations (UN General Assembly Resolution 58/9) and by the World Health Assembly (WHA resolutions 27.59 1974 and 57.10 2004). The member states of these organizations are already on record as having declared this a global epidemic whose solution requires coordinated international efforts;

Important groundwork has already been prepared by previous regional efforts of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Standards for enhancing road and vehicle safety have been developed and implemented in the developed countries. We have an opportunity to build upon these important works by developing regional road and vehicle safety standards and by implementing evidence-based interventions that have already been shown to be cost-effective for reducing the impact of road traffic crashes. Our interventions must cover all three phases of road traffic injury control: prevention of crashes and injuries in the first place; provision of prompt and high-quality care to those injured in traffic crashes; and the provision of rehabilitation and long-term care to those who have been injured in order to minimize disabilities.

Our response requires a coordinated and multi-sectoral approach, from all relevant parts of *government* (including transportation, health, law enforcement, education, finance, and urban planning), *civil society* (including advocacy organizations, academia, foundations, automobile clubs, and professional organizations), and the *private sector* (including road builders and road maintenance organizations, automobile manufacturers, motor vehicle product manufacturers, insurance companies, and commercial road users).

Viewing this situation with great concern, we, the undersigned:

2. Declare that it is both urgent and important that all the nations of the Latin American and Caribbean region work together to stop the growing epidemic of deaths and injuries on our roads. Road safety must become a health, transportation, law enforcement, education, and development priority for our nations and the region.
3. Urge all nations of the region to implement the recommendations of the World Report and to use this as the framework for addressing road safety nationally, regionally, and globally.
4. Urge that resources be committed to road safety commensurate with the need and magnitude of the problem. Development banks should lead the way by requiring that at least 10% of their investments for infrastructure development be applied to road safety programs.
5. Urge that resources be committed to the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility by the industrialized nations so that the Facility can reach a total investment of at least (US)\$300,000,000 by 2015 so that there will be funds available to the countries in the LAC region to develop road safety management capacity, catalyse increased investment, and accelerate knowledge transfer.
6. Commit to work together to develop a regional committee that will:
 - a. represent all relevant sectors of government, civil society, and the private sector,
 - b. promote a region-wide approach to road safety,

- c. organize a region-wide information system,
 - d. promote harmonization of laws for road and vehicle safety, and
 - e. share road safety information and best practices across the region.
7. Commit to mobilize the active participation of regional ministers of transportation, health, and law enforcement and others to set and achieve measurable targets for road safety and traffic-injury prevention in the states of the region.