





**MILESTONES**  
**IN INTERNATIONAL ROAD SAFETY:**  
*World Health Day 2004 and beyond*



World Health Organization  
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Milestones in international road safety : World Health Day 2004 and beyond.

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# FOREWORD

## *Milestones in international road safety: World Health Day 2004 and beyond documents an historic year for road safety*



Not a day goes by without dramatic news of serious car, bus or truck crashes making headlines somewhere in the world. For every headline news event, many other road crashes – both fatal and nonfatal – go unreported in the press. Yet 3000 people die daily on the world's roads and tens of thousands are disabled for life.

To draw attention to this growing problem, WHO for the first time devoted its annual World Health Day to road safety. One year later I am pleased to report that with the launch of a major global report, resolutions in both the United Nations General Assembly and the World Health Assembly, and many other initiatives, road safety was one of the most featured public health issues of 2004.

While I had the honour of co-hosting the global World Health Day 2004 event together with President Chirac in Paris, France, in April 2004, hundreds of other road safety events were observed across the world. From remembrance gardens in South Africa to a helmet fashion show in Viet Nam and from a road safety film festival in Lebanon to theater performances in public parks in Brazil, the response was beyond expectation. Yet across these events participants voiced my own sentiment: road safety does not happen accidentally, but as a result of concerted and very deliberate efforts on the part of governments and their citizenry, law enforcement officers, civil engineers, public health experts, vehicle manufacturers, the media and others.

The *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, launched on World Health Day 2004, reinforced this view. The report provides the most current data and information on the problem of road traffic injuries, the factors which place people at risk, and proven and promising ways to prevent injuries. Its recommendations will guide the World Health Organization's work in the area for years to come, as the Organiza-

tion assists Member States to implement effective prevention strategies, which include wearing helmets, using seat-belts and child restraints, managing excessive speed and reducing drink-driving.

A week after World Health Day 2004, the United Nations General Assembly discussed road safety for the first time and passed a resolution on *Improving global road safety*. The resolution invited the World Health Organization to coordinate road safety efforts across the United Nations system, in conjunction with the United Nations regional commissions. This invitation was accepted in May 2004 by the World Health Assembly, which passed its own resolution on *Road safety and health*. The new coordination mandate provides an excellent platform from which to strengthen collaboration in developing policies and programmes for road traffic injury prevention, and has already resulted in the initiation of a number of collaborative projects.

During the past year the international community has devoted unprecedented attention to road safety. This document seeks to capture the energy and enthusiasm with which governments, civil society, the private sector, and the injury prevention community around the world have taken up the issue. The report is indicative of the tangible progress that can be made once groups embrace an urgent call to action. I applaud the efforts by all, and call upon you to ensure that this momentum continues and action is sustained to decrease deaths on our roads. The World Health Organization will do its part to support Member States in their efforts in the years to come.



**LEE Jong-wook**  
Director-General  
World Health Organization

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The World Health Organization acknowledges with thanks all who contributed to making World Health Day 2004 such an enormous success. From the smallest community-based nongovernmental organization to the largest global multilateral institution, all have done their part to make a difference. Although we would have liked to feature in this particular publication the many hundreds of activities that took place around the world on World Health Day 2004, limitations of time and space do not allow us to do so. Still the Organization appreciates and acknowledges your efforts to improve road safety around the world.

The World Health Organization would like also to thank the teams who prepared World Health Day 2004 and the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, including staff from the Organization's headquarters and its regional and country offices as well as the sponsors of the United Nations General Assembly and the World Health Assembly resolutions on road safety passed during the months following World Health Day 2004.

This publication benefited from the contributions of a number of people: in particular staff from the WHO Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention, including Désirée Kogevinas who researched and compiled the information, Laura Sminkey who drafted the manuscript, Margie Peden and Etienne Krug who reviewed the draft, and Pascale Lanvers-Casasola who provided administrative support for the production of the document. Stylistic editing was done by Angela Haden, and design and layout was done by rsdesigns.com.

Funding for this publication was kindly provided by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, and the Michelin Group.

# INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization has road safety partners around the world. This report is based on information provided by many of them. Its objectives are two fold: to document the key achievements in the area of road safety made on and since World Health Day 2004; and to inspire action on implementing the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. The target audience is primarily policy-makers and others involved in road safety at country, regional and international levels, who would most benefit from examples of practical steps that could be taken.

This publication reflects reports from WHO regional and country offices, ministries of health and nongovernmental organizations about the World Health Day 2004 events they hosted. Requests for information about follow-up to these events were made through WHO's regional offices, the World Health Day 2004 website and key experts in road safety. Although it would have been desirable to produce a comprehensive report, much progress is being made in road safety around the world which is not communicated to WHO. As such the report is illustrative, rather than comprehensive, but we hope it is inspirational just the same. Our apologies in advance to any group or groups whose important work may not be reflected here.

World Health Day 2004 is an opportunity to highlight the impact of road traffic injuries and also to underscore the fact that these are avoidable. They are not just accidents, they are human errors which with proper governmental policy can be dealt with.

Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General, London, United Kingdom,  
7 January 2004 interview with the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society



# BACKGROUND

- WHA Resolution 19.36 **1966**
- WHA Resolution 27.59 **1974**
- Global Burden of Disease published **1996**
- Department of Injuries & Violence Prevention created **2000**
- WHO DG announces WHD on road safety  
Draft UN resolution on road safety  
UN SG report on road safety **2003**
- WHD: Road Safety is NO Accident  
Launch *World report on road traffic injury prevention*  
UN Resolution 58/289  
WHA Resolution 57/10 **2004**

## *A brief history of road safety within WHO*

During the 1980s and 1990s, WHO supported some sporadic activities in the area of road safety. These efforts were spurred by two World Health Assembly resolutions. The first was resolution WHA19.36 on *Prevention of Traffic Accidents* adopted in 1966 by the Nineteenth World Health Assembly. This resolution requested WHO to play a more active role in the prevention of traffic crashes, with special emphasis on the human and medical aspects of the problem, and on the coordination of international research in this field. The second was resolution WHA27.59 on *Prevention of Road Traffic Accidents* adopted in 1974 by the Twenty-seventh World Health Assembly. This resolution urged Member States to promote improved driver licensing systems and traffic safety education programmes; encourage national health authorities to provide leadership in these matters; and require manufacturers to apply safety principles in the development of new types of vehicles. Both resolutions called for the Director-General of WHO to assist in these efforts.

# RECENT MILESTONES IN ROAD SAFETY

**11 FEBRUARY 2003**

Road safety announced as World Health Day 2004 theme, London, UK

**7 AUGUST 2003**

Report of the United Nations Secretary-General issued on the *Global road safety crisis* (A/58/228), New York, USA

**29 OCTOBER 2003**

56 countries present draft resolution to United Nations General Assembly (A/58/L.3/Rev.1)

**29 MAY 2003**

United Nations General Assembly welcomes designation of road safety for World Health Day 2004, encourages governments to do more (A/Res/57/309)

**24 SEPTEMBER 2003**

Advisory Committee gathers to plan World Health Day 2004, Geneva, Switzerland

**14 APRIL 2004**

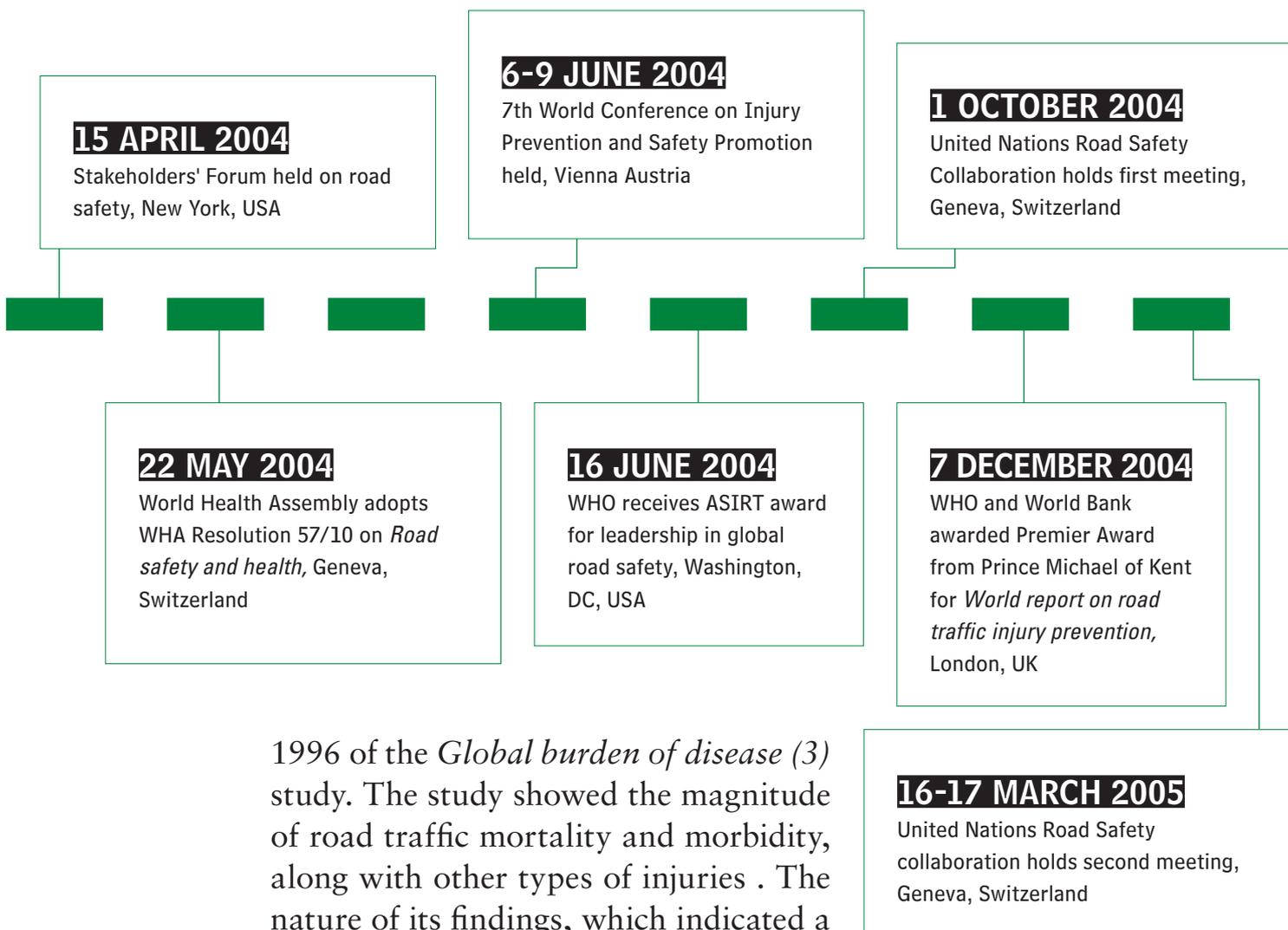
United Nations General Assembly hosts historic plenary session, passes UN Resolution 58/289 on *Improving global road safety*, New York, USA

**7 APRIL 2004**

World Health Day 2004 celebrated around the world with launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

Although a lack of human and financial resources thwarted attempts at comprehensive and sustained follow-up to these resolutions, road safety-related activities continued intermittently. In 1981 WHO convened the *International conference on road traffic accidents in developing countries* in Mexico City, Mexico, during which a road safety working group was created. A report from this meeting entitled *Road traffic accidents in developing countries (1)* outlined the many issues which would need to be addressed in order for progress to be made. In 1989 the group released another document entitled *New approaches to improve road safety (2)* which focused more specifically on proven prevention measures. The report identified a number of collaborative centres around the world working on preventing road traffic injuries.

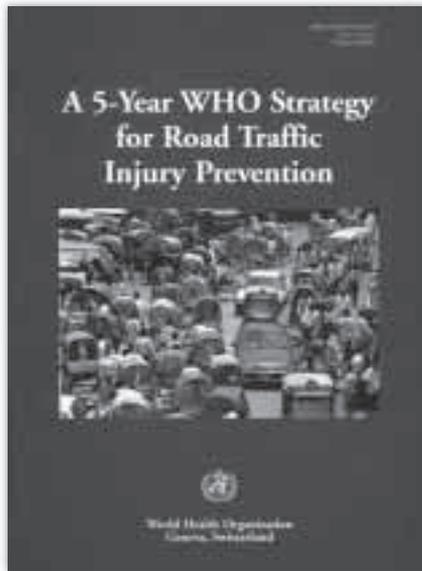
A turning point in recognizing the road traffic injury problem as a serious public health and development concern came with the publication in



1996 of the *Global burden of disease (3)* study. The study showed the magnitude of road traffic mortality and morbidity, along with other types of injuries . The nature of its findings, which indicated a rapid rise in road traffic injuries across the world, lead to the creation in 2000 of the WHO Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention.

WHO and its Member States now benefit from renewed impetus in the area of injuries and violence prevention. This impetus led firstly to the development of *A 5-year WHO strategy for road traffic injury prevention (4)* in 2001 and secondly to the dedication of World Health Day 2004 to road safety, and to the global launch on that day of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention (5)*. Subsequent resolutions adopted by both the World Health Assembly and the United Nations General Assembly demonstrate a firm recognition of road traffic injuries as a major public health problem and a new commitment on the part of governments to finding ways to prevent these injuries.

# *A 5-year WHO strategy for road traffic injury prevention*



Early in the 21st century, public health experts found themselves confronted with the prediction that if current trends continue, road traffic injuries will rise 60% by the year 2020 to number three on WHO's list of leading contributors to the global burden of disease and injury. Public health officials forced to recognize the seriousness of the problem, were challenged by the lack of interest on the part of many governments to address the issue. WHO realized that in order to place road safety on the political agenda, a strategy was needed to energize a collective global effort. The 5-year WHO strategy for road traffic injury prevention was developed in

2001 with the support of a host of key experts on global road safety.

The strategy identified WHO's added value in the areas of epidemiology, prevention and advocacy. Its specific objectives are to build capacity at national and local level to monitor the burden of road traffic injuries; promote action-oriented strategies for the prevention and control of the health consequences of road crashes; and incorporate road traffic injury prevention into public health agendas around the world.

## *Preparations for World Health Day 2004 and the global launch of the World report on road traffic injury prevention*



In February 2003, during an event in London, United Kingdom hosted by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland, then the WHO Director-General, announced that World Health Day 2004 would be dedicated to road safety. She noted that World Health Day 2004 would

be a unique opportunity to raise awareness among policy-makers and the public about the health impact and societal costs of road traffic injuries, and to issue an urgent call for action to increase prevention efforts. She noted WHO's intention to release a major, scientific report on road traffic injuries on World Health Day 2004 and to provide support to the organization of hundreds of road safety events to be hosted around the world.

Poor road safety causes one of the greatest inequities in the world today. More than a million people – the vast majority in the poorest countries of the world – are being killed each year, often because unsuitable vehicles are being driven on unsuitable roads by poorly trained drivers. These are the forgotten victims of road crashes.

Max Mosley, President of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile, London, United Kingdom, 11 February 2003

As part of its preparations for World Health Day 2004, WHO created an Advisory Committee of representatives from more than 20 of the world's leading road safety organizations. They include senior officials from government health and transport departments, nongovernmental



organizations, academic institutes, foundations and the private sector.

The Advisory Committee gathered in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 2003 to share information about plans to celebrate World Health Day 2004 and define potential areas of synergy. The meeting was also an opportunity to set the agenda for collaboration after World

Health Day 2004 on promoting and facilitating policies and programmes addressing: occupant restraints; helmets; speed reduction; alcohol consumption; vehicle design; road safety standards; and the enhancement of emergency response systems.

# Advocacy materials for World Health Day 2004



The 2004 version of the annual World Health Day kit – a package of advocacy materials – was finalized in late 2003 and distributed to groups around the world. The kit included a brochure on road traffic injuries and their prevention, a toolkit for organizers, posters and stickers. One of the stickers was made from reflective material, and was designed for use on bicycles and school bags to increase the visibility of cyclists and pedestrians. These advocacy materials were available to everyone for ordering through the World Health Day 2004 web site. The materials provided the basic content for the development of World Health Day 2004 advocacy materials produced by other groups in a host of languages.

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This is the first gathering of many of the most influential players in the road safety field, from ministries of health and transport, victim associations, foundations and the automobile industry. Combining such diverse expertise in road safety and taking action will help to reverse the unnecessary death toll on the world's roads.

Jong-wook Lee, WHO, Director-General, Geneva, Switzerland, 24 September 2004



Initially launched in late 2003, the World Health Day 2004 web site contained a calendar of World Health Day 2004 events by country, a useful resource for those planning national and local activities who wished to collaborate with others in their vicinity. More than 200 events were listed. The web site also included an audiovisual gallery containing statements of support from various international and national leaders, including the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan; the WHO Director-General, Jong-wook Lee; the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi; the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair; the President of the United States, George W. Bush; the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Janez Drnovšek; the President of Ethiopia, Girma Wolde Giorgis; the President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao; the Head



of State of the Republic of Benin, His Excellency General Mathieu Kerekou; the Head of State of the Kingdom of Nepal, His Majesty Gyanendra

Bir Bikram Shah Dev; and the Prime Minister of Thailand, Thaksin Shinawatra. These video clips were featured and broadcast throughout the world on World Health Day 2004, and used to support national and local events.

On World Health Day 2004, the web site became an invaluable tool for making available the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* and its related summary and fact sheets. On that day the web site received more than 250 000 visits from all corners of the world; for the first time, a WHO web site other than the communicable disease surveillance web site was the most visited on a single day. In the four weeks following the global World Health Day 2004 event, more than 1 million visits were registered.

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I am pleased to say that we are making good progress, but we must not become complacent. Still too many people are killed or injured on our roads every day. We are working hard, however, to improve further, from making safer vehicles and roads in Europe to improving children's road safety knowledge... Road traffic injuries hit the most deprived communities the hardest. In the UK, the poorest children are five times more likely to die on our roads than the better off. And this picture is replicated around the globe.

Tony Blair, Prime Minister, United Kingdom, Message to World Health Day 2004

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Road safety is a significant worldwide health issue. I encourage every nation to do its part to promote safety through public education, advances in road and vehicle engineering and enforcement of transport laws. Today the death toll from traffic injuries is highest in developing countries and it continues to grow as nations become more prosperous and motorized... We must help them have access to the best safety measures available.

George W. Bush, President, United States, Message to World Health Day 2004



# WORLD HEALTH DAY 2004

## *The global World Health Day 2004 event*



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The global World Health Day 2004 event was co-hosted by the Government of France and WHO on 7 April 2004 in Paris, France and was chaired by President Jacques Chirac and the WHO Director-General, Jong-wook Lee. Participants who gathered from across the globe to attend this ceremony to officially launch World Health Day 2004 and the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* included senior officials from govern-

ment, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. The event provided a visible platform for the cry “Road safety is no accident”, a stern reminder that road safety will not happen by chance, but rather by the deliberate efforts of all engaged in prevention.

At the heart of the commitment to road safety, there is a fundamental combat for a society that is more humane, one with greater solidarity and respect for others. We share the highway. Road safety is something we provide for each other.

Jacques Chirac, President of France, Paris, France, 7 April 2004

On this World Health Day, I call particularly upon the public health community to increase its contribution. By strengthening emergency services for victims, improving data collection, contributing to policies, developing prevention activities or simply ringing the alarm bell – as we are doing today – we can all make significant contributions.

Jong-wook Lee, WHO Director-General, Paris, France, 7 April 2004

United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, provided a statement by video, pledging his support to World Health Day 2004. He called on countries to take heed of the growing toll of road traffic collisions and to strengthen preventive action. A high-level session featured moving statements and personal testimonies from: Jacques Chirac; Jong-wook Lee; Ari Vatanen, Member of the European Parliament, Finland; and Genevieve Jurgensen, Founder of *La Ligue Contre la Violence Routière*, France.

The comments of the eminent personalities laid the ground for two dynamic panel discussions, the first on “*International cooperation regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the World report on road traffic injury prevention*” and the second on “*Successes and promising initiatives*”. Participants included Ministers of Health or their representatives from the Czech Republic, France, Ghana, and



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Nicaragua; Ministers of Transport or their representatives from France, Oman, Sweden, and the United States; and senior officials from the Association for Safe International Road Travel, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Pakistan Medical Research Council, Renault, the World Bank and WHO. In sum, the global World Health Day 2004 event was a coup for a public health issue too long dormant on the global political agenda and – in some settings – on the public health agenda too.

## *World Health Day 2004 events hosted by WHO headquarters*

Road traffic injuries are a leading cause of death and injury for the global workforce. Like many employers across the world, WHO is deeply concerned about the safety of its staff on the roads, and welcomed World Health Day 2004 as an opportunity to promote road safety among staff members. As part of the celebrations at WHO headquarters in Geneva,



Switzerland, the high-level session of the global World Health Day 2004 event was transmitted live from Paris, France. In addition testimonies were shared by two victims of road traffic crashes, who are now confined to wheelchairs. With the support of many WHO departments, including the Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention and the Health and Medical Services, interactive activities were hosted including eye sight

testing, first aid demonstrations, a crash-test simulator and a quiz on road signs and signals. A radar speed gun temporarily installed in the vicinity of WHO advised motorists of their speed approaching the building.

# World Health Day 2004 events hosted by WHO Regional Offices

WHO regional offices played a key role in the organization and support of regional and national World Health Day 2004 events. Important regional events took place in Copenhagen, Denmark; Cairo, Egypt; New Delhi, India; Nairobi, Kenya; Muscat City, Oman; Manila, the Philippines; and Washington, DC, United States. The events comprised a range of activities, including launches of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, new road safety legislation and advocacy campaigns. Regional reports, fact sheets, and other advocacy material were released during ceremonies led by WHO's regional directors. At points poignant and sombre, at others festive and celebratory, these high-profile events – through a mix of official proclamation and heart-rending testimony – drew the world's attention to the serious health and development problem posed by road traffic injuries.

- ▶ The **WHO Regional Office for Africa** hosted a regional World Health Day 2004 event in Nairobi, Kenya, during which the WHO Regional Director for Africa and senior government officials from Kenya and other African countries officially launched the *World report on road*

*traffic injury prevention*. Under the banner “Road safety is your responsibility”, this multisectoral event involved representation from the sectors of health, transport, public works, housing, tourism and law enforcement. In addition to a host of ministries, participants included representatives from the African Medical Research Foundation, the Automobile Association of Kenya, the Kenya Red Cross, the National Hospital Insurance Fund and the University of Nai-

robi. Testimonies from victims of road traffic collisions now permanently disabled served as a sad reminder of what happens when safety on the roads is disregarded.



© WHO Kenya, 2004

I urge all nations to implement the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* as a guide to promoting road safety in their countries. With this tool in hand, I look forward to working with my colleagues in health, transport, education and other sectors to more fully address this major public health problem.

Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya,  
Preface to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

In the past, people in public health considered road safety the domain of transportation and law enforcement. Yet the health sector has a comparative advantage in road traffic injury epidemiology, monitoring and evaluating interventions, advocacy, and provision of post-crash care. If African countries must develop, road safety is not an option – it is a necessity. Road safety requires tremendous effort – it will not happen by accident!

Ebrahim Malick Samba, then the WHO Regional Director for Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, 7 April 2004

- ▶ The **WHO Regional Office for the Americas** initiated its week-long road safety campaign with a road safety declaration. Signed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the United States Department of Transportation, the World Bank and WHO, the declaration recognizes road traffic injuries as a major public health problem worldwide and requests the collaboration of many sectors of society to respond to that problem. Countries of the Americas were invited to join the signatories in confirming their commitment to prevention.



The highlight of the campaign was the official launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, which took place at the regional headquarters of WHO in Washington, DC. During the launch, Heather Mills-McCartney received the Champion of Health in the Americas award for her support of the “Road safety is no accident” campaign. She featured in public service announcements urging drivers and pedestrians to use care to protect themselves and others. Groups such as the American Automobile Association, the Inter-American Development Bank, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, the Organization of American States, and Safe Kids joined the signatories to launch the report. Other events throughout the week included seminars, marches, and a memorial service for people killed or injured in traffic crashes.

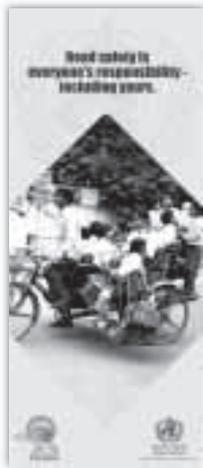
The decision to dedicate the 2004 World Health Day to road safety points to the international community's determination to ensure that modern means of land transportation are increasingly a force for development and the well-being of our peoples.

Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil,  
Preface to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

Death cannot be awaiting us at the turn of every corner. Alcohol, excessive speed, drugs, carelessness, and lack of awareness of the importance of wearing seat-belts and using helmets are also the enemies of road safety. It's not a matter of chance. The majority of these incidents are highly preventable.

Mirta Roses Periago, WHO Regional Director for the Americas,  
Washington, DC, United States, 7 April 2004

- The **WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia** made extensive use of radio to disseminate its World Health Day 2004 messages. Radio talk shows hosted by the WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia were broadcast on national radio stations across the region. The regional office also issued a host of advocacy materials, including special issues of its newsletter *Lifeline*, a special issue of the *Regional Health Forum* on road traffic injury prevention as well as a 2004 calendar with road safety-related images and messages. On the day itself, the regional office hosted a road safety seminar and press conference at its headquarters in New Delhi, India. During the event, the WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia issued his annual World Health Day message, stressing the urgency of preventing road traffic injuries in the region, which currently has some of the highest rates in the world. This was also the occasion for the official launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*.



The problem of road traffic injuries is indeed a highly serious one, but it is also a problem that can be dealt with and prevented through concerted action among all the parties concerned. Through the leadership and strong commitment of the Government, we are confident that we will be successful in our efforts and we hope that others will be as well.

Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand,  
Preface to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

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To deal effectively with injury prevention requires multisectoral partnerships between different government agencies (public health, transport, education, engineering and law enforcement) and civil society. We, therefore, need to constitute an empowered nodal agency with clear authority as well as financial and human resources for road safety to oversee the partnership into action.

Samlee Plianbangchang, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia, New Delhi, India, 7 April 2004

- On World Health Day 2004, the **WHO Regional Office for Europe** launched its report *Preventing road traffic injury: a public health perspective for Europe* (6), a regional companion to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. The reports were presented during World Health Day 2004 events in Belarus, Denmark, France, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, the Russian Federation and Sweden. In the context of these official launches, activities ranged from round table discussions and press conferences to memorial concerts. On the 6 April 2004, the WHO Regional Director for Europe hosted a gathering of European ambassadors based in Copenhagen, Denmark, at which time he highlighted two pillars of new thinking about road safety: to refuse to accept death and severe injuries as consequences of traffic crashes; and to adapt the roads to people's vulnerabilities. Many other activities were hosted across the region by WHO liaison offices, national and local governments, and nongovernmental organizations committed to thwarting the rising epidemic of road traffic injuries.



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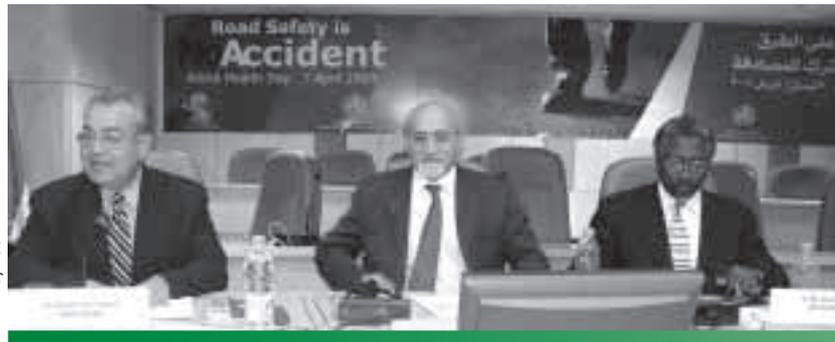
World Health Day will be officially launched in Paris on 7 April 2004. France is honoured. It sees this as recognition of the major efforts made by the French population as a whole, which mobilized to reduce the death and destruction it faces on the roads. These efforts will only achieve results if they are supported by a genuine refusal to accept road accidents fatalistically and a determination to overcome all-to-frequent indifference and resignation.

Jacques Chirac, President of France,  
Preface to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

It is time to stop considering traffic deaths and injuries as an unavoidable consequence of road use: they are preventable... Increasing road traffic safety is everyone's concern. Transport planners, car manufacturers, and health authorities and professionals have an important role to play in protecting the human right to health.

Marc Danzon, WHO Regional Director for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark, 6 April 2004

- With its regional road safety partners, the **WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean** lent its support to the launch of road safety campaigns in Djibouti, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Saudi Arabia. The regional office hosted a



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simultaneous launch of World Health Day 2004 and regional presentations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* in Cairo, Egypt, and Muscat City, Oman, with representation from the highest levels of gov-

ernment. After the official ceremony marking the event in Oman, participants took to the streets for a walkathon to demonstrate their solidarity for renewed efforts in road safety across the region. In Egypt the event was coupled with a one-day workshop on establishing an ongoing partnership for road safety with the media. To support these and other World Health Day 2004 events across the region, the regional office issued road safety fact sheets and a compilation of public service announcements from countries in the region.

The magnitude of the problem encouraged the United Nations General Assembly to adopt a special resolution ... and the World Health Organization to declare the year 2004 as the year of road safety. In taking these two important steps, both organizations started the world battle against trauma caused by road accidents, and we hope that all sectors of our societies will cooperate to achieve this noble humanitarian objective.

Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman,  
Preface to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

World Health Day 2004 is not merely a celebration event but a commitment towards a cause, dedication to an objective and a promise for a better future.

Hussein A. Gezairy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, Cairo, Egypt, 7 April 2004



► The **WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific** worked with WHO country offices in Cambodia, China, Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Viet Nam to plan national World Health Day 2004 events, including announcements of new road safety campaigns encouraging the use of seat-belts and helmets. The regional office issued a message

from the WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific, road safety fact sheets, a web site and a press release. The regional office also supported the translation of World Health Day 2004 materials into local languages.

The Government of Viet Nam will implement more stringent measures to reduce road traffic injuries through health promotion campaigns, consolidation of the injury surveillance system, and mobilization of various sectors at all levels and the whole society. The Government of Viet Nam welcomes the World Health Organization/World Bank *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, and is committed to implementing its recommendations to the fullest extent possible.

Phan Van Khai, Prime Minister of Viet Nam,  
Preface to the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*

In many areas road accidents are the leading killer of young people, with more than 180 000 children under the age of 15 killed in road crashes every year worldwide. The most tragic element of this statistic may remain hidden in the living rooms of victims' families, where a photograph may be all that is visible of a youth whose life was cut short. A typical accident victims is a young man – and, frequently, a breadwinner. Normally only war creates this kind of multiple tragedy of death and disability, emotional pain and economic hardship.

Shigeru Omi, WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific, Manila, Philippines, 7 April 2004

## Other global and regional World Health Day 2004 events

In addition to the events hosted by WHO regional offices, the following activities reflect a sampling of other global and regional World Health Day 2004 events hosted by a range of road safety organizations.

- ▶ **The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control** supported the global World Health Day 2004 event as well as many of the national events hosted across the United States and contributed substantially to the development of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. To support advocacy efforts, the Center developed a World Health Day 2004 information kit, with photos and fact sheets related to road safety, as well as a guide for organizers. As part of its public health grand rounds series, the Center, in collaboration with the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education and the University of North Carolina, hosted a webcast called *On the road again: promoting safe travel and the public's health*, initially broadcast on 26 March 2004. The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control continues to be a key partner to WHO's global road safety efforts.



Many of us in the United States consider having a vehicle essential for a happy and productive life. However, among the prices we as a society pay for the mobility afforded by motor vehicles are 40 000 motor vehicle-related deaths each year and numerous people who are permanently disabled. Motor vehicle-related medical costs exceeded US\$ 21 billion in 2000. World Health Day 2004 focuses on road traffic safety. CDC's theme is "Family road safety: protect the ones you love". We are asking you to use this opportunity to educate, build awareness, and promote lifesaving interventions about road traffic safety.

Sue Binder, then Director, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (United States ), 7 April 2004

- ▶ As a complement to the European Union's *Action Programme on Road Safety*, which aims to reduce the number of road traffic victims by half, the European Union has issued the **European Road Safety Charter**, a mechanism through which road users from across Europe

can sign a declaration of intent as to how they plan in practical terms to contribute to safety on the roads of Europe. The Charter contains a preamble stating the European Union's ambitious safety targets and principles on how these could be achieved, followed by an individual declaration of intent and a commitment made by each signatory. This commitment must be explicit, achievable and able to be monitored, it must contribute directly or indirectly to the common target of halving the number of road deaths, and it must lie within the sphere of responsibility of the signatory and normally last for three years. The Road Safety Charter was signed in Dublin on 6 February 2004. More than thirty organisations were invited to sign the Charter, watched by transport ministers from all the European Union member states.

- From seat-belt advocacy in Costa Rica and carbon sequestration in Mexico to safety assessments of road design in Europe and car crash tests in Australia, the **FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society** manages and supports an international programme of activities promoting road safety, environmental protection and sustainable mobility, as well as funding specialist research on motor sport safety. On World Health Day 2004, a number of Foundation member organizations held national campaigns to promote road safety. For instance, the Automobile Club of Italy organized a campaign entitled "April 7th – Let's give it a try: no casualties on the road". The Club produced a film charting the progress of the campaign from its inception to its conclusion. The result was a third less fatalities on 7 April 2004 than any other day. To support such initiatives, the Foundation offers a seat-belt campaign toolkit which includes a manual providing advice on enforcement, awareness raising and legislating for seat-belt use intended primarily for countries with low seat-belt compliance. The toolkit includes campaign materials in several languages. The Foundation also issued a road safety advocacy film entitled *Global road safety: a shared responsibility* which highlights the extent of the road safety crisis facing the world, and in particular the developing world. In addition to lending support to national events, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society is a key contributor to WHO's efforts to prevent road traffic injuries through support to the 5-year WHO strategy for road traffic injury prevention.
- On 25 April 2004, **Globetrucker**, a Swiss-based nongovernmental organization, joined the International Road Transport Union for a press conference in Yokohama, Japan. The press conference high-

lighted the two-month journey of the Globetrucker truck, an 18.75 metre truck which travels to remote areas across the world to provide educational materials and toys to schoolchildren. To mark World Health Day 2004, the Globetrucker truck journeyed from Geneva, Switzerland, through the Russian Federation and Mongolia en route to Japan. Along the way, the impassioned drivers of the truck gave road safety presentations to schoolchildren and representatives of local media. The group joined the International Road Transport Union in Japan as part of the 29th International Road Transport Union World Congress on the theme *Transport and technology of tomorrow*.

- **The Global Road Safety Partnership** engages business, civil society and governments dedicated to the sustainable reduction of road crashes in developing and transition countries. Initiated by the World Bank in 1999, the Partnership Secretariat is hosted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva, Switzerland. By creating and strengthening links between partners, the Global Road Safety Partnership aims to increase awareness of road safety as an issue affecting all parts of society and to generate common ownership of interventions. On World Health Day 2004, the Partnership and its collaborators hosted events in Brazil, Costa Rica, Ghana, Hungary, India, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Thailand and Viet Nam.
- **The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** called on communities around the world to take action to improve road safety. On World Health Day 2004, the European Red Cross issued the *Good practice guide on road safety and first aid education for children*. The guide, which was launched during an event organized by the German Red Cross in Berlin, Germany, was the outcome of a year-long road safety campaign entitled “You’ve only got one life... So take care!”. Translated into 13 languages, the guide presents 36 proven practices for improving road safety for children, and contains learning activities for children travelling to and from school. This initiative is part of an ongoing road safety campaign organized by 26 European National Red Cross Societies, supported by the European Commission and sponsored by Toyota.

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The *Good Practice Guide* is a strong contribution to the worldwide effort being led by the World Health Organisation on this Day. It is, after all, about the most important reality facing the road traffic crisis we are addressing today. It is about mobilizing the support of children for what we want. It is about reaching their parents and all adult drivers with the absolute imperative of the need for safety on the roads if the children themselves are to have productive lives in happy communities.

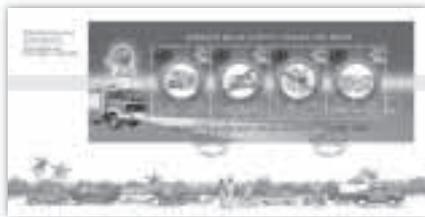
Christopher Lamb, Special Adviser on International Relations,  
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Berlin, Germany, 7 April 2004

- Through its Commission for Mobility, Transport, Road Safety and Public Policy, the **International Motorcycling Federation** hosted an International Public Policy Conference in Prague, Czech Republic, on 16-18 April 2004. The conference gathered together representatives from European and American riders' groups, safety organizations and the motorcycling industry. It was the fourth in a series of conferences bringing together the leadership of the international motorcycling community. In April 2004, the conference discussed the views of riders' groups on the work done by the industry to enhance road safety, and the strategies put in place by government to improve safety and reduce road fatalities. The Federation has built a worldwide network of rider trainers under the Experienced Rider Training Symposium, the goal of which is to exchange knowledge and best practice in the field of advanced rider training.
- The **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** is a leading global advocate for the protection of children. As significant progress has been made in recent decades in reducing child mortality and morbidity from disease, UNICEF is now beginning to focus on other important causes of death and disability among children. On 14 April 2004 senior officials from UNICEF participated in the United Nations General Assembly discussion on road safety, and during the year staff participated in regional injury prevention conferences in Bangladesh and Thailand. At country level UNICEF-supported studies on the causes of mortality and morbidity among children in Bangladesh, China, Thailand and Viet Nam have demonstrated that road traffic injuries are a leading cause of death and disability for children, even those under five years of age. In the years ahead UNICEF will be a key partner to WHO in implementing the UNICEF/WHO child injury prevention strategy currently under development.



➤ The week of 5-11 April 2004 was designated the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe’s Fourth Road Safety Week**. Throughout the week, Member States organized road safety campaigns under the theme “Respect is safety”. The aim was to discourage aggressive driving behaviour linked to time pressures, the consumption of alcohol and drugs, and the poor attitudes of road users. Such behaviour may involve speeding, making unsafe lane changes, and ignoring traffic signs and signals, all of which can result in road crashes. As part of the Fourth Road Safety Week, the Commission hosted a seminar at its offices in Geneva,

Switzerland, to examine the causes of aggressiveness on the road, its consequences, and the means of preventing it. To support the activities of its Member States, the Commission issued a set of guiding principles for road safety campaigns. The next Road Safety Week hosted by the Commission will be held globally in 2007, and will focus particularly on the road safety needs of children, young road users and novice drivers.



➤ The **United Nations Postal Administration** issued a set of commemorative postage stamps on road safety to mark World Health Day 2004. The set of six stamps, the first to be prepared by the Administration to mark a World Health



Day since 1974, were available at United Nations offices in Geneva, New York and Vienna. The stamps, designed by French artist Michel Granger, show images suggesting some key risk and protective factors, such



as speed, alcohol and seat-belts, as well as others drawing attention to pedestrians, traffic signs and courtesy on the road. The governments of Bangladesh, France, Italy, Kiri-



bati and South Africa also issued national postage stamps on the theme of road safety on World Health Day 2004. Postage stamps are an effective way of creating discussion and debate around particular issues, and lend visual support to advocacy activities.

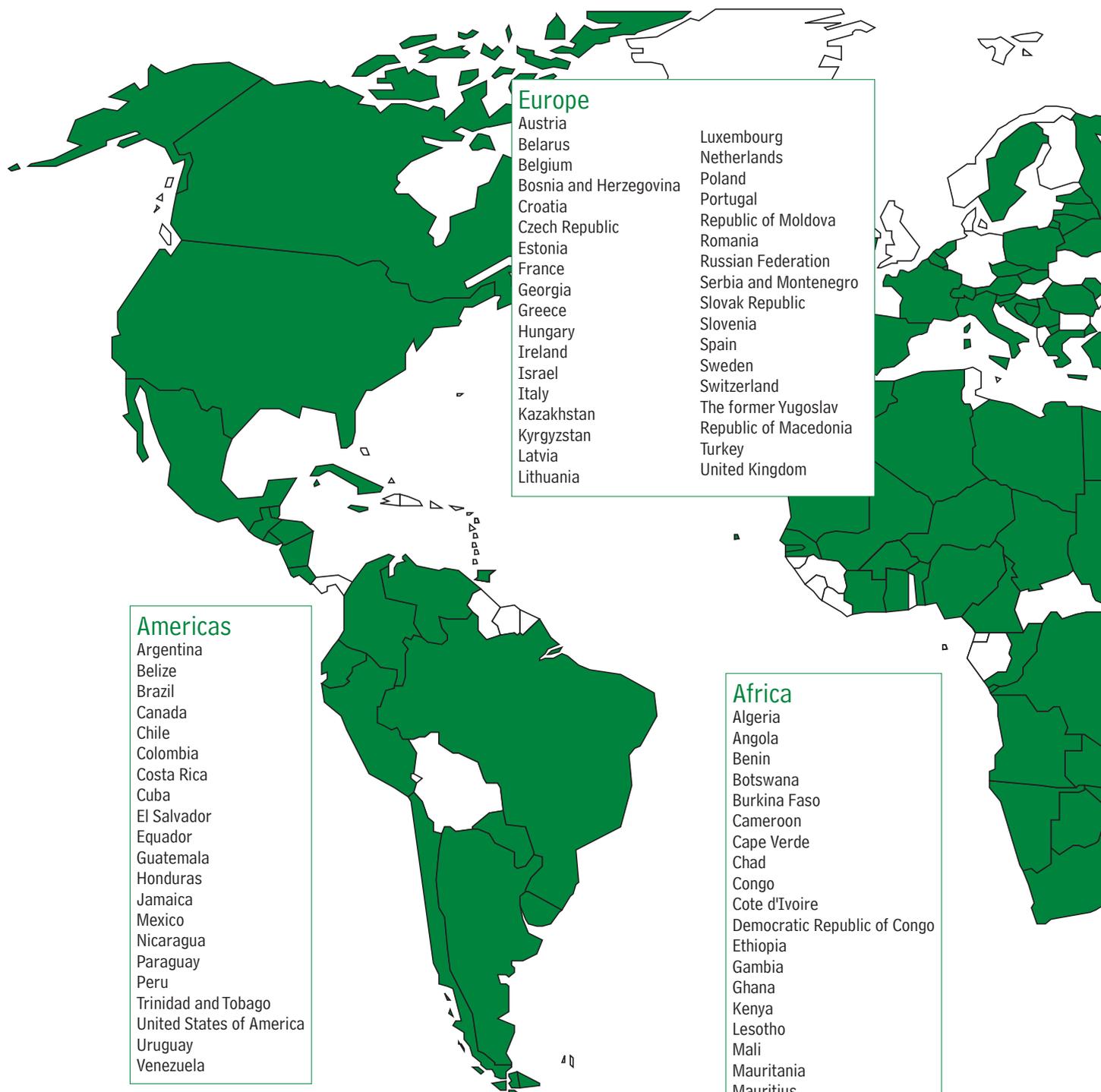
- › The **World Bank** is a key partner to WHO's global road safety efforts, most visibly as coproducer of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. Representatives of the World Bank joined participants in the global launch of the report and World Health Day 2004 in Paris, France, where the World Bank's Director of the Transport and Urban Department participated in the panel discussion on "*Successes and promising initiatives*". Following World Health Day 2004, the World Bank released a special issue of its Transport Notes on *Implementing the recommendations of the World report on road traffic injury prevention*.

## *National and local World Health Day 2004 events*

In addition to the global and regional events described above, groups around the world organized more than 500 national and local events to mark World Health Day 2004. While these events came in a variety of shapes and sizes, the primary objective for most was to raise awareness about road traffic injuries, the numbers of people they affect, their consequences and costs to society, as well as ways to prevent them. The map shows places where World Health Day 2004 was officially celebrated. Descriptions are given below of events in a few selected countries, based primarily on reports from the organizers themselves or WHO's regional and country offices. Unfortunately, it is not possible to describe all of the many national and local events which took place. However, descriptions of others not listed below are available on the World Health Day 2004 web site ([www.who.int/world-health-day/2004/en](http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2004/en)).

- › **Algeria** celebrated World Health Day 2004 by launching a widespread media campaign promoting road safety. The campaign, organized by a national committee chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Health, included road safety courses in schools and universities, and road safety plays and other animations in rural areas of the country. Participation in the launch included senior officials from the health, transport, education, law enforcement, defence, youth and sports, and communication sectors. Representatives of nongovernmental organizations and the private sector were also supportive of campaign activities. The aim of the campaign was to sensitize the Algerian public to the tremendous loss they suffer from road traffic injuries and to spread the word about measures that can be taken to prevent these injuries.

# NATIONAL AND LOCAL WORLD



# HEALTH DAY 2004 EVENTS



- ▶ The Ministry of Health in **Angola**, in close collaboration with the ministries of education, home affairs, transport, and social communication, and the WHO Country Office, organized a road safety week in early April 2004, the purpose of which was: to contribute to national debate and discussion on road safety; to raise the profile of road safety on the public health agenda; and to widely share messages about prevention with the public. The road safety week was launched in Prenda Hospital in Luanda, Angola, where Ministry of Health officials note that an average of 50% of hospital beds are occupied by road crash victims. During the launch, the Minister of Health unveiled a photo exhibition of images related to road traffic in Angola. Radio and television played an important role in facilitating involvement of the public in World Health Day 2004, with the national radio broadcasting live the key ceremony in Luanda and national television dedicating its main talk show to road safety issues.
- ▶ In **Bangladesh**, World Health Day 2004 activities commenced with a children's painting and essay competition on 3 April 2004. More than 500 children, including some children with disabilities, took part in these activities hosted at the Shishu Academy in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Then for several days, the Ministry of Mass Communication showed road safety films at key public locations across the city. A press briefing was held on 6 April 2004, involving among others the Minister of Communication, the Minister of Health and Family Welfare, and the WHO Representative. To officially mark World Health Day 2004, roads were decorated with banners and posters carrying road safety messages. Hundreds of Bangladeshi walked these roads to demonstrate their support of road safety and the rally ended with a statement from the President of Bangladesh, Iajuddin Ahmed. The country's postal authorities also issued a commemorative stamp.
- ▶ In **Benin**, official World Health Day 2004 celebrations were held in Bohicon, a crossroads between the north and the south of the country. Local government officials and health workers have frequently expressed concern about the high rate of road traffic injuries at this crossroads. The celebrations began with a procession of local taxi drivers and inter-city transporters demonstrating against drink-driving under the slogan "Drink or drive. One must choose". The event was then formally opened by the Minister of Public Health, the WHO

Representative, and the Mayor of Bohicon. Speakers highlighted the enormous social and economic costs of road traffic injuries, while calling upon the Government to initiate measures related to drink-driving, speed, vehicle inspections, and the wearing of helmets and seat-belts. A call was made to road users to protect themselves, respect each other and obey the codes of the road.

- Following behind trucks carrying vehicles overturned in crashes, marchers from the four corners of Gaborone, **Botswana**, converged on the national stadium for the ceremony officially launching World Health Day 2004. The ceremony was presided over by senior representatives of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Works and Transport, as well as the WHO Country Office. The event featured poems, music and speeches on the theme of road safety. The Deputy Mayor of Gaborone described the objectives as: raising awareness about the health, social and economic costs of road traffic injuries; highlighting the vulnerabilities of particular groups of road users; and issuing a call for action to increase efforts. Regarding the latter, health professionals, planning authorities, educators, car manufacturers and the media were identified as having key roles to play. Drivers were asked to do their part by complying with road safety regulations.

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Road traffic deaths and injuries are the second most important national health concern, following HIV/AIDS.

*Lesego Motsumi, Minister of Health of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana, 6 April 2004*

- From schoolchildren to representatives of the Office of President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva, Brazilians walked for road safety on World Health Day 2004. The Minister of Health, the Minister of Cities, the Director of DENATRAN (the National Traffic Department), and the WHO Country Representative joined hundreds of others on a symbolic walk across Brasilia, **Brazil** to draw attention to road safety and to provide information about measures to prevent road traffic injuries. As part of an ongoing road safety campaign, the nongovernmental organization Safe Kids Brazil held theatre performances and art exhibitions in public parks for schoolchildren in Curitiba, Recife and São Paulo. The aim was to educate children about road safety in the hope of reducing the alarming number of fatal road traffic injuries of children on Brazil's roads each year. The Office of

President da Silva has conveyed its commitment to WHO to make Brazil an exemplary country with regard to road safety.

© WHO Brazil, 2004



- ▶ In honour of World Health Day 2004, groups across **Cameroon** collaborated on a National Road Safety Week held from 5 to 9 April 2004. These groups included: government ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Transport; nongovernmental organizations, including the Cameroonian Red Cross, the Organization for Road Safety, Industry and the Environment, the Road Assistance Programme and SECURROUTE; and insurance and other private sector companies. Events hosted in the cities of Douala, Edéa and Yaoundé included a public debate, a football match, a gala concert, a press conference and training classes for bus drivers, private driving instructors and transporters. Organizers attribute the enormous success of the national road safety week to the engagement of the public and private media as a means of drawing the attention of the public to key road safety messages.
- ▶ Nongovernmental organizations joined in World Health Day 2004 festivities in **Canada** by hosting a variety of campaigns. The Think First Foundation launched the “Give a kid a helmet” campaign, distributing more than 7000 helmets to Canadian children to ensure

they are properly kitted out with protective headgear. Groups such as the Canadian Royal Mounted Police, Safer City and Safety Bear supported the “Way to go!” school programme in several communities, during which elementary school students walked to school with parents and caregivers while practising road safety skills. The annual “Arrive alive drive sober” campaign was in full swing in Ontario. To support such grassroots initiatives, Health Canada and Transport Canada issued a fact sheet entitled *Road safety in Canada: an overview*, presenting information about the deaths and injuries caused by road traffic collisions in Canada. These activities lent credence to the motion tabled by the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Minister of Transport calling for intersectoral collaboration to prevent road traffic injuries.

► In an operation launching World Health Day 2004 in **Colombia** and highlighting the particular problem of drink-driving across the country, the Secretary of Transport and staff from the *Instituto de Investigación y Desarrollo en Prevención de Violencia y Promoción de la Convivencia Social* (CISALVA), the Institute of Legal Medicine, and the Road Safety Fund coordinated random alcohol-testing of drivers in Cali, Colombia. The testing was conducted in the early hours of 3 April 2004, a weekend morning when drink-driving proved to be a significant threat to safety on the roads. On 7 April 2004, the above-mentioned partners and others gathered for the inauguration of a mobile safety park. A van traveled around the country sharing road safety messages and materials with students, in order to educate them about safe behaviour on the roads. On 7 April 2004 a special mass, plays and other animations took place at points across the city known to be dangerous for drivers and pedestrians. These activities complemented several major media campaigns ongoing in the country.

► World Health Day 2004 was colourfully celebrated in **Ethiopia** following observance of Traffic Education Week. The week itself began with a parade of students, health workers and traffic police through

the streets of Addis Ababa, and consisted of sharing information with students and the public on the merits of specific prevention measures, including seat-belts and helmets. These groups joined individuals from the highest levels of government and industry for a half-day conference on World Health Day 2004, during which the President of Ethiopia,



© WHO Ethiopia, 2004

Girma Wolde Giorgis, called upon them to work in unison to reverse the dangerous trend of road traffic deaths and disabilities in the country. Following the conference, a photo exhibit was inaugurated by the Minister of Health. The exhibit, which was open to the public, graphically depicted the human, social and economic consequences of road traffic crashes on the people of Ethiopia.

- With support from the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and the Global Road Safety Partnership, **Hungary** launched a national seat-belt campaign on 8 April 2004 in Budapest. The campaign to increase seat-belt use took place in the context of a 15% increase in road fatalities in Hungary in 2003 over the previous year. Public service announcements and posters on roadside hoardings



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were used to promote the five-month campaign. A toolkit, offered to participating groups by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, provides advice to governments and road safety campaigners on legislating, raising awareness and enforcing laws on seat-belt use. The toolkit is intended primarily for countries with low seat-belt compliance.

- More than 30 World Health Day 2004 events were officially registered with WHO by groups hosting activities across **India**, ranging from seminars to street plays and from poster competitions to road safety quizzes. Private sector groups across the country provided funding for the production of related advocacy materials in many Indian languages. The Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIPP) of the Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi organized a workshop at which researchers and decisions-makers from all stakeholder organizations in the transportation field met to discuss future policy directions for road safety in India. The group adopted a declaration on road safety in India entitled *The Road Ahead*, calling for the government to create a national lead agency for road safety, establish interdisciplinary research centres and implement proven safety measures, including interventions which focus on the most vulnerable road users. In Bangalore, Friends for Life and Bangalore Toastmasters presented a joint programme on road safety awareness entitled “Safe



© G. Gururaj, 2004

Speak”, including interventions which focus on the most vulnerable road users. In Bangalore, Friends for Life and Bangalore Toastmasters presented a joint programme on road safety awareness entitled “Safe

speak”. Participants at the seminar included victims of road traffic crashes, academics and road safety specialists.

- The **Italian** Automobile Club played a key role in organizing World Health Day 2004 events in the country. With the support of some of its million or more members, the Club organized a host of road safety events, including: distribution of campaign T-shirts, posters and pins; special prayers in churches; dedicated football matches; and extensive media coverage of these events. On 7 April 2004, a short road safety film developed by the Club was shown in cinemas across the country. In Turin the Provincial Council paid tribute to the city’s 250 road traffic victims of 2003 by planting a flower for each victim. Two hundred volunteers disseminated messages among young people on the dangers of alcohol and drug-impaired driving. Outside 35 public venues, the volunteers offered personalized alcohol tests.
- On 6 April 2004 as a prelude to the regional launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, **Kenyan** nongovernmental organizations including the Association for Safe International Road



© WHO Kenya, 2004

Travel and St John’s Ambulance hosted an educational family event in Nairobi Children’s Traffic Park. The programme, which featured popular entertainers, road safety plays, and first aid demonstrations for treatment of injured persons at crash sites, was specifically targeted towards children and the safe use of roads by children. The WHO Regional Director for

Africa and the WHO representative who took part in these activities ended the day with a visit to the National Spinal Injury Hospital, where 75% of the patients have been injured as a result of a road crash.

- The Youth Association for Social Awareness organized and facilitated many World Health Day 2004 events in **Lebanon**. On 26 March 2004, the Association and the Scientific Research Foundation hosted the Lebanese Road Safety Convention, which drew representatives of the public and private sectors from Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. To mark the event the Association issued a booklet entitled *Ten years in traffic crash prevention*, a review of the road safety



work undertaken by the Association during the past decade. On 7 April 2004, the Youth Association for Social Awareness organized a panel discussion and press conference at the United Nations Information Center, with key road safety experts. The Association also collaborated with students of the Lebanese

American University in Beirut who organized a road safety walk around the campus. To honor students and others killed in road crashes in recent years, students released balloons with messages to them into the sky. These advocacy events were followed by a parliamentary debate on road safety on 8 April 2004.

- Since a key mode of transport for residents of the **Maldives** is sea transport, World Health Day 2004 hosts expanded the road safety theme to include maritime safety. Celebrations were launched on 7 April 2004 with a major media campaign, involving television, radio and the print media. The President of the Maldives, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, contributed to a special newspaper supplement in which he urged the public to heed road and maritime safety regulations. He noted that special caution was needed to prevent injuries to drivers and passengers of motorized two-wheelers. The Voice of Maldives and Television Maldives devoted significant programming to World Health Day 2004, and the latter hosted a panel discussion on road and maritime safety, which involved representatives of the Ministry of Defence and National Security, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. On 9 April 2004, a special children's evening was held in Alimas Carnival. The event was open to the public and featured puppet shows, a snakes and ladders game and first aid demonstrations. In addition a number of activities organized by local health care facilities were hosted in the atolls.
- In **Mexico**, a national road safety campaign was launched by the National Centre for the Prevention of Accidents with the aim of inculcating a safety culture across Mexican society. On World Health Day 2004, the Centre collaborated with the National Academy of Medicine to host a conference on preventing road traffic injuries, to draw the attention of academic leaders to the issue and the need for appropriate trauma care services for victims. The Mexican President, Vicente Fox Quezada, and the Minister of Health were the keynote speakers at the opening ceremony. Following the conference, a committee was created to establish a specific trauma care programme. As part of the national campaign, the Ministry of Health and the

Ministry of Education included information related to road traffic safety in 24 million text books distributed to all preschool and primary-school children. Primary-school students in their last years of school also received first aid training.

- In **Mozambique** a host of organizations prepared events marking World Health Day 2004. Among others these included the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport, the National Institute for Road Traffic, the Maputo City Council and WHO. The celebrations were held during the week of 5 to 12 April



2004, and included a national public education campaign, a march through Maputo, a roundtable discussion and extensive media coverage of related events. As part of the latter, senior officials from government partici-

parted in national radio and television programmes on road safety. With support from British Petroleum, partners issued a brochure for schoolchildren entitled *My road to school: prevention and road safety*. The brochure will become part of the curriculum for the primary school. Additionally, 3M and NORCO Mozambique provided financial assistance for the purchase and placement of new road signs and signals at busy squares in Maputo.

On 7 April 2004, when the world was celebrating World Health Day 2004 with the theme of road safety, Maputo Central Hospital attended 22 traffic injury patients, which accounts for 70% of trauma visits on that day. This is too much. We are spending a lot of resources to care for people who are victims of traffic accidents.

*Francisco Songane, Minister of Health of Mozambique, Maputo, Mozambique, 10 April 2004*

- A variety of World Health Day 2004 events were hosted across **Pakistan**. On 6 April 2004 in Lahore, the United Nations community held a panel discussion on road safety, with the participation of practitioners from the health and transport sectors, youth group members, driving school instructors, lawyers and journalists. Measures called for included further research and data collection on the causes of road traffic injuries, a ban on the use of cellular phones while driving, and incorporation of road safety into school curricula. Speaking on that occasion, a representative of the nongovernmental

organization Milestone, who is confined to a wheelchair following a road crash, moved the audience by describing the challenges he faces in his daily life. Many other such events took place, hosted by local governments and groups such as the Fatima Jinnah Dental College, the Citizens' Police Liaison Committee and King Edwards Medical College. In Karachi, the 13th International Children's Health Conference adopted the World Health Day 2004 theme. With the support of the Hamdard Foundation Pakistan, children from across Pakistan and neighbouring countries were able to attend and actively participate.

When I try to point out those responsible for road accidents, I am afraid I can't spare any person of our society. A to Z shares this guilt, but governments and administrative bodies must take the lion's share of the blame, because the higher the authority, the greater the responsibility.

Bela Nisar, Student, Quetta Government Girls' High School, Karachi, Pakistan, 7 April 2004



- The WHO Liaison Office in **Poland** supported World Health Day 2004 activities across the country by facilitating events and translating related materials into Polish. With support from the Global Road Safety Partnership and the United Nations Information Centre, the World Health Day 2004 brochure on road traffic injuries and their prevention was translated and distributed to health centres across Poland, and was included as an insert in the popular daily newspaper *Rzeczpospolita*. In Warsaw, the Mayor hosted the World Health Day 2004 event in Zamkowy Square, where participants could view emergency rescue services, a modern system of police monitoring, and a film on the results of aggression on the roads. An old tram moved through the city dispensing road safety information. In schools and communities across the country, similar events were hosted by the Polish Red Cross, local government, the health services, the fire brigade and the police. More than 50 courses of first aid training were given around the country, some to employees of private companies.
- Organizers of the World Health Day 2004 "Cross the walk safely with mom's hand" and "Safety walk to school day" campaigns in the **Republic of Korea** took a two-pronged approach to these national campaigns to protect children in risky traffic environments. Through the campaigns, the organizers worked with 160 000 first-year elementary-school students from 500 elementary schools in Seoul and 50 other cities. Children were encouraged to hold hands with their parents on the way to and from school, and to follow road safety rules. Participating children wore yellow caps made of reflective material. The organizers also worked with drivers across the country to draw their attention to the law on school zone safety for children, requiring them to adopt certain driving behaviours in established zones around primary and secondary schools.
- **Rwanda** celebrated World Health Day 2004 with its own National Health Week held from 2 to 6 May 2004 across all 11 provinces of the country. In order to highlight the key road safety messages, collaborators made extensive use of radio and television. The National Health Week was launched with radio addresses by the Minister of Health and the WHO Regional Director for Africa. The launch was followed over the next few days, by a series of radio and television broadcasts. During a high-profile television debate, involving the Minister of Health, the Minister of Infrastructure, the President

of the Association of Public Transporters, and the Police Officer-in-Charge of Traffic and Road Safety, the public was invited to call in with comments and questions. The slogan “Road safety is no accident” could be seen across the nation on billboards, banners, T-shirts, bumper stickers and in the national press.

- ▶ In **Saudi Arabia**, the Minister of Health declared Health Week in early April 2004, to draw the public’s attention to road traffic injuries, their consequences and ways to prevent them. King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre and King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital hosted various road safety activities, including road safety exhibitions and sports competitions. The Saudi Arabian Traffic Department organized a parade, and distributed educational materials prepared for the occasion. The Health Centre Coordinator at Dar Al-Hekma College (a school for girls) took advantage of World Health Day 2004 to give lectures and disseminate information, not only on road safety, but also on safety in general, in particular with lectures on the importance of using helmets. More than 500 students from this school, their families and staff participated in these sessions.
- ▶ In myriad ways, **South Africans** answered the call to mark World Health Day 2004. At least 20 organizations planned and facilitated events across the country, including the Automobile Association of South Africa, the Center for Scientific and Industrial Research Transport Division, Drive Alive, Fleetwatch, the Industry Association for Responsible Alcohol Use, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport, Pick ‘n Pay, the Quadriplegics’ Association, and Soul City. A joint collaboration of Drive Alive, the Witwatersrand Botanical Gardens and the Johannesburg City Parks Department resulted

in inauguration of three remembrance gardens in the greater Johannesburg area to victims of road traffic crashes. As World Health Day 2004 coincided with the start of the Easter holiday, the Automobile Association of South Africa, with support from the Global Road Safety Partnership, set up



© Drive Alive, 2004

special stations along routes to coastal areas, to share road safety messages with travelling holiday-makers. A host of other conferences, training courses and campaigns were held across the country. The national launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* was hosted by the Minister of Health and WHO officials.



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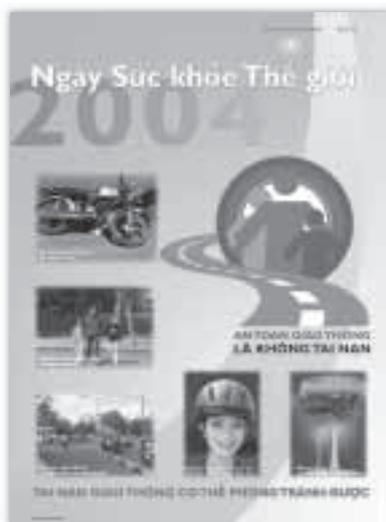
- To mark World Health Day 2004, the Ministry of Health of **Sri Lanka**, through its Department of Noncommunicable Diseases, organized a children's road safety poster competition. Submissions to the contest came from across the country, and included drawings of children in traffic following good road safety behaviour. The prize-winning drawings were selected by a panel of experts and used to develop a 2005 calendar issued by the Ministry. In addition the Ministry and its partners hosted a seminar for the media on road safety, and worked with representatives of the media to issue a full-page supplement on road safety in the national newspapers.



- The Swiss Bureau of Accident Prevention lent its support to Pedestrian Mobility and Touring Club Switzerland to launch the “Yellow zebra campaign” on World Health Day 2004. The goal of the campaign is to reduce the number of injuries occurring each year in **Switzerland** on or near zebra crossings, and its objectives are to make pedestrians and drivers aware of the laws that exist regarding zebra crossings and to improve their behaviour at these locations. Particular emphasis was placed on the safe crossing of children and older people. The joint campaign is the first in Switzerland to bring together advocates for pedestrians and drivers in an equal partnership. In Geneva city center, additional activities were hosted by city health authorities and their partner nongovernmental organizations, including the official signing of the European Road Safety Charter.
- The **Royal Thai Government** launched a year-long road safety campaign on World Health Day 2004. A number of agencies, including the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Transport, were given the task of conducting various activities as part of the “Year of road safety”. These include public awareness campaigns on drink-driving, the strengthening of law enforcement related to the wearing of helmets, and the promotion of more systematic driver licensing systems. The Government launched the campaign with a seminar entitled “*How Thai society can jointly prevent losses due to road traffic accidents*”, which included a live television programme on the topic, public service announcements, and broadcast of the Minister of Health’s annual World Health Day speech. Related to these national efforts, the Global Road Safety Partnership used the occasion of World Health Day 2004 to launch a new project on instructor and driver training in the country.
- More than 80 World Health Day 2004 events were registered across the **United States**. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the WHO Regional Office for the Americas played a facilitating role in many of these. Campaigns under the banners “Click it or ticket”, “You drink. You drive. You lose.”, “Put the brakes on fatalities”, and “Share the road safely” were featured. Related articles appeared in publications as varied as the *American Journal of Public Health*, *Police Chief*

*Magazine* and *USA Today*. Radio broadcasts, moments of silence for victims, and festivals featuring public service announcements all took place. Some specific matters addressed during these events included alcohol and driving, older people and driving, and teenagers and driving, the latter particularly in relation to prom nights at the end of the school year. Groups supporting these events included: the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, the American Association on Aging, the Center to Protect Workers' Rights, and Recording Artists, Actors and Athletes Against Drunk Driving. A coup for organizers was the placement of the global "Road safety is no accident" logo and slogan on a large screen in the heart of Times Square in New York, one of America's iconic locations.

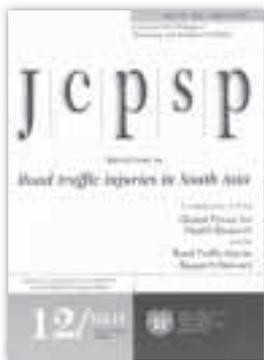
- ▶ **Vanuatu**, a series of islands in the South Pacific, and home to just over 200 000 people, celebrated World Health Day 2004 in many ways. Key activities included an official launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, a poster and essay competition for schoolchildren, purchase of road signs for Port Vila, and a review of the nation's road safety legislation. The Embassy of France, the Ministry of Health, the municipality of Port Vila, the police and the WHO Country Liaison Office lent their support to the organization of these initiatives. Several of the global World Health Day 2004 materials were translated into Bislama.
- ▶ In **Viet Nam**, a wide variety of World Health Day 2004 events took place. There was a high-level ceremony organized by the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Transport and the WHO Country Office, attended by more than



3000 participants. The Deputy Prime Minister of the country was the keynote speaker. A highlight of the event was the helmet fashion show, organized to break the myth that wearing helmets is not fashionable, an explanation that many riders of motorized two-wheelers use to explain their reluctance to wear helmets. In Ha Noi City, more than 1600 helmets were distributed to primary-school children by the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation, with the support of Johnson and Johnson Co., the National Road Safety Committee and TNT.

# Media coverage of World Health Day 2004

Media coverage of World Health Day 2004 was extensive. Some of this success may be attributed to the excellent collaboration with the BBC World Service, which conducted a “season” on road safety, four weeks of intensive radio coverage of road safety-related issues around the world, leading up to and following World Health Day 2004. A companion BBC World Service web site drew further attention to road safety. Dozens of press releases were issued: by WHO headquarters, regional and country offices; by the United Nations; and by a host of other groups celebrating World Health Day 2004 around the world. These sparked more than 550 articles in the world’s leading national newspapers in the English, French and Spanish languages alone. Such newspapers include *Clarín*, *Le Figaro*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Le Monde*, the *New York Times*, the *People’s Daily*, the *Times of India* and the *Washington Post*. Most international television news services, including BBC, CNN, and Sky, carried interviews and feature stories on the day. World Health Day 2004 and the WHO/World Bank *World report on road traffic injury prevention* were among the top three stories in most international and national media. Around 7 April 2004, editorials and articles appeared in the scientific press as well, including the *African Safety Promotion Journal*, the *American Journal of Public Health*, the *British Medical Journal*, *Injury Control and Safety Promotion*, *Injury Prevention*, the *Lancet*, *Transport Reviews*, the *WHO Bulletin* and the *WHO South-East Asian Regional Health Forum*. Magazines, such as the special edition of the *Planète Jeunes* targeting youth in Africa, featured road safety, as did newsletters from a number of organizations including the Global Road Safety Partnership and Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. This successful media coverage of World Health Day 2004 and the launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* has continued in a host of countries, where road safety now seems a permanent fixture in the daily news.

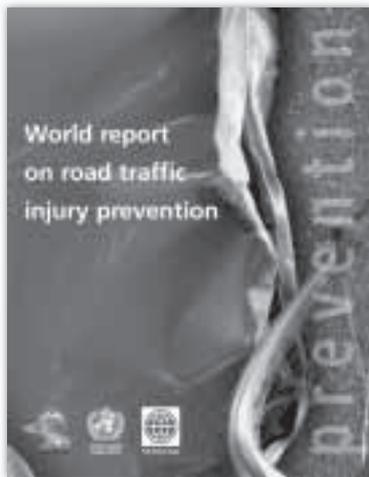




# WORLD REPORT ON ROAD TRAFFIC INJURY PREVENTION

## *Developing and disseminating the World report on road traffic injury prevention*

The *World report on road traffic injury prevention* was developed during a two-year period by WHO and the World Bank with support from more than 100 professionals from the sectors of health, transport, education, engineering and law enforcement. An editorial committee coordinated this process, with input from five technical committees of road safety experts, one technical committee per chapter of the report. An advisory committee provided overall guidance to the development of the report, particularly on sensitive issues. WHO hosted four regional consultations in order to confer with regional road safety experts on chapter outlines, to solicit additional data and information, and to identify ways to collaborate on organizing regional launches of the report.



On World Health Day 2004, the full report was available in English and French, and summaries were available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Russian. Since then the report, or its summary, have been translated into Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese.

Through its standard dissemination channels, WHO has issued more than 12 000 copies of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* in English and French since World Health Day 2004. The report was freely distributed to ministers of health, ministers of transport, staff from WHO regional and country offices, representatives of permanent missions, members of the WHO Executive Board, and officials of

selected nongovernmental organizations and United Nations agencies. In developing countries, the report was also sent to libraries of faculties of medicine and public health, and important health-related institutes. Several major journals, such as the *British Medical Journal* and the *Lancet* and journals specialized in injury prevention also received the report. In the hands of those who are in a position to make a difference, the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* is clearly a valuable guide to researching, preventing and advocating for road traffic injury prevention around the world.

## Regional and country launches of the World report on road traffic injury prevention

Events surrounding regional and national launches of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* have varied greatly. Some launches have been ceremonial, involving officials from the highest levels of government, civil society and the private sector. Others have consisted of in-

depth policy discussions with those most involved in road safety on a day-to-day basis. Whatever their format, it is hoped that the launches will provide a renewed impetus to identifying a way forward for countries in terms of improving their road safety record. On and since World Health Day 2004, regional and national launches of the report are known to have taken place in the follow-

ing countries: Brazil, Cameroon, China, Cote d'Ivoire, Denmark, Djibouti, Egypt, Fiji, Honduras, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Oman, the Philippines, Peru, Puerto Rico, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Uganda, and the United States.

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As new language versions of the report were published, events were hosted to mark the launch of these reports, bringing together many of the key players in road safety. For example on 11 October 2004 in Beijing, China, the Chinese version of the report was launched during an event hosted by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Public Security, the World Bank, and WHO, during which the report was officially handed over to the Chinese authorities. During a meeting following the launch, participants from China and abroad discussed ways for the country to implement the recommendations of the report in the coming years. On 28 February 2005, the Russian version of the report was launched in Moscow, the Russian Federation, where officials from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Transport, formally received the report from World Bank and WHO officials. They were encouraged to see road safety not in isolation, but as part and parcel of a sustainable transport system and the wellbeing of society in general. On 4 March 2005, the launch of the Spanish version of the report took place in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, during a ceremony chaired by the Minister of Health, the Minister of Transportation and Housing, and officials from the Ministry of Security and law enforcement. Issues addressed included a national plan for road safety and improvement of care and services for victims of road traffic injuries. Future launches of the report are being planned in other countries, and it is hoped that these too will provide an opportunity to bring key players together to share ideas and experiences about ways to improve road safety.

## *Other regional and national road safety reports*

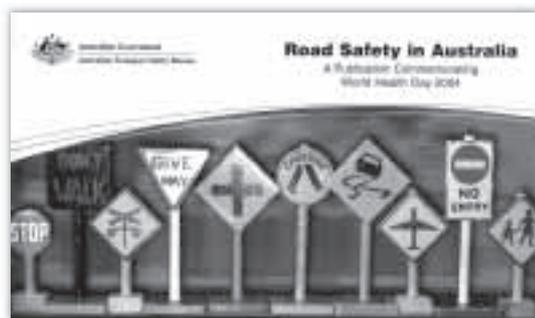
The *World report on road traffic injury prevention* encourages countries and regions to develop and publish their own local reports on road traffic injury prevention to raise awareness and call for action. To date, the following reports have come to our attention.



► *Preventing road traffic injury: a public health perspective for Europe* was launched by the **WHO Regional Office for Europe** on World Health Day 2004. The publication aims to raise awareness among the public and enhance commitment among policy-makers to take immediate action towards preventing road traffic injuries. In the WHO European Region, such injuries kill about 127 000 people and injure about 2.4

million every year. The publication builds on and complements the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, analysing in depth the burden of disease from road traffic injury in the European Region, framing the issue in the context of sustainable mobility, presenting a comprehensive systems approach to road safety based on successful experiences developed by some Member States in the region, and highlighting opportunities for the health sector to play a broader role. The publication calls for a multisectoral and evidence-based approach to preventing road traffic injuries, with public health playing an important role. It emphasizes the importance of strong political commitment at all levels of government and makes recommendations for action. *Preventing road traffic injury: a public health perspective for Europe* is available in English and in Russian, and a summary document is also available in English, Russian and Swedish and may be downloaded in PDF from the WHO European Regional office web site.

- The Australian Transport Safety Bureau produced the document *Road safety in Australia: a publication commemorating World Health Day 2004*. The document, which brings together some of the work of the Bureau and information from other related bodies, addresses such key topics as the fatal five behavioural factors including speed and fatigue; vehicles and vulnerable groups; and risky areas.

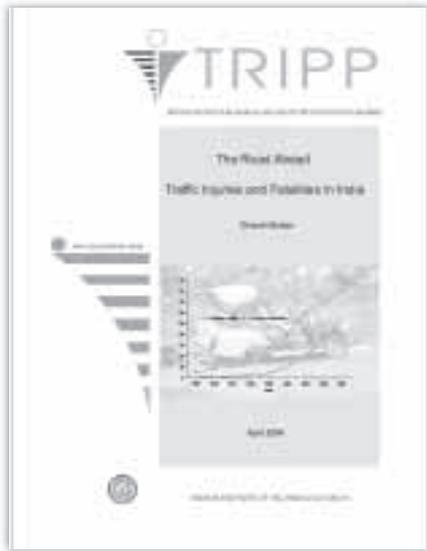


We must work together so that roads and memories cease to be haunted by ever widening circles of red.

Rochelle Sobel, President, Association for Safe International Road Travel,  
Quote in message to *Road safety in Australia: a publication commemorating World Health Day 2004*

Australia's national highway network stretches 18 500 km through mountain ranges, deserts, flood plains and each of our capital cities. In many parts, for long distances, it is a testing highway requiring intense concentration and great care by drivers. Like the motto for World Health Day, this also is a universal message: motorists everywhere must take responsibility for driving safely within their own capabilities and according to the prevailing road conditions.

Ian Campbell, Minister for Local Government, Territories and Roads of Australia, Message to *Road safety in Australia: a publication commemorating World Health Day 2004*



› In April 2004 the **Indian** Institute of Technology in New Delhi issued *The road ahead: traffic injuries and fatalities in India*. This national report presents the numbers, patterns and costs of road traffic injuries in India. It also reviews the international knowledge base and existing interventions, such as legislation and enforcement, education and campaigns, driver licensing and education systems, vehicle safety features, and pre-hospital care. The report examines road safety policies for India and offers short-term and long-term road safety strategies. Short-term strategies underline the importance of the role of education, information and publicity in road safety, and examine specific strategies for intervention.



› Spurred on by World Health Day 2004, the **South African Automobile Society** published a report highlighting the three major risk factors in the country: speeding; drink-driving; and the non-use of seatbelts. The report presents data and case studies on each of the three risk factors and proposes short-term and long-term actions to improve road safety in the country.

› The **United Kingdom's** road safety strategy entitled “*Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone*” guides the nation's efforts in this area through the year 2010 and dictates ambitious targets with regard to reducing road traffic deaths and injuries. To coincide with World Health Day 2004, the Government released a progress review “*Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone: The first three year review*”. According to the report, progress has been very good. In 2002 the overall number of people killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads was 17% lower than the 1994–1998 average. Even better progress is being



made on child casualties. The number of children killed or seriously injured has reduced by 33% compared with the 1994–1998 average. The report notes that there is still a long way to go, and the report identifies a number of new measures or actions in this regard. This report may be downloaded from the UK Department for Transport web site.

The review has highlighted both notable successes and areas in which we could do more. We see both of these as equally providing opportunities to improve further upon the good start that has been made. But we are particularly concerned that the number of fatalities on our roads each year has not continued to fall since 1998. It is understood that this is a problem across Europe. But every life lost is one too many.

David Jamieson, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport;  
Nicol Stephen, Minister for Transport, Scottish Executive;  
Andrew Davies, Minister for Economic Development and Transport, Welsh Assembly Government,  
Foreword to "*Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone: The first three year review*"

## Main messages of the World report on road traffic injury prevention

Launched on 7 April 2004, the WHO/World Bank *World report on road traffic injury prevention* presents a comprehensive overview of what is known about road traffic injuries – whom they affect, the factors that place people at risk of crashes and injuries, and what can be done to prevent injuries. The main messages of this the first report on the topic are:

- Road traffic injuries are a major global public health and development problem, leading to the deaths of some 1.2 million people per year and the injury of as many as 50 million more. They rank as the 11th leading cause of death and account for 2.1% of all deaths globally.
- Road traffic injuries disproportionately affect people from low-income and middle-income countries, especially young males and other vulnerable groups of road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and passengers of public transport. Around 90% of road traffic fatalities occur in low-income and middle-income countries.
- Without appropriate action, the problem will only worsen. In fact, road traffic injuries are predicted to become the third largest contributor to the global burden of disease by 2020.

- The costs of road traffic injuries are enormous. It is estimated that in low-income and middle-income countries road traffic injuries cost US\$ 65 billion per year, which exceeds the total amount received by these countries in development assistance.
- Road traffic injuries can be prevented, and their consequences can be alleviated. Many countries have achieved sharp reductions in the number of crashes and injuries by: creating and enforcing laws governing speed limits, alcohol impairment, and the use of seat-belts, child restraints and crash helmets; making vehicles more protective for occupants, pedestrians and cyclists; and formulating and implementing transport and land-use policies that encourage safety.
- The health sector has a key role to play among other sectors in promoting and facilitating road safety. In particular, its role should include: collecting data in order to demonstrate the health, social and economic impact of road traffic injuries; monitoring and evaluating road safety interventions; ensuring appropriate care and rehabilitation for all injured people; and promoting a multisectoral approach to road traffic injury prevention.
- Road safety should be addressed using a systems approach. Improving road safety requires an understanding of the traffic system as a whole, an understanding of the interaction between its elements – vehicles, roads, road-users, and of physical, social and economic environments – and an ability to identify potential interventions.
- Road safety is a collective responsibility; partnerships bridging many sectors of society can promote and facilitate efforts to prevent road traffic injuries. Such partnerships should include people from government, industry, nongovernmental organizations and international agencies, and include health professionals, road engineers, motor vehicle designers and manufacturers, law enforcement officers and community groups.
- Strong political commitment is key to prevention efforts, and governments have a particular role to play in creating enabling environments for road safety. This commitment requires adequately funded road safety policies and programmes which are regularly monitored and evaluated. Increasing citizens' participation in road safety is an important complement to political commitment.

# Recommendations of the World report on road traffic injury prevention

**The *World report on road traffic injury prevention* offers governments the opportunity to assess the current status of road safety in their country, review policies and institutional arrangements and capacity, and take appropriate actions. The following recommendations need to be addressed across a wide range of sectors and disciplines if they are to achieve success in preventing road traffic injuries. These provide guiding principles, and should be adapted to local conditions and capacities in order to be implemented effectively.**

- **Recommendation 1:** Identify a lead agency in government to guide the national road traffic safety effort.
- **Recommendation 2:** Assess the problem, policies and institutional settings relating to road traffic injury and the capacity for road traffic injury prevention in each country.
- **Recommendation 3:** Prepare a national road safety strategy and plan of action.
- **Recommendation 4:** Allocate financial and human resources to address the problem.
- **Recommendation 5:** Implement specific actions to prevent road traffic crashes, minimize injuries and their consequences and evaluate the impact of these actions.
- **Recommendation 6:** Support the development of national capacity and international cooperation.

## Awards for WHO and the World report on road traffic injury prevention

WHO has been formally recognized for its contribution to global road safety by the granting of two prestigious awards. In the United Kingdom on 7 December 2004, WHO and the World Bank received the Premier Award, the highest honour given as part of the annual **Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards**. The Premier Award was granted in recognition of the outstanding contribution of WHO and the World Bank to improving road safety, in particular for the publication of



the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. Announcing the Premier Award winners during the annual awards ceremony, His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent declared: “The authors of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* made us all think and take action

– the fact that worldwide, an estimated 1.2 million people are killed in road crashes each year and as many as 50 million are injured is staggering.”

In the United States, on 16 June 2004, during an event hosted on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, the WHO Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention and its Director, Etienne Krug, were attributed the Leadership in Global Road Safety Award by the **Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT)**. The award is granted annually to individuals and institutions demonstrating leadership in the field globally. During the awards ceremony, ASIRT President, Rochelle Sobel and Congressman Robert Wexler stressed the enormous contributions made by WHO through World Health Day 2004 and related activities. A congressional caucus on international road safety was also launched during this event.



# FOLLOW-UP TO WORLD HEALTH DAY 2004

## *Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the World Health Assembly*

Policy-makers capitalized on World Health Day 2004 and the launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* by passing two historic resolutions on road safety.



On 14 April 2004, for the first time, the United Nations General Assembly discussed and adopted resolution 58/289 on *Improving global road safety*. The resolution, which calls for countries to take note of the recommendations contained in the joint WHO/World Bank *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, also invited the World Health Organization, working in close collaboration with the United Nations regional commissions, to act as the coordinator of road safety issues within the United Nations system. While convinced that responsibility for road safety rests at the local, municipal and national levels, participants stressed the importance of international cooperation in the field of road safety. The General Assembly also recognized that developing countries and countries with economies in transition had limited capacities to address road safety and underlined the importance of providing further support for their efforts. During the debate, some 27 speakers noted that road traffic injuries were well on their way to becoming one of the leading causes of death and disability globally and that immediate action was required. A more detailed summary of this event, including the related Stakeholders' Forum described later in this document held on 15 April 2004, can be found in the document *The global road safety crisis* (7) published by the United States-based Task Force for Child Survival and Development in September 2004.





In May 2004, following this landmark discussion in the United Nations General Assembly, road safety received unprecedented attention at the fifty-seventh World Health Assembly. After nearly 30 years of absence from this forum of discussion of road traffic injuries, the World Health Assembly passed resolu-

tion WHA 57.10 on *Road safety and health*. This resolution received unanimous support from representatives from 42 Member States, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Speakers congratulated WHO for placing this issue on the agenda by dedicating World Health Day 2004 to road safety and launching the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. The resolution's recommendations broadly reflect those of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* but also focus on the added value that public health can make to reduce the carnage on our roads, particularly with regard to epidemiology, prevention, research, advocacy and trauma care. The resolution also accepted the invitation by the United Nations General Assembly, through resolution 58/289, for WHO to serve as a coordinator of road safety issues within the United Nations system in close collaboration with all five of the regional commissions.

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Road safety is an item that ought to feature permanently on the Assembly's agenda, because in addition to the human costs of death and injury on the roads, there is the financial cost of treatment and rehabilitation, which constitutes a heavy burden for developing countries.

Tannia Solano-Ortiz, Ministry of Health of Costa Rica  
at the 57th World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland, 22 May 2004

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I commend the decision to make road safety and health the theme of World Health Day 2004 and recommend that Member States discuss the issue on a continuing basis... WHO should provide guidance and promote capacity building within the health sector in the area of traffic safety.

Yusuke Fukuda, Ministry of Health of Japan  
at the 57th World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland, 22 May 2004

These two resolutions provide important policy and advocacy tools that can be used to ensure that road safety retains its newly earned position at the forefront of myriad health and development issues at both national and international levels. Both resolutions call for increased attention and resources to be directed towards road safety efforts, in addition to specifying particular actions that should be taken to reduce road traffic injuries. Both resolutions also call for reports on the progress that is made back to future sessions of their respective forums. It is therefore important that road safety experts from all sectors assist their governments to move towards implementing these historic resolutions.

## *Implementing the recommendations of the World report on road traffic injury prevention*

Countries across the world are at varying stages along the road to safety. In the year since World Health Day 2004 and the launch of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*, tangible progress has been made towards improving safety on the roads in many countries. This section of the report describes some of the national, regional and global initiatives currently under way, many of which contribute directly towards fulfilling one or more of the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. What follows is a selection of initiatives that have been brought to our attention, although we are sure that there are many more currently being planned or ongoing.



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## **Recommendation 1: Identify a lead agency in government to guide the national road traffic safety effort**

- ▶ Following several high-profile World Health Day 2004 events, and the instrumental role that **Oman** played in placing road safety on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly, a forum on road safety was held in Oman in October 2004. The two-day gathering was attended by numerous dignitaries of the two *Majlis*es, the councils responsible for advising the country's ruler, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. There was also representation from the Royal Oman Police, who are currently fully engaged in the work of preventing road traffic injuries. Following the forum, the councils recommended to the Sultan that a lead agency be appointed to oversee the country's road safety efforts, and that this agency be given adequate financial resources to fulfill its remit.
- ▶ Senior officials from various government ministries participating in a one-day workshop in Sanaa, **Yemen**, on 24 April 2004 recommended the establishment of a national lead agency for road safety. Subsequently approved by the cabinet, this proposal led to the creation of a multisectoral National Committee for Road Safety. Housed within the Ministry of Public Works, the Committee has been given the mandate to guide the government's road safety efforts. In this regard, plans are under way to develop a five-year strategic plan of action for the prevention of road traffic injuries. To prepare this plan of action, an in-depth assessment of the existing situation was completed, and an outline for the plan of action was vetted by officials from all relevant sectors, to build national consensus on a way forward.



## **Recommendation 2: Assess the problem, policies and institutional settings relating to road traffic injury and the capacity for road traffic injury prevention in each country**

- ▶ The police force in Addis Ababa, **Ethiopia**, is engaged in a project aimed at improving the city's data collection and management system for road traffic injuries. The project was formally launched on 25 February 2004 as part of a swearing in ceremony for 450 traffic police officers. Based on a situational assessment completed in 2003, the police force has been working with partners on the initial stages of the



project. This work has included moving to a computer-based data system, training staff to use the system, standardizing data collection forms and equipping the resource centre. Eight police officers are now fully trained in computer-based data entry, processing and analysis, and report writing. Two stakeholder meetings have been held with representatives of the Ministries of Education, Health and Transport, insurance companies and the traffic police. This activity is part of the implementation of the WHO 5-year strategy on road traffic injury prevention, funded by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society.

- ▶ Following an international seminar on road safety which was convened by the Pan American Health Organization in Brasilia in June 2004, delegates from the 12 **Latin American and Caribbean countries** are collaborating to develop a document entitled *Road safety: a public policy problem for the Americas* which profiles the extent of the problem in the Americas. It also offers some suggestions for how the recommendations currently contained in the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* can be “regionalized”. This document should be available by late 2005.
- ▶ **Morocco** is currently planning a cost of road traffic injuries and deaths project in the country. They will conduct a review of the socio-economic cost of road traffic injuries and deaths in other countries around the world, with the intention of developing country specific tools which will allow them to assess the socioeconomic cost of road traffic injuries, with an emphasis on the poor, in their own country.
- ▶ In 2004, **Mozambique** conducted a national Demographic Health Survey which showed that road traffic injuries are one of the leading causes of injuries and deaths in the country. This information will be augmented in late 2005 by a community survey using the *Guidelines for conducting community surveys on injuries and violence* (8) which will identify in more detail risk factors and underlying causes. Information from both these studies will be used to inform policy-makers as they work towards the development of a national injury prevention strategy.



- ▶ The December 2004 issue of the Journal of the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan was dedicated to the issue on road traffic injuries in **South Asia**. The journal included a number of articles on the burden of

road traffic injuries in South Asia, risk factors, capacity development, policy responses and care.

- As part of the implementation of WHO's global strategy for the prevention of injuries, WHO is currently conducting a **global assessment of national capacity** for injury prevention and control, around the world. This assessment is an attempt to clearly define national and regional profiles of injury prevention and control activities in order to outline regional strategies. A database summarizing these results, country by country, will be available later in 2005.
- Many countries around the world have made commitments to develop **national reports** on road traffic injury prevention, some of which may be modelled on the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. Other national reports will address injuries in general, but will include data and information on road traffic injuries. Reports are currently being prepared in **China, India, Nepal and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**.
- The **Road Traffic Injuries Research Network (RTIRN)** is a partnership of individuals and institutions – government, academic, and nongovernmental – collaborating to further research on the impact,



causes and strategies for the prevention of road traffic injuries in low- and middle-income countries. Partners exchange ideas on developing a research agenda and capacities for research in these settings. This includes: defining research priorities; promoting appropriate investments for research; conducting strategic research; and facilitating the use of research results for national policies on road traffic injuries.

The RTIRN evolved from work done to address the “10/90 disequilibrium”; of the estimated US\$ 70 billion spent on health research annually, less than 10% is spent on addressing the health problems relevant to 90% of the world's population. RTIRN recognizes that the neglect of research on road traffic injuries in low-income and middle-income countries significantly contributes to this disequilibrium. RTIRN is supported by the Global Forum for Health Research, the World Bank and WHO.



### **Recommendation 3: Prepare a national road safety strategy and plan of action**

- ▶ In April 2004 in the context of World Health Day 2004, the Government of the **Czech Republic** approved the National Road Safety Strategy. Fully in line with the European Union's Action Programme on Road Safety, the strategy aims to reduce the number of casualties on the nation's roads by 50% by the year 2010. As part of this strategy, officials from the Ministry of Transport drafted amendments to current road traffic legislation, bringing in new and restrictive measures concerning drivers, such as the introduction of a penalty point system, increased fines for traffic violations, and mandatory use of child restraints on all types of roads. In May 2004, the Senate of the Czech Parliament established the Subcommittee on Road Traffic Safety. On 1 September 2004 the Czech Governmental Council for Road Safety, a multisectoral coordinating body, and the Road Safety Foundation were established to lead and support the renewed national road safety effort.
- ▶ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is helping all 10 countries of the **Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)** to draft a five-year ASEAN Regional Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan as part of the ADB–ASEAN Regional Road Safety Program. ASEAN includes **Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam**. The regional strategy and action plan were developed after a regional workshops held by the ADB with the participation of the ASEAN countries and modelled on successful road safety action plans from around the world. The economic development of the ASEAN countries has spurred rapid growth in the level of motorization and has resulted in a significant worsening of the road safety situation across the region. According to ADB, motorcycles, involved in a high proportion of Asia's road crashes, now constitute a large proportion of the vehicle fleet in several countries, as high as 94% in Viet Nam. The ADB estimates that the percentage of gross domestic product lost annually through road traffic injuries averages 2.2% for the region. The regional plan calls for the adoption of individual country action plans.

Experience shows that road safety needs to be tackled in a comprehensive and coordinated manner and that different types of intervention are effective at different stages of a country's development.

Charles Melhuish, Lead Transport Sector Specialist,  
Asian Development Bank, Manila, Philippines, 22 November 2004

- ▶ WHO is collaborating with a host of partners to finalize guidelines on **developing national injury prevention strategies and plans of action**. These strategies and plans are expected to be available in the latter part of 2005. In some countries, road safety strategies exist as part of broader injury prevention strategies and plans of action. Countries currently reported to be preparing a national road safety strategy and plan of action include **India, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Uzbekistan and Yemen**.
- ▶ The Paris-based **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development** has contributed greatly to the development of manuals of good practice in the area of road safety. The Organization's latest project, conducted jointly with the **European Conference of Ministers of Transport**, relates to good practices in achieving ambitious road safety targets, such as the target set by the European Union's Action Programme on Road Safety to halve deaths on European roads by the year 2010. The project focuses on research that can assist high-level decision-making on road safety priorities, the process required to meet national targets and funding considerations. Representative of 26 countries have contributed to the development of a draft outline for the manual, which is expected to be completed by 2007.



#### **Recommendation 4: Allocate financial and human resources to address the problem**

- ▶ The **FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society** is one of the largest grant providers in the area of road safety and continues to support international and national road safety initiatives both before World Health Day and after. Established in the United Kingdom as a registered charity, the FIA Foundation's objectives are to promote public safety and health, protect and preserve human life and conserve, protect and improve the physical and natural environment. It does this by providing grants which promote research and the dissemination of road safety research, promoting improvement in the safety of motor sport, and conducting its own research and educational activities.

- The Fogarty International Center of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), United States, announced a new programme to address the growing burden of morbidity and mortality in the developing world attributable to trauma and injury. The programme, launched on the occasion of World Health Day 2004, is supported by the Fogarty International Center, seven NIH partners, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and WHO. Applications were invited in areas such as prevention, treatment at the scene, emergency medical facilities and services, post-acute care, development of low-cost prosthetic devices, and long-term care (including rehabilitation), as well as evaluation of low-cost techniques in diagnostic procedures. Awards will provide up to US\$ 150 000 per year in direct costs for up to five years of support. The current combined financial commitment of the Center and its partners is approximately seven million US dollars over five years.



This year World Health Day focuses on road safety, an issue that affects men, women and children in the United States and around the world. Our goal in this programme, which contributes to raising awareness of the human and economic costs caused by trauma and injury, is to build skills and knowledge on how to most effectively address these daunting problems in resource-constrained settings. Our focus on the people and skills will have pay-off not only abroad but potentially back home as well to the extent that new techniques are transferable.

Sharon Hrynkow, Acting Director,  
Fogarty International Center, Bethesda, MD, United States, 7 April 2004

- On 16 December 2004, seven of the world's largest automotive and oil companies announced a collaborative five-year, US\$ 10 million project to reduce road traffic fatalities in developing countries. The **Global Road Safety Initiative**, to be implemented by the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP), focuses on such key road safety issues as pedestrian safety, seat-belt use, and the training of road safety professionals in developing countries. Seed money will be made available to support pilot programmes on road safety. Participating companies will also contribute expertise and linkages with governments and the community in the selected countries. Companies supporting this

project include Ford, General Motors, Honda, Michelin, Renault, Toyota and Shell. This initiative builds on the World Business Council on Sustainable Development's Sustainable Mobility Project.

- ▶ The World Bank is exploring the possibility of creating a **global road safety facility** to support those areas of global road safety for which there are currently limited resources. Globally, these areas include research and development of tools and products; nationally, they include the development of capacities, road safety strategies, and national projects. As currently conceived, the three-year project will disburse US\$ 5 million through two separate funding streams, one for global work and one for national work.

### ▶ **Recommendation 5: Implement specific actions to prevent road traffic crashes, minimize injuries and their consequences and evaluate the impact of these actions**

- ▶ As part of the WHO 5-year strategy on road traffic injury prevention, WHO is working with a host of partners in **Cambodia** on a helmet-related project. The agencies leading the effort are Handicap International, the Cambodian Ministry of Health and WHO. Others include the Cambodian Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Cambodian Ministries of Education, Interior, Public Works and Transport, and Youth and Sport, the municipality of Phnom Penh, and



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the United Nations Children's Fund. The project is three-pronged, and includes data collection on rates of helmet use across the city, support to implementation of a recently launched national road safety plan of action, and input on the creation of a proposed piece of legislation on the mandatory use of helmets. The initiative encourages United Nations agencies, government departments and nongovernmental organizations to adopt, enforce and monitor helmet-wearing policies among their staff. A nationwide media campaign is underway in the country to promote the use of helmets among drivers and passengers of two-wheeled vehicles.

- › The National People’s Congress passed the first National Road Safety Law in **China** in October 2003. This ground-breaking piece of legislation came into force on 1 May 2004, just weeks after World Health Day 2004. It calls for improved safety measures such as mandatory use of seat-belts for the driver and front-seat passengers, and mandatory use of helmets for motorcycle riders. This legislation also took the stance of protecting the most vulnerable road users by making the driver responsible for a crash between a vehicle and a pedestrian in the absence of obvious wrongdoing on the part of the pedestrian. As in many other countries, the challenge will be to ensure that this new legislation is enforced, and that the public adopt the requirements of this legislation as standard practice.
- › In order to reduce the high number of fatalities on the roads in **Costa Rica**, where only 1 in 4 drivers wears a seat-belt, the Costa Rican Automobile Club, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Costa Rican Ministry of Transport, the National Council for Road Safety and the National Insurance Institute lent support to a major new seat-belt awareness campaign. A seat-belt slide donated by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society toured the country, giving the public an opportunity to experience the benefit of a seat-belt even at the simulated low-impact speed of 30 km/h. In a victory for road safety campaigners, Costa Rica made seat-belt use mandatory following approval of a law reintroducing compulsory seat-belt use announced by the country’s Vice Minister of Transport following World Health Day 2004, during the debate on road safety at the United Nations General Assembly in April 2004. The new legislation, which had been subject to review by the country’s constitutional court, came six months after the launch of the seat-belt awareness campaign and a parallel political campaign in Costa Rica’s parliament for support for seat-belt use.
- › Established in 2003, the multisectoral State Road Traffic Safety Council in **Latvia** oversees implementation of the National Programme of Road Traffic Safety 2000–2006. Jointly chaired by the Minister for Traffic and the Minister for the Interior, the Council introduced a new system of penalties on 1 July 2004, which not only fines the driver for individual traffic offences, but also totals the offences over time, making it possible to deprive the driver of his or her driving licence if the limit of allowable “offence points” is exceeded. This new system is especially harsh in regard to drink-driving and violat-

ing speed limits. The new measure has already yielded results in terms of reducing the number of fatal traffic crashes during the first six months of operation. Mass media campaigns organized by the Ministry for the Interior, and stronger enforcement of traffic rules and regulations by the state police have also contributed to the success of this new initiative. The campaigns have addressed the issues of drink-driving and improving the visibility of vulnerable road users. The latter has resulted in a tripling of the use of reflectors, which are now available for sale in most shops and petrol stations.



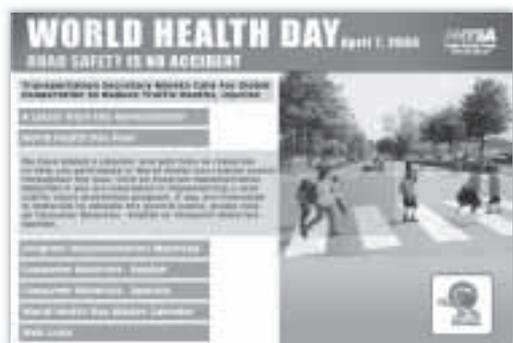
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► **Poland** suffers from a road traffic fatality rate that is more than three times the European Union average. It is thought that the inefficiency of the emergency rescue system contributes to this high fatality rate. The Medical University of Lublin, Poland, has been conducting a situational assessment of the emergency rescue system for people injured in road crashes in the regions of Lublin and Lodz, Poland.

Initiated in October 2004, the assessment involves an evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the emergency rescue system. A stakeholder analysis of rescue-service providers is also being conducted. The assessment is considered to be an important activity in redefining Poland's response to its road traffic injury crisis. The Government of Poland is collaborating with a host of partners on this project, including the Austrian Red Cross, the Global Road Safety Partnership, Holmatro, the Polish Red Cross and WHO. This activity is part of the implementation of the WHO 5-year strategy on road traffic injury prevention, funded by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society.

- In Cuernavaca, **Mexico**, a city-wide advocacy campaign is underway to address the safety of young drivers, an issue which the local community had identified as a priority. The campaign, conducted by the National Institute of Public Health of Mexico, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the municipality, the police, parents and students, includes broad dissemination of messages on key risk factors and protective factors, including speed, alcohol, the use of seat-belts, licensing, and the protection of pedestrians. The campaign is making use of television, radio and the print media. This activity is part of the implementation of the WHO 5-year strategy on road traffic injury prevention.

- As defined in the **New Zealand** Road Safety Programme Guidelines 2004/2005, road safety audits are now mandatory. A road safety audit is a series of formal checks on road and traffic projects, planned or existing, in relation to their implications for safety. The road safety audit is a formal and independent process, conducted by appropriately trained and experienced people. Road safety audit programmes aim: to minimize the risk and severity of road crashes that may be affected by the road project at the site or on the nearby network; lessen the need for remedial works after construction; reduce the overall costs of the project; and improve awareness of safe design practices for all those involved in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of roads. Road safety audits recommend either identifying and removing preventable crash-promoting elements (such as inappropriate intersection layouts) at the planning or design stages, or identifying remaining or existing problems leading to the inclusion of suitable crash-reducing features (such as anti-skid surfacing, guard fencing, traffic control devices, and delineation). Methodologies for such audits have been developed by Transfund New Zealand.
- In **Sweden** on 1 January 2005, it became compulsory for all children under the age of 15 years to wear a bicycle helmet as a result of a law passed in May 2004. Road safety and health advocates in Sweden hope that the child law will lead to the passage of a universal helmet wearing law in the future.
- New regulatory measures for road safety were adopted in **Uganda** in June 2004. They include obligatory use of seat-belts, prohibition of drink-driving or using mobile telephones while driving, and introducing speed governors in public service vehicles. Public transporters were given three months to make their vehicles compliant with these new measures by fitting them with seat-belts. Enforcement of these measures is reported as vigorous.



- The **United States of America**, through its Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) played a major role in World Health Day 2004 and the preparation and launch of the *World report on road*

*traffic injury prevention*. NHTSA plans to focus its efforts over the next three to five years on two major road safety areas – impaired driving and occupant protection. For impaired driving the focus will be on high visibility enforcement, support for prosecutors and “driving while impaired” courts, as well as alcohol screening and brief interventions. For occupant protection the focus will be on high visibility enforcement and primary safety belt laws, while continuing to explore effective public education approaches for specific demographic groups.

- ▶ **Vanuatu** is currently reviewing its road safety legislations in order to make recommendations to the national road safety strategy and action plan to provide public awareness and education campaigns about the Road Traffic (Control) Act and road safety in general.
- ▶ Building on similar efforts by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, WHO and its partners are developing an on-line **global database of road safety legislation**. The database will provide information on legislation relating to a number of risk and protective factors for road traffic injuries, including speed limits, use of occupant restraints, helmet use, blood alcohol limits, daytime running lamps and mobile phone use. Users will be able to search the database by region, country, and risk or protective factor. The database will provide a brief overview of legislation, with links to detailed information on other web sites. The database, which will be updated regularly by WHO and its road safety partners, is scheduled to be launched in the latter part of 2005.

- ▶ The WHO Regional Office for the Americas published a document entitled *Lesiones no intencionales – legislación de América Latina sobre programas preventivos y responsabilidades*



[Unintentional injuries – legislations from Latin America about prevention programmes and those responsible] in late 2004 which includes a section on **road safety laws for countries in Latin America**. This document is downloadable from the regional office website.



► Hundreds of road safety advocacy campaigns took place as part of World Health Day 2004 celebrations, and hundreds more take place annually across the world. These campaigns target the public, and involve dissemination of information and materials by the print, radio and television media. They seek both to raise awareness about road traffic injuries, and change the public's behaviour with regard to adopting measures to improve personal safety. Some campaigns may last a year or longer, and may be part of a national road safety strategy, such as the national media campaign launched by the Government of **France** in 2002 under President Chirac's leadership. Since April 2004, **Costa Rica** has celebrated the "For love, use a seat-belt" campaign, **New Zealand** has celebrated "National kids safe week" and the **United States** has celebrated "Buckle up America! week" and "Crash-free



June". Campaigns are also underway in **Cambodia, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Thailand, Uganda** and **Vanuatu**.

- To coincide with World Health Day 2004, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development launched a report entitled **Keeping children safe in traffic** in April 2004 which draws on best practice and research to show how child casualties can be reduced while at the same time encouraging children to develop into safe, active and independent road users. It focuses on the contribution education, training and publicity can make; measures related to the risks children face in the road environment; vehicle and bicycle standards; safety equipment and the importance of appropriate legislation. This document has wide global applicability.

- The **seat-belt toolkit manual**, published by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society and developed in collaboration with the Global Road Safety Partnership for the Automobile and Society and the Transport Research Laboratory, provides advice on enforcement, awareness raising and legislating for seat-belt use, which is intended primarily for countries with low seat-belt compliance. The toolkit includes a manual which provides advice on enforcement, awareness raising and developing and implementing seat-belt laws. It contains campaign resources including cartoon strips and an animated cartoon video, logos and advice on how to organize a seat-belt campaign.
- The FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the World Bank and WHO are developing a **series of good practice guides** that will assist countries with the implementation of the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. These “how to” guides will initially focus on the main risk factors and protective factors identified in the report – speed, drink-driving, seat-belt use and helmet use. They will provide detailed step-by-step instructions on how to design, implement and evaluate related policies and programmes. The guides will identify roles and responsibilities of the different sectors involved, and will provide examples of good practice, including case studies from both developed and developing countries. Additional guides will be developed on how to assess the road traffic injury problem, how to establish a lead agency to coordinate the response, and how to develop a national strategy and plan of action for road safety. The guides are targeted primarily towards road safety policy-makers in developing countries.
- Created in 1991, the **WHO Helmet Initiative** promotes the use of motorcycle and bicycle helmets worldwide. It serves as a resource

for those wishing to learn more about helmets, and to develop strategies to advocate their use. The initiative seeks to address the safety of millions of people who use motorcycles and bicycles for transport and for recreation every day, a large number of whom are killed or permanently disabled as a result of a head injury. Many such injuries could be prevented



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or their severity reduced through the use of a simple and inexpensive helmet. The WHO Helmet Initiative promotes universal helmet use by stimulating research and maintaining a reference library on helmet promotion and efficacy. Following World Health Day 2004, the WHO Helmet Initiative relaunched its web site and has taken steps to expand its reach by designating Cooperating Helmet Initiative Programmes, which are helmet-related centres of excellence from around the world. The web site ([www.whohelmets.org](http://www.whohelmets.org)) features links to a literature database, news of helmet programmes from around the web, a quarterly newsletter entitled *Headlines* and links to other important web-based organizations and resources.



### **Recommendation 6: Support the development of national capacity and international cooperation**

- ▶ **Health Politics with Dr Mike Magee** is a good illustration of Internet-based capacity development spawned by the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. Health Politics is a weekly, internet-based electronic media programme that explores complex topics at the intersection of healthcare and policy. Health Politics provides education and insight into health policy in a highly condensed and easily understood format. On 7 July 2004, Dr Magee launched a module entitled *Road safety: a public health issue* ([www.healthpolitics.com/program\\_info.asp?p=prog\\_54](http://www.healthpolitics.com/program_info.asp?p=prog_54)). The topics covered included: the burden of road traffic injuries worldwide; the difference in death rates from road traffic injuries between high-income countries and low-income and middle-income countries; the economic and social costs of road traffic injuries; the common causes of road traffic crashes; and the solutions to preventing road traffic injuries.
- ▶ The Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Programme (TRIPP) of the Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi, India, the French National Institute for Transport and Safety Research, Arcueil, France, and the International Research Council on the Biomechanics of Impacts, Bron, France, organized the **International Course on Transportation Planning and Safety**. The course, held in New Delhi, India, from 9–15 December 2004, brought together professionals working in the area of transportation planning and safety promotion to acquaint them with the state-of-the-art information in the field. The



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course was especially designed for an interdisciplinary audience of law enforcers, traffic and road engineers and behavioural scientists. The contents of the course were especially designed to provide a global road safety perspective.

- ▶ The Netherlands-based Institute of Traffic Care (ITC) and partners worldwide have established the **International Road Safety Academy (IRSA)**, led by a number of international road safety experts through regional offices across the world. The functions of IRSA include training local and regional police officers and others as master trainers, who then provide road safety training in schools, companies and elsewhere in their home countries. The master trainers also organize workshops in their regions to raise awareness of the importance of road safety training. IRSA train-the-trainer programmes address such issues as the development of road safety policies and strategies, enforcement, and emergency trauma care. The IRSA maintains a database of training programmes and good practices from around the world. Regional training centres are or will be established in: Addis Ababa, **Ethiopia**; Tehran, **Islamic Republic of Iran**; Rabat, **Morocco**; Bucharest, **Romania**; Moscow, **Russian Federation**; and Istanbul, **Turkey**. Additional requests to host regional offices are under consideration from Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Israel and Spain.
- ▶ A public health approach to building capacity for injury prevention and control requires enhancing knowledge, developing skills, and enabling systems in which injury prevention and control efforts are supported. A strong and immediate focus of WHO's capacity building efforts has been on the development of an **injury prevention and control curriculum** known as TEACH-VIP. This a comprehensive injury prevention and control curriculum has been developed in collaboration with a network of global experts on injury prevention. The course material is designed around a classroom instruction model, with PowerPoint slide presentations and supporting lecture notes which address a wide variety of topics, including road traffic injury prevention and control. In September 2004 TEACH-VIP went into a pilot testing phase involving 23 settings worldwide and a wide variety of training audiences. The countries pilot-testing courses directly related to road traffic injury are **China, Colombia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Kenya, Mozambique, New Zealand, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Kingdom** and **Viet Nam**. From September 2005, WHO will make TEACH-VIP available to institutions wishing to provide instruction in the area of injury prevention.

- » Since accepting the invitation of the United Nations General Assembly to act as coordinator of road safety across the United Nations system, together with the United Nations regional commissions, WHO has



hosted two meetings of the **United Nations Road Safety Collaboration**, the first in October 2004 and the second in March 2005. With representation from more than 25 organizations (11 United Nations bodies including the 5 regional commissions, and 14 others), the Collaboration has initiated work on the following activities:



- » development of a series of good practice guides to assist countries with the implementation of the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*;

- » creation of a dynamic, web-based database on global road safety legislations;

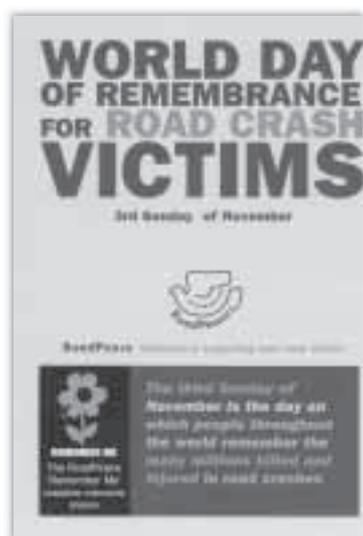
- » completion and updating of a series of resolutions on road traffic signs and signals adopted in the European region;
- » follow-up meeting to the Stakeholders' Forum hosted by the Global Road Safety Steering Committee in April 2004; and
- » establishment of an annual World Day of Remembrance for Victims of Road Traffic Injuries.

The Collaboration has agreed upon lead agencies to take responsibility for product development, and timeframes for their preparation. The number of organizations involved, both governmental and nongovernmental, and the range of sectors they represent – health, transport, safety – attests to the broad support that exists for this new effort. A special feature of the most recent meeting of the Collaboration included the launch of a document entitled *United Nations road safety collaboration: a handbook of partner profiles*, containing an overview of the missions, road safety activities and strengths in the area of road safety of partner organizations, as well as useful contacts within each organi-

zation. The handbook will be updated regularly as more organizations join the Collaboration.

➤ In the context of the United Nations General Assembly, the **Global Road Safety Steering Committee** orchestrated the Stakeholders' Forum in New York, United States, in April 2004. Under the Secretariat of the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, the Global Road Safety Steering Committee brought together senior officials from key United Nations agencies, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector in a visible show of support for the General Assembly resolution on road safety. The Global Road Safety Steering Committee was created to raise political will and encourage swift action to end the global epidemic of road traffic injuries. The Steering Committee, which in September 2004 released a document entitled *The global road safety crisis*, summarizing its efforts to date, will continue to serve as an advocate for road safety at a global level. A second Stakeholders' Forum is in the planning stages, and will tentatively be held in Oman in 2006.

➤ In recognition of the enormous strength they possess as advocates for road safety, and in the hope of ensuring their support for World Health Day 2004, WHO hosted a meeting of 12 nongovernmental organizations advocating for road safety, and the rights of injured



persons and their families. Hosted in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 2003, the meeting led to the creation of an informal **network of nongovernmental organizations advocating for road safety** and identified areas for joint activities in data collection and research, services for victims and advocacy. All 12 organizations actively participated in World Health Day 2004 events in their countries. The group next met as a network during the 7th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion, held in June 2004 in Vienna, Austria, to discuss ways to mobilize additional support for a **World Day of Remembrance for Victims of Road Traffic Injuries**.

The group hopes the event will be observed worldwide on the third Sunday in November each year. Already several countries already mark the occasion to remember friends and loved ones killed or injured on the world's roads. In November 2004, WHO staff took part in the day by participating in an event hosted by RoadPeace in London,

**United Kingdom.** Other events marking World Day of Remembrance for Victims of Road Traffic Injuries took place in **Argentina, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal, South Africa and Spain.**

WHO applauds the work of nongovernmental organizations, and in particular the women campaigners amongst them, for bringing the scale of road death and injury to the world's attention.

Margie Peden, Coordinator for Unintentional Injury Prevention, WHO, London, United Kingdom, 8 March 2005 (International Women's Day)

- Every two years the WHO cosponsors a series of **World Conferences on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion** which gather together over a thousand of the world's leading academics and practitioners in the area of injury prevention and control. The 7th World Injury Prevention Conference was held in Vienna, Austria, in June 2004. The momentum gained through World Health Day 2004 was carried through at this event and road safety featured prominently in both the academic programmes and exhibits. The 8th World Injury Conference is scheduled for 2–5 April 2006 in Durban, South Africa. More information about this series of conferences may be found at <http://www.safety2006.info/>.



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# THE ROAD AHEAD

For the several hundreds of groups working to promote road safety around the world, the road ahead will provide opportunities and challenges: opportunities to build on the enormous progress made in the area of road safety during and since 2004 and challenges to maintain the current high levels of visibility for the issue and to identify the resources needed to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*. As part of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, WHO will continue to play its role as coordinator of road safety within the United Nations system. In the years ahead WHO and the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration will focus on five main areas: occupant restraint use; helmet wearing; impaired driving; speed management and the promotion of cost effective engineering measures. A series of “how to” manuals, developed in partnership with the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Global Road Safety Partnership and the World Bank, will be important implementation tools.



In addition WHO will continue to support global road safety in the areas of research, prevention, advocacy, and care and services for victims, including their rehabilitation. WHO headquarters, regional and country offices will also provide technical support to countries, as they seek to make progress on their road safety objectives. Through TEACH-VIP, WHO will also assist in building the local capacities needed to tackle the road safety problem.



WHO will also tap into the vast knowledge and experience of its partners to develop two further world reports: one on child injury prevention, which will feature a chapter on the child in traffic; and the second on disability and rehabilitation – road traffic crashes being a major cause of disability around the globe.

WHO offers a host of resources for road safety, all of which can be accessed through the web site of the WHO Department of Injuries and Violence Prevention at the following address: [www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/en/) . Linked directly to the web sites for World Health Day 2004 and the WHO Helmet Initiative,

the Department's web site offers information about WHO's road safety work, and access to related products and materials, including the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* and companion fact sheets, resolutions and the twice yearly *Road ahead* newsletter. In addition visitors may complete a form to order WHO's road safety posters, which highlight key facts from the *World report on road traffic injury prevention*: the unacceptably high number of deaths, injuries and disabilities caused by road traffic crashes around the world each year; their propensity to strike primarily pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists and passengers of public transport in developing countries; and their enormous costs to society. WHO encourages groups to adapt these posters for their own road safety advocacy purposes. The web site will continue to develop and expand to include additional resources as they become available.

# CONCLUSION

For the tens of thousands of researchers, practitioners and advocates dedicated to road safety around the globe, World Health Day 2004 was a gift, an opportunity to draw attention to road traffic injuries, their consequences and costs and to rally support for action to prevent road traffic injuries. For a day, those researchers, practitioners and advocates were able to speak with a single voice; one that was heard loud and clear around the world.

The United Nations General Assembly and World Health Assembly resolutions lent much-needed authority to governments and the international development community to identify ways to heed calls for a concerted response that transcends any single sector or discipline.

The world faces a global road safety crisis that has not yet been fully recognized and that will continue to grow unless appropriate action is taken. WHO will continue to play its part together with hundreds of road safety organizations committed to reducing the number of deaths and injuries on the world's roads.

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