

AN URGENT CALL TO ACTION FOR NORTH AMERICA

RATIONALE

Each year, the world suffers 1.3 million preventable deaths and an estimated 50 million injuries from road crashes¹. Without serious action, road crashes will cause an estimated 13–17 million more deaths and 500 million more injuries in the current decade².

UN Member States have adopted a resolution 74/299 *Improving Global Road Safety*³ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (target 3.6)⁴ and are therefore mandated to reduce road deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030. We know what works to achieve this target: the actions needed are set out in the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030⁵.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The estimated road traffic mortality rate (per 100,000 population) is 11.7 for North America⁶, according to the Pan-American Health Organization/WHO data from 2016⁷. Nevertheless, disparities between countries in North America are huge. While in Canada, the road traffic mortality rate in 2019 was 5.34, in the US it was 12.67⁸.

1,745 people died in road crashes in Canada in 2020. This represents a 1% decrease in the number of deaths from 2019 and an overall 14% decrease over the 10-year period from 2011 to 2020⁹. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in the US, 38,824 people were killed in road crashes in 2020¹⁰. This represents a 6.8% increase compared with 2019; over the ten-year span from 2011 to 2020, the number of road traffic fatalities increased by 19.5%. Furthermore, the US is one of only three OECD countries where road fatalities increased in 2020 when compared with the 2017–2019 average¹¹. In 2020, across North America, 63% of road traffic deaths were motor vehicle drivers, 16% were motor vehicle passengers, 17% were pedestrians, 2% were cyclists and 1% were other road users, or cases where user type was not reported¹².

At a national level, both Canada and the U.S. have road safety strategies based on the Safe System approach with a vision for zero fatalities and serious injuries,

although the Canadian national strategy lacks specific numeric, time-bound targets. However, it is provinces/territories, states, and municipalities that are primarily responsible for implementation of road safety interventions and commitments at the national level must be converted into action on the ground.

Immediate action is needed. We must seize this window of opportunity to integrate the recommendations of the Global Plan into existing road safety strategies and plans. By doing so, we will not only save lives and empower others to save lives, but also improve public health, stimulate economic growth, and promote environmental sustainability.

CALL TO ACTION

We call on governments in North America to commit to act for people's right to safe mobility and a 50% reduction in road deaths and injuries by 2030, through implementation of evidence-based interventions that put people at the center, protect the environment, and promote equality and inclusion, through investment in effective solutions, and involvement of civil society.

We demand:

1 EVIDENCE-BASED ACTIONS

- a. Implement the Safe System approach in traffic safety and mobility plans at federal, state/provincial/territorial, and municipal levels, including systematic integration of road safety into public health, urban development, and mobility planning.**
- b. Integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into all road safety planning at the policy level, ensuring that roads and other public spaces are equitable and safe for everyone.**
- c. Implement active transportation and multi-modal transportation options with a focus on protecting vulnerable road users by:**
 - i. Promoting and making multiple forms of transportation available equitably, ensuring that low-income neighborhoods have the same quality of available transportation as high income neighbourhoods;
 - ii. Regular, frequent public transport with accessible timetables;
 - iii. Transport hubs that connect different modes of transportation;

- iv. Adequate and well-maintained infrastructure.
- v. Strategies to uncover, identify, acknowledge, and address the inequities in our current systems.

This will enable road users to shift to alternative, safe, and environmentally-friendly transport options such as walking, cycling, and public transit.

d. Speed management, guidance, policies and regulations that take into account the safety of all users, encouraging the setting of context-appropriate speed limits, such as 20mph where people move, live, and play, and that takes account of how vulnerable road users use the transportation system.

e. Establish clear and measurable targets and improve data collection to improve policy implementation by:

- i. Establishing unified, comprehensive data systems that produce timely, reliable, accurate, well-categorized data on road safety and the causes contributing to fatalities and serious injuries in crashes;
- ii. Introducing key performance indicators (KPIs) for road safety data, defining a data collection program for this purpose, and making KPIs part of periodical monitoring activities;
- iii. Basing interventions on evidence and scaling up partnerships to bridge the gap between government, research institutions, and civil society to provide better and more reliable data.

2 INVESTMENT IN EFFECTIVE ROAD SAFETY SOLUTIONS

a. Invest in road safety at all levels of government: federal, state/provincial/territorial and municipal. National governments are crucial in establishing policy, laws, and standards, but it is also important that they work collaboratively with and leverage available resources and partners to support implementation of road safety priorities.

b. Allocate the investment needed to deliver the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administration (CCMTA)'s National Road Safety Strategies and the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy.

c. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for public-private partnerships (PPPs) to ensure accountability for safety in road and transport contracts.

d. Establish appropriate funding to empower all road safety stakeholders,

including governments and NGOs, to develop adequate policies and action, notably to collect, analyze, use, and share quality crash data.

3 CIVIL SOCIETY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

- a. Establish clear mechanisms, such as formal committees, at the federal, state/provincial/territorial, and municipal government levels in North America, that include civil society stakeholders (NGOs, researchers, public health, and private sector) as key partners in the design and implementation of national road safety plans and as part of the leadership for planning and design.
- b. Promote constructive dialogue between civil society, including private sector, and governments, to offer evidence, analyses, and recommendations for better road safety governance and regulation for the benefit of people and communities.
- c. Promote the role of civil society and showcase how civil society can contribute to the implementation of national Safe System approaches and active transportation planning.

OUR ROLE AND COMMITMENT

Civil society plays a significant role and can contribute expertise in the successful delivery of road safety initiatives. No single organization has the resources to undertake all road safety projects. Furthermore, because the scope of potential projects is diverse, road safety needs to be addressed by a wide range of multisectoral stakeholders. It is important to work with and support existing community initiatives as well as cooperatively develop new programs and initiatives.

We, as civil society, have a role defined in the Global Plan. We commit to play our part in advocating for and enabling people's rights to safe mobility and achieve a 50% reduction in road deaths and injuries by 2030.

We commit to:

1. Stand up for people's right to be safe on the roads

We empower people and communities. We show the reality of the roads they use and highlight the experiences of road victims and their loved ones who have been affected by crashes. We speak up on decisions that affect road safety.

2. Use data and evidence to show what needs to be done

We amplify data, evidence, and best practices from around the world and we collect ground-level evidence that show the impact of safe and unsafe roads on people and communities.

3. Hold our governments accountable for people's right to be safe on the road and for the 2030 target

We keep road safety on the agenda until every person is guaranteed — through commitment and action — their right to safe mobility. We monitor progress and put a spotlight on action and inaction.

¹ WHO. (2018). *Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018*. Geneva: World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565684>.

² WHO & UN Regional Commissions. (2021). *Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030*. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>; Job, RFS. (2019). *Development of a Safe System Approach*, Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, 13 January 2019, Washington DC.

³ United Nations General Assembly. (2020). *Resolution A/74/L86 Improving Global Road Safety*. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/226/30/PDF/N2022630.pdf?OpenElement>

⁴ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

⁵ WHO & UN Regional Commissions. (2021). *Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030*. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>

⁶ For the purposes of this document, North America is defined as Canada and the U.S., and does not include Mexico.

⁷ Pan American Health Organization. (2019). *Status of Road Safety in the Region of the Americas*. PAHO. <https://doi.org/10.37774/9789275120868>

⁸ WHO. (n.d.). *SDG Target 3.6 Road traffic injuries*. World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/sdg-target-3_6-road-traffic-injuries

⁹ Transport Canada. (2022 February 1). *Canadian Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision Statistics: 2020*. <https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/statistics-data/canadian-motor-vehicle-traffic-collision-statistics-2020>

¹⁰ National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2022). *Overview of motor vehicle crashes in 2020 (Report No. DOT HS 813 266)*. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813266>

¹¹ International Transport Forum. (2021). *Road Safety Annual Report 2021*. <https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/irtad-road-safety-annual-report-2021.pdf>

¹² National Center for Statistics and Analysis Information Services Team (personal communication, March 18, 2022); Transport Canada. (2022 February 1). *Canadian Motor Vehicle Traffic Collision Statistics: 2020*. <https://tc.canada.ca/en/road-transportation/statistics-data/canadian-motor-vehicle-traffic-collision-statistics-2020>