It is a great honour to once again represent the United Kingdom in a General Assembly session on global road safety, and I would like to thank the UK Government for allowing me this opportunity.

Last September, here in this hall, the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the world’s governments. For the first time, these Global Goals included a road safety target – a clear and unambiguous target to halve road traffic fatalities by 2020.

In Brazil last November many of us gathered at the High Level Conference on Road Safety, to set the agenda for delivering this global target and to agree the Brasilia Declaration. More than seventy ministers and two thousand delegates participated. Speaking in the closing ceremony I described the Declaration as a ‘Manifesto for Change’.

And I am pleased to see so much of the change that was proposed in Brasilia has been included in the General Assembly resolution that we formally adopt here, today.

It is a resolution that urges leadership and cooperation by all governments, and calls on donors to support a new Global Fund;

It is a resolution that sets a clear moral challenge to all the world’s car makers to meet essential and unarguable minimum UN safety standards by 2020;
It is a resolution that highlights the appalling toll of child and adolescent casualties, and calls on countries to meet their obligations, under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to protect our young;

It is a resolution that recognises the need to design and manage highways and city streets be safe for all;

that makes the vital link between safe mobility and environmental protection;

and demonstrates why road safety must be at the heart of the ‘New Urban Agenda’ to be agreed later this year at Habitat 3.

So this is a resolution that can help us to deliver change. But we will only succeed if we resolve, together, to turn these words on a page into action on our streets.

And we must act now. Because, as the British Prime Minister David Cameron has said: “Every six seconds, someone is killed or seriously injured on the world's roads. Addressing this must be an urgent priority for the international community”.

The United Kingdom is responding to the Global Goals. In December the government published a new road safety policy statement, adopting the Safe System approach and setting out how it will deliver an election manifesto commitment to reduce road traffic deaths every year.

The UK’s policy statement references the UN Global Plan for the Decade of Action as an organising framework.
It sets out a clear plan to drive down casualties, through measures including protecting vulnerable road users; tough enforcement of speeding and drink driving; and encouraging faster uptake of safer vehicles.

To improve infrastructure safety, Highways England is now ‘aiming for zero’ with the objective that by 2020 ninety per cent of travel on its strategic network is on roads with a safety assessment of three stars or better.

And in solidarity with the global effort, the UK Department for International Development is funding the World Bank’s Global Road Safety Facility: helping to catalyse a local response in low income countries with high levels of road traffic carnage.

I am proud that the FIA Foundation, the independent UK charity of which I am now Chairman, is at the forefront of campaigning and collaborative funding to tackle this global epidemic of road death and injury.

Our Foundation helped to establish and finance two other UK charities, iRAP and Global NCAP, which are now working with dozens of countries across the world to improve infrastructure and vehicle safety.

We are providing strong support to the new UN Special Envoy, Jean Todt, and his high level efforts to secure unprecedented financing for road safety.

And we are excited to be working with UNICEF and other global and national partners on a new child health initiative with a vision that every child can enjoy a safe and healthy journey to school.

Because if we are to achieve the Global Goals, we must be ambitious. And we have to succeed.

We must succeed for Lavna, a 14 year old girl killed by a lorry as she walked to school in London, on the same day that we met in Brasilia.
We must succeed for Sammy, struck down and killed at the age of 13 while walking to school here in New York City.

And we must succeed for Maria, an 11 year old girl from Brazil, who wrote a prize winning essay for a school road safety competition.

In her essay Maria said: “You should have love for life, your life and others as well. I believe that if all drivers thought this way then certainly many children would still have their parents and many parents would still have their children.”

Just ten months after writing these words, Maria and her father were killed when their motorbike was hit by a car.

We can resolve, here, today, that the loss of these young lives will mean something.

We can resolve, here, today, that there will be no more excuses, no more delays, in delivering the solutions we know can work and can prevent more unnecessary deaths.

We now have the new Global Goals with the ambitious target of halving road casualties by half in the next five years.

So many lives are at stake. We cannot afford to fail. So let us approve this Resolution and then work together to deliver the change that is so desperately needed.