



**Second Global Meeting of Nongovernmental Organizations  
Advocating for Road Safety and Road Victims  
14-15 March 2011 - Pan American Health Organization Headquarters - Washington, DC, USA**

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**REPORT OF THE MEETING**

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**Introduction**

On 14-15 March 2011, the World Health Organization convened representatives of 100 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) from 48 countries. All are NGOs actively promoting road safety and support for victims of road traffic crashes. The meeting, which was hosted in Washington, DC by the Pan American Health Organization and prepared with the support of a group of NGO members of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC), had the following objectives: sharing knowledge and experiences among the participants; facilitating coordination around the launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020; strengthening NGO capacity in media relations; and creating a global alliance of NGOs advocating for road safety and road victims. In addition to NGOs, groups such as the FIA Foundation, Inter-American Development Bank, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, United States National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the World Bank also participated in the event. Participants were very grateful for the opportunity to come together, and in their evaluation, rated the meeting highly in terms of its usefulness for their work. The meeting programme, list of participants and presentations are available at the following web address:

[http://www.who.int/roadsafety/nongovernmental\\_network/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/roadsafety/nongovernmental_network/en/index.html) .

**Welcome, opening statements and participants' introduction**

Dr Mirta Roses Periago, Director, PAHO, and Regional Director, WHO Regional Office for the Americas

Dr Etienne Krug, Director, Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability, WHO

Mr Martial Manfred Missimikim, Executive President, Securoute, Cameroon and all participants

Dr Roses opened the two-day event by welcoming the participants and stressing the crucial role that NGOs play in the area of advocacy. She noted that NGOs can increase attention to road safety, garner political will for action and engage the public in the demand for safer roads. She added that several countries in Latin America are preparing for the launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 at high levels in their countries, among them Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela. Dr Krug observed in his opening remarks that NGOs are particularly well-positioned to demand action since they are able to be more agile and vocal compared to other types of organizations. He observed that an important objective of this meeting is to empower NGOs to more effectively conduct advocacy initiatives. This would support achievement of the goal of the Decade, and would contribute ultimately to saving lives. Mr Martial Manfred Missimikim of Securoute in Cameroon followed and closed the session with a tribute to Pius Njawe, once a member of the community of NGOs, who was killed in a road crash in the United States earlier in the year. A minute of silence was observed in his memory. Following this tribute, all participants introduced themselves and their organizations.

**Presentations: Spotlights on NGO advocacy for road safety and road victims and discussion**

Ms Amy Aeron-Thomas, RoadPeace, United Kingdom

Ms Aeron-Thomas described the *Road death investigation guide for bereaved families*. This useful tool, produced by RoadPeace for the families of victims of road traffic crashes, helps them to better understand the causes of the crash in which their loved one was involved, the steps they may take towards criminal prosecution, and their rights in terms of civil compensation. It also contributes to a better understanding of how to make roads safe. The guide is updated annually, and is based on feedback from families, helpline volunteers and police collision investigators.

Ms Ebtehal Shawky Moawad, Egyptian Society of Road Safety, Egypt

Ms Shawky presented on her NGO's efforts to increase the number and use of pedestrian crossings in cities across Egypt. She described a particular initiative to advocate for construction of a pedestrian bridge across a busy intersection in the Autostrad Road, and the steps towards completion of this project, which involved government and private sector partners. In addition to promoting the development of safer road infrastructure, her NGO promote awareness of traffic rules among children and the population at large.

Mr Josiah Matagane, Amend, Tanzania

Mr Matagane presented on Amend's work in Ghana and Tanzania, in particular its ongoing collaboration with media. He explained that when a child is killed in a road crash, Amend invites media to the site of the crash to cover the story. As an awareness raising tool, serving as "press agents" is inexpensive, easily done and delivers the intended results. Amend is able to do this because the NGO has fostered good relations with local journalists, its messages are simple, and it is perceived to do this as a public service and not because it seeks visibility for the NGO itself.

Ms Rochelle Sobel, ASIRT, USA

Ms Sobel described creation of the Congressional Caucus on Global Road Safety. Members of this caucus serve as spokespeople for road safety in Congress and are "built in" allies or champions. ASIRT supplies the caucus with hard data on road safety as well as contacts with families in their respective constituencies who have been affected by a road crash. The caucus hosts briefings and other high-profile events, including those marking the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. Members reach out to other government agencies, including the Department of State, which encourages and supports increased action on road safety through its embassies abroad. Discussions in this forum become part of the Congressional record.

Ms Alma Chavez Guth, VIVIAC, Mexico

Ms Guth presented on efforts in the Mexican state of Guadalajara to pass new legislation on drinking and driving. VIVIAC has contributed to this success through its advocacy efforts, including awareness raising of the need for stricter laws and more stringent law enforcement and the so-called "citizen observatories" through which families of victims join the police when doing random breath tests on drivers. The group will consider in the future how it might influence changes in legislation on child car seats, seat-belts and helmets for motorcyclists.

**Presentation: Strengthening civil society advocacy for public health issues: the experience of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids**

Dr Birckmayer, Director of International Research, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

In the spirit of learning from other successful advocacy efforts in other fields, and given its long experience, Dr Birkmayer gave a presentation on the advocacy work of the Campaign

for Tobacco-Free Kids. The goal of the Campaign has been to reduce tobacco use and save lives. Through its advocacy efforts, it has been successful in increasing tobacco taxes; banning advertising, promotion and sponsorship; mandating warning labels on tobacco packs; and banning smoking in public and work places. She noted that when scientific evidence is accompanied by advocacy on policy, solid communications and a strong base of partners then change is possible. Advocates must seek ways to directly influence policy makers, by knowing the policy making system; mapping allies and opponents; finding out who has influence; and influencing them as opportunities arise. Communications work keeps tobacco in the news and creates an environment supporting policy change. She then gave concrete examples of such efforts in Mexico and the United States.

### **Presentation and Discussion: Advocating for Road Safety and Road Victims: A Guide for NGOs**

Ms Laura Sminkey, Communications Officer, Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability, WHO

Discussant: Ms Moira Donahue, Director of International Operations, Safe Kids Worldwide and all participants

Ms Sminkey noted that the document, *Advocating for road safety and road victims: a guide for NGOs*, is currently under preparation by WHO and the NGO members of the UNRSC. It is intended to support NGOs, in particular those which are newly established and those who seek to improve their effectiveness. She described the added value of NGOs in the area of advocacy in terms of increasing attention to road safety; generating political will; promoting changes in policies, programmes or behaviours; increasing funding; and generating a demand for safety from the public, among others. In terms of guiding principles, she noted that NGOs - like other partners - should commit to the long-term; be strategic and realistic; base efforts on evidence; make use of existing materials; and engage with partners. Along the lines of the "A" frame for advocacy, a concept developed by Johns Hopkins University, she outlined a series of steps NGOs could take in their advocacy efforts, from reviewing the status of legislation in their countries to developing a strategy, creating materials, organizing events, and engaging the media to reviewing successes.

Ms Donahue described how Safe Kids Worldwide has followed many of the general principles and steps outlined in the draft guide. With a vision of eliminating accidental child injury worldwide, Safe Kids Worldwide supports targeted campaigns in 19 countries, engaging a broad range of partners, from the police and fire fighters to teachers, lawmakers and community volunteers. It also has the support of a number of the world's leading companies. She described initial efforts in the United States to define a single objective - to strengthen occupant protection laws - and from there to development of a document called *Child passengers at risk in America: a national rating of child occupant protection laws*, which compared legislation state by state. She described other initiatives such as the development of advocacy materials like PhotoVoice, a project encouraging children to photograph and reflect on the safety of roads in their communities; events such as International Walk to School Day; and approaches to engaging with the media. Her presentation served as a basis for discussion, during which participants generally agreed that the guide would be helpful as a tool for those NGOs wishing to strengthen their strategic planning processes, in particular those which have been recently created.

## **Presentation: Preparations for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 and discussion**

Ms Laura Sminkey, Communications Officer, Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability, WHO

Ms Sminkey presented on plans for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, officially proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in March 2010. She described the overall vision and goal of the Decade, and outlined the Global Plan which has been developed by the UNRSC, with the support of the international community. She updated on plans for the launch of the Decade on 11 May 2011, and described what would be an ideal launch event. She also introduced the road safety "tag" - the new global symbol for road safety - and noted that it may be used freely by NGOs on advocacy materials developed for the Decade. It may also be purchased as a wearable, decorative item. She emphasized the need to be strategic in our activities across the Decade, to be sure that they yield concrete results. WHO will support the Decade by serving as the Secretariat, providing technical support, offering advocacy materials, and producing global status reports to monitor progress. She invited NGOs to:

- encourage government to nominate a focal point, inform WHO
- promote the Global Plan, encourage government to produce national plan
- plan launch event, register with WHO
- promote, purchase, wear the road safety tag
- join us on Facebook
- share your photos
- link to web sites from your web site

Discussion following the presentation highlighted the enthusiasm of the participants in terms of the opportunity provided by the Decade. Some clarification focused on use of the tag. It was noted that the tag may be produced locally in countries by NGOs and governments provided that they sign a franchise agreement with WHO.

## **Training: Working with the media**

Ms Elena Altieri, Communications Officer, Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability, WHO

Discussant: Ms Maria Fernanda Rodriguez, President, Gonzalo Rodriguez Foundation, Uruguay and all participants

Ms Altieri provided guiding principles to work with mass media. The session focused on the use of mass media for campaigning purposes as opposed to the use of media to promote specific activities. She observed that mass media need to be considered as a tool rather than an end in itself, and that organizations should approach media strategically. To do so, NGOs should: be aware of the media landscape in their country and understand how media work; ensure that their media strategy reflects adequate resources (time, funds and people); keep focused on simple objectives, targeted audiences and clear messages; have newsworthy issues to offer; and be focused and structured in their communications. There was a quick overview of some of the most common communication products and initiatives used to attract the attention of mass media. She suggested the use of social media as a way to mobilize large groups of people for the launch of the Decade.

Ms Rodriguez presented the methodology and results of a successful campaign she implemented in Uruguay to increase and improve the use of child restraints in vehicles. The case study revealed that an extensive pre-campaign investigation is crucial for success. As part of this, the NGO carried out observational studies and market research not only on the use (correct and not) of the restraints, but also on the quality of the child restraints available on the Uruguayan market. Ms Rodriguez explained how her effort was successful because it addressed the roots of the problem and went beyond the elaboration of messages for

radio and TV. All messages were repeatedly tested before dissemination which led to the development of a very plain, but effective, message: *use the child seat*. One year and a third of the project's budget were dedicated to pre-campaign research. Key partners included paediatricians and the broadcasting media.

### **Presentation: The global impact of road traffic crashes and what works to prevent them and discussion**

Dr Margie Peden, Coordinator for Unintentional Injury Prevention, WHO

Dr Peden gave a presentation on the global impact of road traffic crashes and what works to prevent these crashes. In her presentation, she provided NGOs with some of the global facts and figures; shared information about good practices or "what works" in road safety (as well as what should be avoided); and gave examples of what and how NGOs can contribute to road safety. In particular, she highlighted the important role that NGOs can play in lobbying for change - be this infrastructural, vehicular, behavioural or legal, in implementing prevention programmes and providing support for victims following a crash. She ended her presentation by giving an overview of the areas where WHO can assist NGOs and encouraging delegates to implement the "best buys" in road safety. She invited them to contact WHO for technical support.

### **Regional meetings: Trends, challenges and opportunities for NGOs advocating for road safety and road victims**

On the second day, participants divided in groups to discuss road safety from a regional perspective and in particular injury data, plans for the launch of the Decade, and ideas for regional collaborations. The main conclusions were:

#### Data gathering and reliability

In general terms, the reliability of available data is limited; however, the situation differs enormously from country to country and across regions. For example, in Europe, there is little coordination among organizations and entities responsible for collecting data; in Africa and in the Eastern Mediterranean, in addition to that, the technology available is not suitable and the lack of an agreement on the definition of *road traffic death* is a further complication. The groups discussed possible suggestions to address this challenge, and among them they identified the creation of "road safety observatories", training programmes for data collectors, and direct support from WHO to governments for the improvement of the quality of the data available.

#### Launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020

The launch of the Decade is scheduled for 11 May 2011. Although the launch has been planned by the international community for more than a year now, at national level governments and their partners are still identifying the concrete actions they will take. For many of the NGOs, plans are still at a concept stage. Overall, it was agreed that the actions planned by NGOs should dovetail with those being planned by governments at national level. Some plans include the following:

- Belgium: Launch of the Fairspace Project
- Egypt: Activities by youth organizations
- Lebanon and Tanzania: Road safety education for kids
- Nigeria: Road safety campaigns conducted with the support of private companies
- Poland: Unveil a monument for victims of road traffic crashes
- Others: Calls for review of legislation and enforcement, school competitions on road safety, dissemination of posters and pamphlets, events attracting the media such as lighting national monuments in yellow with the Decade symbol and other public displays

All groups were encouraged to register their events on the official global web site for the Decade.

#### Ideas for regional collaboration

The European Federation of Road Traffic Victims has been in existence for a number of years, and at this point involves NGOs from beyond Europe. The Iberoamerican Federation of Road Traffic Victims was recently announced. It now includes among its members NGOs from twelve different Spanish-speaking countries, and additional groups will soon be joining. The Federation is planning a number of public initiatives to increase its visibility. Among the NGO community, there has been some discussion about the creation of similar groups for other regions. The working group for Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean regions agreed that sharing information and experiences should be at the centre of any coordination initiative. Given the geographical challenge, communications will rely mostly on web-based and social networking tools. Regional groupings of NGOs will be encouraged where possible.

#### **Presentation and discussion: Concept for global alliance of NGOs advocating for road safety and road victims and discussion**

Mr Jeffrey Witte, Executive Director, Amend, USA

Mr Witte presented the concept for a global alliance of NGOs advocating for road safety and road victims. The concept has been developed and discussed by the NGO members of the UNRSC. Following the presentation, the participants divided in groups and discussed the need for such an alliance, its objectives and other details of the concept. Each working group reported in the plenary the main conclusions of the discussion. The great majority of participants agreed that the formation of a global alliance of NGOs advocating for road safety and road victims would be useful and should be pursued. However:

- In some regions NGO alliances already exist to one degree or another so any global NGO alliance would need to work in a fashion which is complementary to those existing alliances.
- In order for an alliance to be successful, it will need legitimacy from the international community and funding for permanent administrative staff.
- The alliance will need clear criteria for membership.
- The alliance will need realistic, achievable goals, especially at the beginning.
- The alliance should use web tools to share information and best practices.
- A credible, recognized alliance would help member NGOs in terms of legitimacy in their home countries.

To formally move forward towards the creation of an Alliance, the NGO members of the UNRSC will develop proposed by-laws, membership criteria, technical setup, and initial activities.

#### **Presentation: Overview of funding to the field**

Mr Saul Billingsley, Deputy Director General, FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society

Mr Billingsley presented the work of the FIA Foundation and its main partners in the area of road safety. Over the last 10 years, the FIA Foundation has donated over US\$ 40 million to road safety projects around the world. He shared with the audience what the Foundation learned as a donor and what it values when it comes to choosing projects to support. In this respect, he advised organizations interested in raising funds to be:

- Credible and able to achieve and demonstrate concrete results;
- Professional and provide their donors with continuous and transparent information and updates through websites, accounts and strategic plans;
- Expert in their field and able to demonstrate the specific added value of their contribution;

- Capable of creating good working relations with their donors;
- Willing to work in partnership with other players.

He then listed some of the major funding sources to the road safety field: FIA Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, private companies, embassies, and the public. He noted that additional philanthropic organizations willing to fund road safety need to be identified. His final bit of advice to the NGO community was: if you want to be heard (and funded) make sure you have a loud and unified voice. He concluded by encouraging the participants to make the most of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 as an opportunity to save lives, and to use the Decade's symbol widely.

### **Summary of meeting, next steps and closing**

Mr Geert van Waeg, Vice President, International Federation of Pedestrians

Dr Etienne Krug, WHO Director, Department of Violence and Injury Prevention and Disability

Mr van Waeg provided participants a detailed summary of the two days, the discussions which took place and the outcomes of these. The meeting was closed by Dr Krug who thanked all participants for their contributions and insisted on the key role played by NGOs as advocates for change. He reminded participants that only sixty days are left until the launch of the Decade and hopefully this will be the kick off of many substantial initiatives. He congratulated the participants on the outcomes of the meeting, in particular steps towards creation of a global alliance of NGOs; further collaboration with the media; and planning for the launch of the Decade at global, regional and national levels. He also expressed his gratitude for inputs on the NGO guide, which in its final version will reflect all comments and suggestions received. He said that WHO would be pleased to support the initiatives of the NGO community, but that the leadership for how the NGOs organize themselves as a group is now in their hands. He concluded by warmly thanking the participants and informing them that WHO will report to its partners, including the UNRSC, about the outcomes of the meeting.