

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON THE WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS
20 November 2011**

Each day, nearly 3,500 people die on the roads. Tens of thousands more are injured. Families are broken apart. The futures of young people are dashed. Road accidents have become the leading cause of death for people aged 15 to 29. This is an unacceptable price to pay for mobility.

The Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, which began in May this year, has the goal of saving five million lives. A global plan for the decade provides a framework for governments, civil society and the private sector to work together to improve road management; upgrade the safety of roads and vehicles, and educate drivers, passengers and pedestrians on safe behaviour.

The plan focuses on the big risks, including speeding, drinking and driving, inattention while using mobile devices, and failing to use seat-belts, helmets and child restraints. It calls for better infrastructure and innovation. The global plan also encompasses care for victims, including their rescue, treatment and long-term rehabilitation. It calls for thorough crash investigations to prevent further deaths and injuries.

The United Nations itself must do its part to implement the plan. Earlier this month, a system-wide policy was introduced to promote road safety and the safe operation of UN vehicles.

Globally, vehicle ownership is forecast to double by 2020. Given this rapid expansion of vehicle use, especially in the world's emerging economies, capacity-building for road safety is crucial.

On this World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, let us mobilize all possible contributions to improving road safety – from city planners to vehicle designers, from policy makers to road users. Let us honour those who have lost their lives on the world's roads by acting to save the lives of others.