



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

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MAKE ROADS SAFE

**G8 leaders urged: 'to Make Poverty History we must Make Roads Safe'
George Robertson and International Commission launch campaign for safer roads**

Road deaths are a global epidemic on the scale of Malaria and Tuberculosis and G8 leaders must do more to tackle road safety in developing countries, warns a report launched today in London by the Commission for Global Road Safety (8).

Former NATO Chief Lord Robertson of Port Ellen and an international Commission including 7 times Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher issued a stark warning that failing to act on road deaths – which are second only to HIV/AIDS as a global killer of young men – will jeopardise key development goals on health and poverty.

Of the 1.2 million people killed and 50 million injured around the world in road traffic crashes, more than 85% of casualties are in low and middle income countries. Road deaths in these countries are forecast to almost double by 2020. The Commission for Global Road Safety, led by Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, is launching its report 'Make Roads Safe' with a demand for urgent action:

- G8 countries must support a \$300 million, 10 year Action Plan to improve road safety in developing countries;
- Road projects in developing countries funded with overseas development aid must include a minimum 10% for road safety improvements including engineering measures, safety rating and assessment, and wider community based road safety initiatives.
- A United Nations Road Safety summit – the first ever such meeting - must be convened to coordinate an international approach to road traffic injury prevention.

Despite causing death and injury on a similar scale to global diseases like Malaria and TB, road traffic injuries are not included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and receive overseas funding which is a tiny fraction of that allocated to Malaria and TB.

Road crashes also hit the poorest countries and poorest people hardest. The annual economic costs of road crashes to low and middle income nations are estimated at between \$65 billion - \$100 billion. This compares with official overseas aid in 2005 of \$106 billion. The majority of those killed or injured are pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. Road injury is a significant cause of poverty amongst lower income families who lose a breadwinner.

Lord Robertson will be sending the Make Roads Safe report to all the G8 leaders in advance of the St Petersburg G8 Summit in July 2006 and is calling for global road safety to be included in the agenda of a future G8 summit. UK Prime Minister Tony Blair has already written to Lord Robertson confirming that he would support including road safety in a future G8 agenda.

Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, the Commission Chairman, and himself a survivor of a serious car crash, said:

“In 2005 millions of people, and the leaders of the G8, responded to the call to Make Poverty History. Yet many of the gains for development won in 2005 will be at risk if action is not taken to reverse the growing epidemic of road traffic death and injury, with its terrible human and economic cost. Every day 3000 people are killed in road crashes. We know that many of these deaths are preventable. But we need political leadership from the G8 and a significant increase in resources if we are to Make Roads Safe.”

To promote the messages of the report, a Make Roads Safe campaign is also launched today:

- The main objective of the campaign, led by the FIA Foundation, is to put global road safety on the G8 agenda and secure political and financial commitments for the recommendations proposed in the Make Roads Safe report;
- The campaign also aims to raise awareness amongst young people around the world of the global, developmental problems of road safety. This will also help to raise awareness about and acceptance of domestic road safety amongst a key high risk age group in terms of road crashes in industrialized countries: men in their late teens and early 20s;
- A website www.makeroadssafe.org with an online petition will be live on 8th June.

Michael Schumacher, 7 times Formula One World Champion and a member of the Commission, said:

“We need to make people aware of the real human cost of road traffic injuries across the developing world. Five hundred children are dying every day and thousands more are being disabled or injured. This is why I support the campaign to Make Roads Safe.”

David Ward, FIA Foundation Director General, said:

“The five main development lending banks, like the World Bank, together fund road projects worth \$4 billion a year. Yet between them, these five institutions have just two road safety specialists. The G8 has approved major development funding for new roads in Africa, but road safety is not part of the package. Unless we make roads safe in Africa, Asia and elsewhere, a whole generation will suffer the human tragedy and economic cost of rising road deaths. If we are to Make Poverty History we must Make Roads Safe”.

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