

**HE Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo,
Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations**

Opening remarks to the Policy Briefing on Road Traffic Injuries in the SDGs 4 March 2015

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests,

- May I begin by paying tribute to my colleagues representing the Permanent Missions of the Russian Federation, the Government of Brazil and the Sultanate of Oman for their work on road safety and their leadership of this issue globally. And may I thank the organisers, the FIA Foundation, the UN agencies and experts gathered today.
- This is a crucial year for road safety and we stand together in advancing this agenda globally in 2015.
- Road traffic injury is the number one killer of young people aged 15-29 globally, and it is becoming a growing health burden on younger children.
- As the data shows and as the experts will outline later in the session, the health burden is on the scale of Malaria and Tuberculosis.
- The majority of fatalities and injuries – 90% of the total worldwide – are in developing countries. We must consider this to be a development issue.
- This is a man-made epidemic but we do not need to search for a cure. The solutions are well known: safe roads, safer vehicles, legislation enforcement and education, better post-crash care.
- Implementing these solutions can lead us to achieving a global target of halving road traffic fatalities. This is an ambitious target for the SDGs. But with sustained action and support we can achieve it worldwide.
- As the World Health Organization has outlined and will explain today, all countries, no matter what level of income, are capable of ensuring these solutions are in place. What is needed is better coordination, improved capacity and sustained support over next phase of global development.
- I am particularly proud that from South Africa, the family of Nelson Mandela has been so active in the campaign for global action on road safety. Far too many families worldwide have suffered as they have – and this is unacceptable. I see many of our partners in the global campaign here in the room today and we pledge to continue our efforts to fight this epidemic and end the carnage on the world's roads. And so I pledge my support to the 'Save Kids Lives' campaign for the forthcoming UN Global Road Safety Week. We must take action for our children and our future.
- Let us make this new era of post-2015 development truly sustainable and let us save lives.