

Statement by Casey Marengé, Chariots of Destiny Executive Director
First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety

Your Excellency the President of the Russian Federation, Honorable Ministers and Delegates, Distinguished Guests, Fellow Advocates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

My name is Casey Marengé, Executive Director of the Chariots of Destiny Organization a road safety NGO based in Nairobi, Kenya. It is indeed a great honor to be here today in this historic event as I represent victims of Road crashes, their families and the voices of those we have lost on our roads.

My journey to this day began six years ago at the tender age of 20, when I was involved in a tragic road crash in which two of my friends died- one of whom was my best friend. On that tragic September morning, my parents received the dreadful call that is every parent's nightmare. I was lying in the intensive care unit of a hospital on a life-support machine fighting for my life. I was discharged nine months later with the devastating news that I was quadriplegic – paralyzed from my shoulders down – and confined to a wheelchair.

The effects on families around the world affected by road carnage are immense. The journey for me has been emotionally exhausting, physically challenging and financially draining. I have and continue to struggle with constant expenses such as physiotherapy, rehabilitation and medical expenses so as to cope with the effects brought about by my injury. My mother had to leave her employment in order to provide round the clock care for me and so she continues to struggle with regular back pain brought about by the strain of six years of constant care. The pain caused to mothers who have lost their children or to families who have lost their breadwinners cannot be measured and today they continue to face the overwhelming and constant burden of road carnage.

As we assemble here today, we represent hundreds of meetings, conferences, events and campaigns that have taken place from across Africa to America and the greater Europe -as we echo the voices of millions who have come together to bring a stop to this rising epidemic on our roads. From a mother still grieving her son in Washington D.C, to mothers caring for their maimed children across the seas in Asia, developing Africa and Europe at large – we remember our brothers and sisters and all the young people who like myself had their dreams shattered and who know that if action is not taken, several more lives will be lost.

Today in Moscow we bring hope that we can fight road carnage in our society. On behalf of all our sons and daughters, friends and family who have been affected by road carnage, I appeal to all gathered here today to look beyond this conference and take action. Let us all join efforts together with one voice -- from the Russian federation, to Governments and organizations across the globe -as

we come together to represent families and the greater community all with one goal -- to make our roads safe!

We have remembered those whose lives have been affected – together it is time to respond and save the millions of those whose lives will be destroyed. One person cannot do everything but everyone -- can do something. Road crashes are destroying lives, let us save lives!

Thank you very much!