



# General Assembly

Seventy-sixth session

**90<sup>th</sup>** plenary meeting  
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New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Shahid . . . . . (Maldives)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

## High-level meeting of the General Assembly on improving global road safety

### Agenda item 13 (continued)

#### Improving global road safety

##### Draft resolution (A/76/L.70)

**The President:** I declare open the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on improving global road safety. This meeting is being held in accordance with resolution 75/308, of 21 July 2021, and takes place under agenda item 13, entitled “Improving global road safety”.

#### Statement by the President

**The President:** I would like to begin by observing a moment of silence for all those who are killed or seriously injured on roads all over the world.

*The members of the General Assembly observed a moment of silence.*

**The President:** The statistics on road safety are both daunting and disturbing. Nearly 1.3 million lives are claimed by road traffic accidents every year. As much as 3 per cent of annual gross domestic product is lost in some countries owing to road accidents. And road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among children and young adults aged between 15 and 29 years of age. That trend can change. That trend must change. Today’s high-level meeting on improving

global road safety is one step towards doing exactly that. Under the theme “The 2030 horizon for road safety: securing a decade of action and delivery”, we can build the political will and deliver the concrete actions that help to save lives. As we begin our deliberations, I have five core messages.

First, no deaths on our streets are acceptable. For far too long we have accepted far too many deaths. We have allowed the huge range of crucial benefits that arise from safe transport systems to pass us by. Enough is enough. Road safety falls under the umbrella of the universal right to health, which is a fundamental right of every human being, wherever they are and whatever their circumstances. Safety is paramount.

Secondly, the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 is key to reducing deaths and boosting development. The Plan calls for a fundamental shift in how we approach mobility. It makes the best use of our investments in safe transport systems and aims to halve preventable deaths by 2030. The safe systems approach recognizes that road transport is a complex system with interconnecting elements that reinforce each other. Safety must therefore be front and centre in determining how we organize, design and build mobility systems. All partners and stakeholders involved in building safe transport systems must be engaged in crafting road safety strategies.

Thirdly, this high-level meeting could mark a critical juncture in addressing the issue of global road safety. Governments need to endorse the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety and urgently act

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on its recommendations, including by setting national and subnational reduction targets, outlining detailed plans of action, employing a whole-of-Government approach, ensuring sustainable financing and putting in place gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory policies and practices. Above all, the implementation of the Global Plan is crucial and should be guided by evidence-based practices.

Fourthly, transformative leadership and good governance are key. In order to make that work, road safety must be a political priority at the highest levels of Government. Governments must lead and facilitate each country's respective road safety strategy. They must set up and maintain broad and inclusive coordination mechanisms in order to ensure that all ministries and partners are fully involved in building safe transport systems. Governments are key to providing legal frameworks and funding. Long-term, sustainable investment is also needed to leverage the existing investments in wider areas of the transport sector.

Fifthly and finally, everyone has a role to play. The safe systems approach calls on everyone involved to share the responsibility for road safety and take part in the design of road safety policies. We must include young people, who are affected disproportionately by road safety incidents. We must adopt a gender perspective in all policymaking, including by ensuring that women's voices and perspectives are heard in designing policies that provide safe, inclusive and secure mobility. We must take into account the views of those in vulnerable situations, such as persons with disabilities and older persons. From urban planners to engineers, and academia to civil society, everyone has an important role to play. We must ensure that all stakeholders accept their responsibilities and that mechanisms are put in place to support them. That includes all those involved in designing and maintaining our roads, manufacturing our vehicles and administering our safety programmes. The role of the private sector is crucial.

Today's high-level meeting on improving global road safety is a key opportunity and platform for us to make the changes that are needed to strengthen the political will, scale up investment and draw on the lessons learned in order to accelerate action in implementing the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. As the tragic toll of incidents on our roads rises, the time is now for action from Governments, societies and communities. Safe mobility systems offer the promise of a safer, healthier

and better future for everyone, everywhere. Let us seize that opportunity.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres.

**The Secretary-General** (*spoke in French*): Let me begin by thanking members for their presence here today to promote road safety — one of the many critical challenges facing our world. I would also like to commend my Special Envoy for Road Safety, Mr. Jean Todt, and thank him for his leadership and tireless commitment.

Road accidents are a rampant silent epidemic. Today's meeting is a vital opportunity to improve the situation, take concrete action and work towards lasting change. Every year, 1.3 million people die on our roads, and 50 million more are seriously injured. Today road accidents are the leading cause of death worldwide among young people aged between 5 and 29 years. Nine out of 10 victims live in low- or middle-income countries. The tragedy is all the more unacceptable given that many of those deaths are entirely preventable.

(*spoke in English*)

Road fatalities are closely linked to poor infrastructure, unplanned urbanization, lax social protection and health-care systems, limited road safety literacy and persistent inequalities, both within and between countries. At the same time, unsafe roads are a key obstacle to development. Traffic accidents can push entire families into poverty through either the loss of a breadwinner or the costs associated with lost income and prolonged medical care. Developing countries lose between 2 and 5 per cent of their gross domestic product every year owing to road accidents.

Safer roads promote sustainable development. Our goals are clear — to cut road traffic deaths and injuries by half by 2030 and to promote sustainable mobility, with safety at its core. I count on members to attract attention and raise awareness and to foster more inclusive collaboration and closer coordination across sectors and stakeholders. We need more ambitious and urgent action if we are to reduce the biggest risks, such as speeding; driving under the influence of alcohol or any psychoactive substance or drug; failing to use seatbelts, helmets and child restraints; unsafe road infrastructure and vehicles; poor pedestrian safety; and the inadequate enforcement of traffic laws.

We need increased financing for sustainable and safe infrastructure, as well as investments in cleaner mobility and greener urban planning, especially in low- and middle-income countries. And we need to adopt a more holistic approach to road safety. That means better integrating road safety into national policies, from education, health and transport to climate mitigation, land-use planning and disaster response.

I encourage all Member States to accede to the United Nations road safety conventions and to implement whole-of-society action plans, while taking a strong prevention approach. I urge all donors to scale up their much-needed financial and technical contributions through the United Nations Road Safety Fund. Every one of us has a role to play in making roads safer for everyone, everywhere. Together we can save lives, support development and steer our world towards safer roads, leaving no one behind.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Before proceeding further, as announced in my letter circulated on 29 June, it is proposed that the opening segment of this meeting also feature a statement by Mr. Stewart Simonson, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization and the Director-General's Special Representative for United Nations Reform, on behalf of the Director-General of the World Health Organization.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to decide that the opening segment of its high-level meeting on improving global road safety, held pursuant to resolution 75/308, will feature a statement by Mr. Stewart Simonson, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization and the Director-General's Special Representative for United Nations Reform, on behalf of the Director-General of the World Health Organization?

*It was so decided (decision 76/570 A).*

**The President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Stewart Simonson, Assistant Director-General of the World Health Organization and the Director-General's Special Representative for United Nations Reform, to make a statement on behalf of the Director-General of the World Health Organization.

**Mr. Simonson** (World Health Organization): I am honoured to deliver these remarks on behalf of Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization.

The transport systems we use every day open the world to us. But they are far too dangerous, polluting and wasteful. Every year, nearly 1.3 million people die in road traffic accidents — that is about 3,500 lives lost every single day. Road traffic crashes are the leading cause of death among children and young people. The increasing motorization of transport systems brings with it the risk of death, injury, greenhouse-gas emissions, air pollution and fossil-fuel reliance. Pedestrians and cyclists, who are often the most disadvantaged members of society, are on the roads alongside high-speed traffic, which substantially increases the risk of road traffic crashes. That is too high a price to pay for mobility.

Putting safety at the core of our transport systems is an urgent moral imperative. The Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, which was launched last year by Dr. Ghebreyesus, calls for a comprehensive, balanced and achievable approach to improving the safety of roads by putting safety at the heart of transport, the environment, urban planning and development policies. The Plan promotes safe walking, cycling and public transport. It calls for action on managing speed and emphasizes the importance of road infrastructure design, vehicle safety standards and legislation as key elements of a safe-system framework to prevent deaths and injuries.

The health sector plays a critical role in preventing deaths and long-term disabilities. The Global Plan draws attention to the need to strengthen post-crash response, including emergency trauma care and rehabilitation services. It also calls for a just response for victims and their families. The Plan will indeed drive the implementation of the second United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety. In that regard, a 50 per cent reduction in road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030 is an ambitious but achievable target. In fact, a reduction of just 7 per cent each year over the next decade will result in a more than 50 per cent reduction overall. It is important for policymakers to be ever mindful that safe mobility is fundamentally a human right.

Today's high-level meeting of the General Assembly on global road safety is important and timely. We need Presidents, Prime Ministers, mayors and ministers to lead the effort by ensuring coordination across all sectors in order to make roads safe. Improving the design of urban environments and transport systems in order to protect and promote health and well-being requires an integrated multisectoral approach, guided by policy

frameworks, so that human and environmental health go hand in hand.

The World Health Organization encourages civil society, academia and the private sector to do their part to make our roads safe. As the group most affected by road traffic crashes, young people should be engaged in meaningful ways in planning the future of their mobility. The World Health Organization encourages leaders to be inspired by the Global Plan as a foundation for their own national safety policies and programmes. Safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems are well within reach. The discussions held over the next two days will be instrumental in promoting whole-of-Government action around a shared vision of the future of mobility and its links with human and planetary health. That is particularly important as we recover and rebuild from the coronavirus disease pandemic.

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for his leadership in bringing to a successful conclusion the substantive, forward-looking and action-oriented draft political declaration (A/76/L.70) and for convening this high-level meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy for Road Safety, Mr. Jean Todt, for their leadership and vision.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to all the members of the Assembly for their dedication and commitment to road safety. The World Health Organization, having been mandated by the General Assembly to lead the United Nations system's effort on road safety, looks forward to working with all members in order to make safe roads a reality in every country on Earth.

**The President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Jean Todt, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Road Safety.

**Mr. Todt:** It is a real honour to open this first-ever high-level meeting of the General Assembly on global road safety. The fact that we have managed to make this meeting happen indicates that road safety has been recognized as an urgent global issue that requires our combined effort. During the first Decade of Action for Road Safety, which began in 2010, we gained much experience of how to address this urgent, life-saving issue. But even today, road traffic crashes represent a leading cause of death and injury around the world, killing more than 1.3 million people and injuring as many as 50 million more each year, with 90 per cent

of those casualties occurring in developing countries. Only by combining efforts everywhere can that growing destruction on our roads be resolved.

As we attend the panels and events over the next two days, we must keep fresh in mind the theme of securing a decade of action and delivery. Action and delivery are indeed needed. The world is uniting to attack the invisible, pervasive threat of road accidents. The increase in funding for road safety in recent years is encouraging but not enough. We also now have many more partners, including through the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, the United Nations road safety conventions, the United Nations Road Safety Fund, the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, the Global Status Report on Road Safety and many others. But we need to do more.

Before I became involved in road safety more than a decade ago, I had a long career in motor racing. Success in racing is easy to measure — when someone wins, they have done their job; when someone does not win, they have not. Unfortunately, measuring success in road safety is not as simple. It is not so easy to know whose life we have saved. It might even include some of us here today. What is certain is that we all know of someone who lost their life in a road crash. We need to have faith that, through the steady application of work towards our goal, we will see a drop in the horrifying number of road traffic fatalities and injuries.

Even if we have made progress in certain countries, there is still an unacceptable discrepancy between what is happening in the developed world as compared to the developing world. Over the past 45 years, Europe has added three times more vehicles but had five times fewer victims. In the developing world, however, both the number of vehicles and the number of victims are growing. Africa, for instance, with only 2 per cent of vehicles globally, has the highest road-crash fatality rate in the world. Some of the solutions are simple, such as reducing speed and wearing a helmet or a seat belt. Others are more complicated. For example, building busy roadways away from schools reduces fatalities dramatically. But for a solution like that to be effective, we need to be involved early in the city and road planning stages. It requires the participation of everyone. That is why we are now working as hard as we can, during our second Decade of Action for Road Safety, which ends in 2030, to combine our efforts in the battle for road safety goals with those that seek to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In that



way, we can also achieve many of our global targets on climate change, gender, cities, education, child health and human rights.

History has proven that, if the world works together in that way, we can achieve the seemingly impossible. Only a century and a half ago, the average global life expectancy at birth was around 32 years. Today, thanks mostly to medical science, it is 73 years — that is a more than 50 per cent increase in life expectancy. We are aiming to achieve 50 per cent fewer deaths on the road. We have much less time to achieve that, but we already have many of the solutions. By working together to apply a systematic approach across all our modes of transport, we can achieve that goal.

The Assembly can count on my commitment to delivering on our objective together. I wish members an excellent two days of events ahead, here in New York.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker for the opening segment of the high-level meeting. I wish to thank the Secretary-General for taking the time to be with us this morning. The Secretary-General will now be leaving due to his other commitments.

The Assembly will now proceed to consider draft resolution A/76/L.70, entitled “Political declaration of the high-level meeting on improving global road safety”.

In that connection, I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Ms. Norman-Chalet** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): The present oral statement is made in the context of rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. The present statement will also be distributed to Member States.

Under the terms of paragraph 18 of draft resolution A/76/L.70, the General Assembly would

“[d]ecide to convene a high-level meeting on improving global road safety in 2026 in New York, [...] the scope and modalities of which shall be decided no later than at the eightieth session of the General Assembly”.

The adoption of the draft resolution would not entail any budgetary implications with regard to the programme budget. Upon a decision on the format, scope and modalities of the high-level meeting, the Secretary-General would assess the budgetary implications and advise the Assembly in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General

Assembly. Furthermore, in accordance with established practice, the date of the high-level meeting would be determined in consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management.

The statement I just read out will be made available in *The Journal of the United Nations* under the e-statements link for the meeting.

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/76/L.70. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/76/L.70?

*Draft resolution A/76/L.70 was adopted (resolution 76/294).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of vote after the voting, may I remind delegations that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

**Mr. Chumakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank you, Mr. President, for your personal efforts to ensure the adoption of the political declaration on improving global road safety (resolution 76/294). We are also grateful to the Chef de Cabinet of your Office, Ambassador Nagaraj Naidu Kakanur, and the World Health Organization’s office at the United Nations in New York for their outstanding contribution to the preparation of this positive document.

Russia supports the political declaration and welcomes its adoption by the General Assembly. The text underpins a number of principles that are essential to the implementation of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, including the right to health, the system-wide cross-sectoral approach to road safety, with the involvement of all sectors of society, the importance of planning and the establishment of specific goals. The document contains important mandates, including to undertake a midterm review in 2026 of the implementation of the second Decade of Action, and to strengthen the specialized work of the World Health Organization.

At the same time, we regret that the Assembly was unable to adopt a more comprehensive text, which was prepared under the mandate of the President of the Assembly following a six-month open process. The document therefore fails to fully reflect a number of

important topics, including, inter alia, advocacy and education, a focus on vulnerable road users, speed limits, funding, advanced technology, research, standardization, the role of public transport, assistance to victims of road traffic accidents, contributions by the private sector and the United Nations road safety partnership, the consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic and others.

Anyone who wishes to do so can verify those shortcomings by consulting the United Nations website, which includes the original version of the document that was submitted via silence procedure on 24 May. The responsibility for those shortcomings lies with a group of countries that absurdly blocked the text based on political motives that were unrelated to the topic of the meeting, in violation of the established practice and with no respect for the work carried out by other States. The result is that road safety has been undermined, especially in developing countries. We condemn that destructive and senseless action, which will not go unnoticed. Nevertheless, we welcome the adoption of the political declaration, which marks significant progress on the matter.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

I take this opportunity to once again extend my sincere appreciation to all Member States for their constructive engagement and support during this process, which enabled agreement on a concise and action-oriented political declaration, as mandated by resolution 75/308. I would also like to express my appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Gbolíé Désiré Wulfran Ipo, Deputy Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations, and His Excellency Mr. Dmitry Chumakov, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, for their work. I also thank my Chef de Cabinet, Ambassador Nagaraj Naidu Kakanur, who ably facilitated the second phase of the intergovernmental negotiations and successfully completed the work on a final political declaration.

Before we begin with the list of speakers for the plenary segment, I would like to remind delegations that, as set out in resolution 75/308, statements will be limited to three minutes for individual delegations and five minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. François Bausch, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Mobility and Public Works of Luxembourg.

**Mr. Bausch (Luxembourg):** Let me first thank you, Mr. President, for convening this high-level meeting of the General Assembly on improving global road safety, and for your efforts that enabled us to adopt the political declaration by consensus this morning (resolution 76/294). Despite all the other crises we are facing today, including climate change, poverty, hunger, health crises such as the global pandemic, as well as geopolitical crises and wars, there is one crisis people tend to forget, and that is road safety.

Every day, people are dying on our streets. What crime are they committing? None. They merely want to get from A to B. In some countries, road safety fatalities are the most common cause of death, especially among young people. That is a disaster. That is unacceptable. The vast majority of road deaths worldwide occur in so-called low- and middle-income countries. We had a similar situation in Europe in the mid-seventies, when road deaths increased dramatically. The problems were very much the same in every country. Most of the fatalities were the result of people driving at high speeds or drinking and driving. Speeding was the main reason for road fatalities, and it still is. Despite all our efforts to build safer roads, and despite all the innovation in vehicle safety, speeding is the major problem when it comes to road safety.

If we think about road infrastructure today, we see it mainly as infrastructure for cars. But, in fact, roads should be multimodal corridors that are secure for every mode of transport, including for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. That is especially true in urban areas, where the most vulnerable infrastructure users are present. We have to slow down the traffic in those areas. We must give back our cities to the people, pedestrians, cyclists and all other users of slow mobility.

We need to reorganize the public space in our cities. We have to create cities for people. It is important to raise awareness of the fact that public space is for everyone. One of the most alarming new tendencies concerning road safety is distraction. A mobile phone, a tablet, a navigation device — all those items can cause drivers to be inattentive. Texting while driving is as dangerous as drinking and driving. If we are to reduce road deaths and fatalities, we need a holistic action plan and strong political will.

In order to achieve the target set by the United Nations for the Decades of Action for Road Safety, Luxembourg has put in place action plans concerning road safety. The two plans, for 2014-2018 and 2019-2023, respectively, comprise a total of 57 specific measures to reduce road fatalities. They include a mix of preventive and educational measures, but also enforcement measures. Through those programmes, we have managed to reduce our road fatalities over the past 10 years by almost 50 per cent. Luxembourg now has 38 road deaths per million inhabitants each year, which is the European average.

We still have a lot to do and a lot of work ahead of us. That is why our main goal is to achieve Vision Zero, that is, zero deaths and zero injuries. To do so will take time, political perseverance and, of course, money. Therefore, when I first heard about the plans to introduce the United Nations Road Safety Fund, it was absolutely clear to me that Luxembourg would need to be a part of it. All the necessary measures to improve road safety — from training and testing to driver education and raising awareness of road safety, as well as efficient enforcement and improving infrastructure — all have a price. In order to help countries develop their own road safety programmes and fight the daily disasters on our roads, that new Fund is of paramount importance. I would therefore like to thank all those involved in making it happen, and hope that it will save many lives in the years to come.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Wee Ka Siong, Minister of Transport of Malaysia.

**Mr. Siong (Malaysia):** Allow me to speak briefly about Malaysia's efforts to improve road safety.

In line with our commitments under the second United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Government of Malaysia, in collaboration with regional state governments, industry partners, non-governmental agencies and other road safety partners, is working hard to ensure that road safety is entrenched as part of the norms of our daily life and upheld as the utmost priority in everyone's travel routine.

In Malaysia, the fatalities of motorcycle users contribute to more than half — to be exact, 64 per cent — of the total annual fatalities from road crashes. Tackling the safety aspects of motorcycle use has therefore become paramount in achieving the target of

reducing road fatalities by 50 per cent by the year 2030. The high number of users and an almost equal number of motorcycles as compared to other motor vehicles on the road pose a huge challenge for us in formulating effective safety policies for motorcyclists.

We pay serious attention to the nine recommendations put forward by the Academic Expert Group of the Swedish Transport Administration in its high-level report, especially those relating to safer vehicles and the proliferation of safer technologies in vehicle construction and infrastructure design. In that regard, we are seriously looking into enhancing the adoption of vehicle safety technologies by creating demand for them and sustaining the supply chains of production. We have seen a very positive impact on vehicle manufacturers as a result of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) New Car Assessment Programme, which aims to populate Malaysian roads with safer cars day by day. We are also working towards making it mandatory for an anti-lock braking system to be installed in all new motorcycle models, initially for those with an engine cylinder capacity of 150 and above, in the next two years.

We have been participating in the International Road Assessment Programme since 2016, and we are now putting in place a more focus-driven programme for motorcycle safety under the Malaysia Road Assessment Programme, including by emphasizing dedicated lanes for motorcycles on our newly constructed roads. In addition, our Malaysian Institute of Road Safety Research is also forging close partnerships with many relevant organizations in the ASEAN region in order to bring the community together around the common goal of making road transport safer. Those partnerships can lead to wider collaboration, the execution of road safety improvement projects and exchanges of expertise, knowledge and experience with a view to achieving safer roads for all parties concerned.

All those efforts have been institutionalized in the Malaysia Road Safety Plan 2022-2030, which was developed by the Ministry of Transport and is supported by all relevant stakeholders. The Plan was prepared in line with the recommendations of the United Nations in its resolution 74/299, which declared the period 2021-2030 as the second Decade of Action for Road Safety. In addition, targets relating to road safety, as described under Sustainable Development Goals 3.6 and 11.2, have also been adopted in the Plan, with the main aim of achieving at least a 50 per cent reduction

in the number of fatalities caused by road crashes by 2030. The Plan encompasses 10 priority areas that have been identified as being the most important in order to significantly reduce the risk of death and serious injury on Malaysian roads. In particular, two priority areas, specifically those of safer motorcycle riding and safer vehicles, will include key strategies and action items to improve safety for riders and motorcycles in Malaysia.

In conclusion, we are pleased to note today's adoption by the General Assembly of the political declaration of the high-level meeting on improving global road safety (resolution 76/294), which reaffirms our collective commitment to international cooperation on road safety. Let us all work together to achieve the ultimate safety goals in order to better our lives at both the national and global levels.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Alexis Guerrero, Minister of Transport of Argentina.

**Mr. Guerrero (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*):** I would like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and the President of the General Assembly, Minister Abdulla Shahid, for having convened this high-level meeting that is so important to safeguarding the security and lives of our citizens.

In Argentina, we have done sterling work with respect to road safety. The latest statistics show that the number of fatalities caused by road accidents is still 25 per cent below the pre-pandemic figures. That has been made possible owing to the fact that we have been working and cooperating, through our national agencies, with the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization and Argentine non-governmental organizations on concrete State policies of oversight, awareness-raising and support, including, for example, by launching communication campaigns and preventing drink driving through 19 simultaneous control operations across the country's 24 provinces.

The current statistics show a reduction in the number of drink driving cases by half, which is an example of what can be achieved when a public policy that seeks to raise awareness is sustained over time. In that regard, we monitor speeding, carry out operations to prevent driving on the hard shoulder, work in conjunction with other political ministerial portfolios to eradicate underground street races, promote the mandatory use of helmets for motorcyclists and monitor the use of seat

belts in cars and on long-distance public transport, in addition to child seat devices, inter alia.

We work in conjunction with local jurisdictions to educate people, ensuring that teachers of all subjects have an obligation to incorporate road safety into their curriculums. Children who acquire knowledge from an early age are proficient in replicating good practices, and through them we are also reaching the rest of the family. In order to also educate adults in an improved, less violent and more inclusive road culture, we have incorporated a module with a gender perspective into the national driver's licence. The process of obtaining a licence therefore includes content that helps banish stereotypes and ensure that women and diverse segments of the population have access to the same rights and opportunities when it comes to using the road network. More than 190,000 people have completed the training since its implementation, and a programme is already being rolled out in the country's 23 provincial capitals to provide low-income women and women breadwinners with the tools to obtain their first driver's licence.

Receiving support at a time of grief is an acute need for many families in the aftermath of a road accident, and the State can make its resources available to help alleviate their suffering. We therefore have a federal network in place to assist victims of road accidents and their relatives via a specific helpline — 149. The service supports and advises people free of charge once the emergency situation has passed, including by providing psychological and legal assistance, advice on social services, medical assistance and rehabilitation, relocation and accommodation and economic support, among other resources. The policies we are promoting have already enabled us to prevent an average of five deaths per day, as compared to the figures over the past 10 years, which means that an additional 1,825 people per year are still with their loved ones.

Much remains to be done, and we are deeply pained by every road victim. That is why we are still working to further improve our country's standards. Together with provincial authorities, we are already implementing a federal scoring system to ensure that citizens throughout the country are treated equally before the law and that their offences are not merely resolved by financial means. In that regard, every licence will start with 20 points, from which points will be deducted for each offence committed by drivers, irrespective of where in the country they do so. Thanks to that system,



dealing with offences is no longer merely an exercise in collecting fines, and it will also enable the national Government to rely on better statistics regarding compliance with regulations in each of the country's local jurisdictions.

We are currently pushing for a zero-alcohol law, which is already being discussed in the National Congress, in order to eliminate any margin of tolerance for the level of blood alcohol content with which a vehicle can be driven throughout the country. Several regions in Argentina already apply the law successfully, and the statistics indicate that deaths and injuries from road accidents have decreased as a result. Reports show that alcohol is present in one in every four people who die in road accidents, and the fact that we have the highest margin of tolerance in the region tempts Argentine drivers to speculate about the amount of alcohol they can consume, which leads to endangering their lives and those of their fellow citizens.

We are also pushing for a law that creates classifications of criminal offences for road homicide and road injuries, with prison sentences of between 8 and 25 years and lifelong disqualification from driving for the most serious cases, such as those involving fatalities during underground street races. We want to toughen the sentences and raise awareness among reckless drivers who put their lives and those of others in danger.

All those actions are part of a clear vision that has been set out by our President, which aligns Argentina with the global objective of halving deaths and injuries from road accidents by 2030. It is a commitment that we as a State have assumed through of our National Road Safety Agency, and one we have an obligation to fulfil, because doing so means protecting the lives of our citizens.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Audley Shaw, Minister of Transport and Mining of Jamaica.

**Mr. Shaw (Jamaica):** Jamaica is pleased to participate in the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on improving global road safety with a view to tackling the plague of road crashes and fatalities. We welcome the sincere efforts of this body.

Globally, road traffic crashes cause nearly 1.3 million preventable deaths and an estimated 50 million injuries each year, and they are the leading killer of children

and young people worldwide. Jamaica has not been spared the destructive effects of road crashes, as we have observed a steady increase in fatality rates since 2012. Fatalities increased on average by 10 per cent from 2012 to 2019. In 2021, 487 persons were killed on our nation's road network, representing a 12 per cent increase as compared to 433 deaths in 2020. It has been generally accepted that developing nations, despite having fewer vehicles than developed countries, have a larger portion of fatalities globally. The socioeconomic impact on developing States is devastating.

In October 2021, as the keynote speaker at the launching of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, Jamaica's Prime Minister, the Most Honourable Andrew Holness, announced the adoption of the safe-systems approach, which remains core of the second Decade of Action, thereby sending a clear signal of Jamaica's commitment to the United Nations goal to halve road fatalities by 2030. We affirm our commitment to the second Decade of Action in order to prioritize and formulate policy that serves as a blueprint for the development of national and local plans and targets.

The United Nations estimates that 13 million deaths and 500 million injuries during the next decade will hinder sustainable development, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. In order to help reverse the tide of road crash deaths and injuries, cooperation among multilateral agencies, developed and developing countries, public-private partnerships and non-governmental organizations will be required, especially if we are to achieve the goal of reducing road fatalities and injuries by 50 per cent. The work of the United Nations Road Safety Fund is critical to supporting that endeavour. The Fund leverages fiscal and technical cooperation in order to fund strategic road safety interventions that improve road infrastructure, transport management, public education and post-crash care.

Jamaica is optimistic about the outcomes of the high-level meeting on global road safety and its first pledging event. We welcome the opportunities to forge partnerships with a view to achieving the shared goal of reducing road fatalities globally. We know we can achieve the vision of zero lives being lost to road crashes, as long as we all work together.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Chanthol Sun, Minister of Public Works and Transport of Cambodia.

**Mr. Sun (Cambodia):** Road accidents are a major cause of death in Cambodia. Each day, an average of five people are killed and 10 are injured on the roads in Cambodia. According to a study by the United Nations Development Programme, Cambodia incurs a loss of approximately 2.5 to 3 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) per year owing to road accidents.

The Royal Government of Cambodia established the National Road Safety Committee, which is chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, while the Minister of Public Works and Transport is permanent vice-chair and the National Police Chief is vice-chair. The permanent vice-chair is responsible for establishing the road safety policy, and the National Police Chief is in charge of enforcement. In addition, subcommittees chaired by the governors of the provinces have been established to implement the road safety policy at the provincial level. The National Road Safety Committee meets on a monthly basis to review the road accident statistics and set action plans to combat those accidents. The Royal Government of Cambodia adheres to global road safety guidelines and regulations in order to prevent and reduce road accidents.

According to our Road Crash and Victim Information System's annual report for 2010 to 2020, the major causes of road accidents include speeding, dangerous overtaking, not respecting the right of way and drink driving. Flawed road designs and technical vehicle malfunctions were also shown to be contributors. We have worked very hard to strengthen the enforcement of road traffic law and our national policy on road safety and decade of action 2011-2020, which I am pleased to report has resulted in nearly 5,000 lives being saved, which is a positive trend, albeit still short of our objective of saving approximately 7,400 lives.

Following the declaration made at the third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, which was held in Stockholm, as well as the establishment of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, which was launched by the World Health Organization and the United Nations regional commissions on 28 October 2021, Cambodia established its own decade of action for 2021-2030, with the aim of reducing road accidents by 50 per cent. We recently introduced a new

mobile app that enables our traffic officers to deduct points from drivers' licences in real time at the point of infraction. The introduction of cameras to capture speeding and reckless driving on our national roads has added to the continuing increase in awareness that traffic violations will not be tolerated.

Our Prime Minister issued a statement to remind our citizens that "today and tomorrow, we shall not have road accidents". Reducing road accidents is the responsibility of all stakeholders. Governments cannot do so alone. We need both the public and private sectors, non-governmental organizations and the media to work hand in hand with the Government in order to educate road users about traffic law. In that regard, the National Road Safety Committee has been working with various chambers of commerce in Cambodia so that members educate their employees about road traffic law. The Committee has also adopted and adapted the best practices of other countries on road safety.

Although road accidents cost us an average of 2.5 to 3 per cent of our GDP, which makes road safety a major public health concern, the funding to fight the problem has not been allocated adequately owing to budgetary constraints. In that connection, I urge all development partners to contribute to the cost of the effective implementation of road safety programmes in all Member States.

We truly appreciate the theme and concept of this meeting, as well as the three panel discussions. Our delegation looks forward to learning from this meeting about the various mechanisms and technical support available to reduce road accidents.

**The President:** I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Aishath Nahula, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation of the Maldives.

**Ms. Nahula (Maldives):** Let me thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this high-level meeting on improving global road safety, as part of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. I would also like to congratulate Member States and all stakeholders on having successfully adopted an action-oriented political declaration (resolution 76/294). I am confident in our ability to generate the further political will to make our roads safer. The Maldives welcomes the establishment of the target to reduce the number of road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50 per cent by 2030. We are strongly encouraged by members' commitment in that regard.

Mobility plays a vital role in all aspects of our lives. Safe and efficient road transport systems are critical to our daily lives, as they improve access to food, education, employment and health-care services. Every year, approximately 1.3 million people lose their lives in road traffic crashes, and as many as 50 million more suffer non-fatal injuries. According to the World Health Organization, more than 90 per cent of traffic-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries like the Maldives. Such overwhelming statistics make it clear that, while road safety is a public-health issue, it also has socioeconomic repercussions. Road traffic injuries cause considerable economic losses among individuals, their families and nations. They cost most countries 3 per cent of their gross domestic product.

The Maldives notes with concern that road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among children and young adults. That is true even in the Maldives. Sadly, the victims who fall are mostly between the age of 18 and 30. Typically, the accidents are the result of reckless driving. Taking those facts into consideration, the Maldives strongly supports the implementation of a speed limit of 30 kilometres per hour on streets where pedestrians and road traffic coexist. While speed limits are crucial to making our roads safer, they also encourage sustainable transport choices that could help reduce harmful vehicle emissions that contribute to climate change.

Climate change is this century's defining threat. It continues to pose a significant risk to small island developing States like the Maldives. It represents the gravest of threats to our survival and viability, including through the loss of territory. We need to do more to encourage safe and liveable urban communities, with neighbourhoods that are designed to promote zero-carbon mobility, including by advocating walking and cycling.

Road safety plays an increasingly important role in facilitating access to employment and education, reducing poverty and inequities, as well as mitigating the impact of climate change. It is indirectly linked to the realization of several of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Maldives supports the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, and urges Member States to develop national plans and targets.

Improving road safety is a shared responsibility. Reducing the number of road accidents requires concerted and collaborative action by several sectors.

Leadership and clear lines of institutional responsibility and accountability are crucial. We must also engage the private sector, civil society and academia. As we push for the establishment of proactive measures and action, we must face the harsh reality. The politics of a nation should not stand in the way of policies that can lead to safer communities. One small action can have a lasting impact on someone's life. A life could be saved by abandoning reckless habits. It is time to roll up our sleeves and get to work.

The Maldives will stand strong with fellow Member States in leading initiatives to make our roads safer and ensure prosperity, equal opportunity and economic success for everyone around the world.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mahamoudou Zampaligre, Minister of Transport, Urban Mobility and Road Safety of Burkina Faso.

**Mr. Zampaligre (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*):** At the outset, I should like to express my appreciation and gratitude to the United Nations for having involved Burkina Faso in this high-level meeting. It gives us the welcome opportunity to share our views on global road safety based on our own experiences and those of others, and on the role of the United Nations in that area.

Allow me to extend my warm greetings to you, Mr. President, and to congratulate you on the distinction with which you have presided over our work. May your wisdom and vast experience enlighten and guide our efforts so that we may fulfil the objectives we have set for ourselves. For my part, I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support and close cooperation in these endeavours.

This high-level meeting is being held against the backdrop of the uncertainty associated with the consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic, the acute international economic situation and the growing threats to international peace and security. The various challenges facing the world call on us all to act and demand greater courage, effort, creativity and solidarity. Alongside those well-known challenges, there is an equally serious threat that endangers human life and hinders sustainable development, that is, of course, road safety.

At the beginning of this second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, road accidents still cause an estimated 1.3 million deaths and more than 50 million

serious injuries around the world each year. Ninety per cent of road traffic deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, and more than 55 per cent of them are among vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.

In Burkina Faso, between 2019 and 2021, the number of road accidents rose from 20,578 to 25,118, representing an average increase of 15.13 per cent per year. The number of injuries rose from 13,653 to 15,340, while the number of deaths rose from 978 to 1,272 — an average increase of 5.62 and 0.9 per cent, respectively, per year. The socioeconomic consequences of road accidents are huge. In particular, the economic cost is estimated to be 3 per cent of gross domestic product, which is the same as our official development assistance. Road safety has therefore become a major concern both for States and also for the United Nations. In that regard, I should like to commend the numerous efforts made by the United Nations system to support the steps taken by States to address the following challenges: elevating road safety to the status of a national priority; encouraging Governments to develop and implement policies to improve road safety; establishing standards and developing technical guidance based on scientific evidence; mobilizing stakeholders from the private sector, academia and civil society to work effectively towards improving road safety; and encouraging Member States to periodically review and report on the road safety initiatives they have undertaken and the progress made.

There is no need to emphasize the urgency of meeting those challenges, given that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals partly depends on it. Indeed, a road network that is safe, efficient and meets the needs of all citizens helps facilitate equitable access to education, health care and food. It also helps connect all parts of a country and thereby promotes the establishment of economic, social and environmental links between urban, suburban and rural areas.

For its part, Burkina Faso would like to reaffirm its readiness to continue the fruitful cooperation that has always existed between our country and the United Nations system, particularly with respect to improving road safety. I would hope that today's exchange will enable us to strengthen that partnership and explore other types of cooperation at the regional and international levels. In any case, my country is present here today to draw inspiration from the experience of other countries that are more directly confronted with the issue, as well

as to share our views on the implementation of road safety initiatives.

We are therefore aware of the urgent need to implement urgent and appropriate solutions. In that regard, the Government of Burkina Faso has had a national road safety policy in place since 2009, which is built around four strategic approaches relating to the institutional management of road safety, road user training and awareness, the technical condition of vehicles and the safety of road infrastructure. Despite our commitment to improving road safety through the implementation of a national road safety policy, we have been faced with various difficulties, including the lack of a sustainable financing mechanism for road safety, poor data management on road traffic accidents, a failure to implement regulatory texts and the absence of regular road safety checks and penalties.

In order to meet those challenges, Burkina Faso needs the support of its partners to help finance road safety activities and build the technical capacities of its National Road Safety Office. Moreover, the Government of Burkina Faso intends to pursue the reform efforts already under way and will spare no effort to improve its approach to the issue on a daily basis in order to fulfil its safety commitments for the benefit of the population.

Finally, I would like to renew my deep gratitude and the heartfelt compliments of my delegation for the scrupulous organization of this meeting.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Tomas Eneroth, Minister of Infrastructure of Sweden.

**Mr. Eneroth (Sweden):** Each year, 1.3 million people are killed in road traffic accidents. Road traffic injuries are the most common cause of death among young people globally. That is not acceptable. We must inject a sense of urgency into our road safety ambitions. In the past, road safety has been isolated from other policy areas and treated almost as a separate process. But now we have learned that more can be achieved if we see road safety as part of a bigger picture, as part of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and as a way of building a safer and more sustainable society for all.

When Sweden had the privilege of hosting the third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Stockholm in 2020, it was my ambition that the



Stockholm Declaration would provide us with the opportunity to show our strong commitment both to strengthening road safety and sharing our experiences and, in doing so, to work together to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, not least with regard to climate and gender equality.

In an increasingly polarized world, in which the differences between countries are often in focus rather than the common challenges, we need more multilateral arenas for collaboration — not less. The countries of the world need to come together around our common challenges, as we are doing here in New York today, because the global nature of the road-safety challenge calls for international cooperation. Now is the time to act. Reaching consensus on a political declaration under the current circumstances shows the strong political commitment of all of us. I especially want to thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership in making that possible.

Now is the time to come together in this second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 in order to make road traffic fatalities a thing of the past. Now is the time to deliver on our promises to make safer, more sustainable and more accessible transport systems for ourselves and for the generations to come. Since adopting Vision Zero in 1997, Sweden has come a long way. We have seen significant reductions in the number of road traffic fatalities, and I believe our success is based on three approaches.

First, we design our transport system in a way that takes human error into account. In a safe transport system, mistakes can be made without it resulting in someone being killed or seriously injured. Secondly, with regard to stakeholder engagement, we design our transport system in close collaboration with the private sector, academia and civil society. Road safety is a shared responsibility, and several perspectives must be taken into account. Thirdly, we embrace technology and innovation. Our vehicle manufacturers work closely with others to innovate solutions for safer and more sustainable vehicles.

*Ms. Fatima (Bangladesh), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

I recall that, 20 to 30 years ago, we thought the green transition would not be possible. But now we see the transport industry taking the lead in the green transition and creating new jobs. The same attitude to

change must be applied to road safety. Together we can achieve a 50 per cent reduction in fatalities on our roads by 2030, and I offer my and Sweden's full commitment to making that happen. We will save lives and give hope to the coming generations. It is time for action.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Deligne Ascención Burgos, Minister of Public Works and Communications of the Dominican Republic.

**Mr. Ascención Burgos (Dominican Republic)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Recent decades have shown that effective and comprehensive road safety strategies can reduce the number of people killed or injured in road traffic accidents. The vast majority of road accidents worldwide take place in low- and middle-income countries, disproportionately impacting the poorest. They are the leading cause of death among young people aged between 15 and 29 years, which means they are at increased risk.

The Dominican Republic has a population of approximately 10.5 million people — of which 80 per cent live in urban areas and 20 per cent in rural areas, in a surface area of just over 48,000 square kilometres — and a gross domestic product of just over \$80 billion dollars. However, the Dominican Republic is among the highest-ranking countries in the world with respect to the number of road traffic accidents and the number of deaths they cause. Approximately 34.6 lives per 100,000 inhabitants are lost each year on the roads in the Dominican Republic. That means that more than 3,500 people die every year as a result of road traffic accidents, which is more than the number of people who died as a result of the coronavirus disease pandemic in our country. For that reason, the Government of the Dominican Republic has itself adopted the goal enshrined in resolution 74/299, namely, to halve the number of road traffic accidents in the decade 2021-2030. In order to achieve that, we have identified the main causes that give rise to road accidents.

In 2021, the International Road Assessment Programme was applied to the three main transport arteries in the Dominican Republic, which were given a star rating for their level of safety. Those three major road arteries received one- and two-star ratings, indicating a high probability of a traffic accident occurring along them. We are therefore working on three key pillars, as defined by the Government: first, the legal

framework; secondly, enhancing our road and transport infrastructure; and thirdly, improving education.

With regard to the first pillar, specifically, the legal aspect, the National Institute of Transit and Land Transportation of the Dominican Republic has been developing a wide range of programmes centred around inclusion, strengthening driver education in schools and other initiatives aimed at reducing the number of accidents involving motorcycles. Motorcycles account for 50 per cent of all vehicles in the Dominican Republic. In terms of road infrastructure, we are developing a comprehensive programme to improve the condition of our roads and creating new road infrastructure, including a number of bypasses to prevent heavy vehicles from driving through our city centres, as well as enhancing interregional connections. We have also rolled out a very successful road assistance programme, led by my Ministry, which ensures that assistance is provided to users of the main road corridors in the Dominican Republic.

All of those actions taken and the investments made by our Government are intended to reduce the number of deaths resulting from road traffic accidents within the time frame stipulated by resolution 74/299. The Government of the Dominican Republic is therefore working to fulfil the commitment to reducing deaths and injuries by 50 per cent and to break free from the situation in which we regrettably find ourselves.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. James Macharia, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Public Works of Kenya.

**Mr. Macharia (Kenya):** Road traffic injuries are among the leading causes of death in Kenya. In 2021, road traffic crashes caused 4,579 deaths on Kenyan roads. In the two days over which we are holding this high-level meeting, 25 Kenyans will die as a result of preventable road accidents, while dozens more will suffer life-altering injuries with long-lasting effects. Every life matters, and I hope that the day will come when we no longer need to discuss and address this matter.

Kenya's expanded road network has boosted economic activity and transformed the lives of many Kenyans. However, higher traffic volumes have also resulted in an increase in the number of road accidents and incidents. The Government of Kenya is committed to promoting road safety, and we are implementing

numerous initiatives to that end. They are aligned to the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, the aim of which is to reduce the number of road accidents, deaths and serious injuries by 50 per cent between 2021 and 2030. One pillar that is key to improving road safety is to make sure that we have robust and timely data on road accidents and incidents. In that regard, we have established a robust information system that consolidates road transport data in order to support the development of evidence-based policy and facilitate robust monitoring and enforcement.

Road construction, design and maintenance play an important role in road safety. All roads in Kenya are subjected to design, construction and post-construction safety audits. Proposed road maintenance works also undergo road safety assessments in order to ensure that they incorporate road safety features. That process involves the identification of black spots and hazardous sections and the implementation of appropriate corrective actions and measures. They include the construction of speed-calming measures and footbridges and the installation of appropriate road furniture.

Enhanced road safety requires strong leadership and collaboration. I would like to express my appreciation to the United Nations Road Safety Fund for having worked with the Kenyan Government to improve pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in Kenya's cities and towns. We welcome the prospect of other institutions working with us towards enhancing safety on Kenyan roads.

In conclusion, allow me to reiterate the Government of Kenya's commitment to working with the international community to enhance road safety. I look forward to a positive outcome of this meeting.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Arsénia Felicidade Félix Massingue, Minister of Home Affairs of Mozambique.

**Ms. Massingue (Mozambique)** (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): It is a great honour for me, on behalf of the Government of Mozambique, to participate in this high-level meeting of the General Assembly, which addresses an issue of particular importance in assessing the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030.

Road safety is an urgent priority, as it is closely linked to people's economic development and social well-being. However, the increase in road traffic gives

rise to certain problems that societies are currently having to contend with, including people being killed and infrastructure being destroyed as a result of road accidents, as well as environmental degradation and the undermining of efforts to promote sustainable development. We would like to commend the United Nations for having designated the Decades of Action for Road Safety — the first from 2011-2020 and the second from 2021-2030 — and for having established the goal of halving the number of fatalities and serious injuries caused by road traffic accidents by 2030. Such measures contribute greatly to raising social awareness about the importance of a safe road environment.

The road safety situation is worrisome in Mozambique. Between 2015 and 2021 alone, the country recorded around 11,000 road accidents, which resulted in numerous deaths and injuries, most of them among children. In the light of that situation, Mozambique has been implementing the recommendations of the third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, which took place in Stockholm in February 2020, by adopting the following structural reforms.

We created the National Road Transport Institute, a State institute responsible for coordinating and implementing initiatives and agendas relating to road safety. We also established the Technical and Scientific Committee for Road Safety, which is an entity that consults and advises the Government with a view to seeking solutions to road safety issues in the country. We formulated and adopted a National Road Safety Strategy, which constitutes a guiding instrument for road safety initiatives, while a national road safety plan, inspired by that document, is currently being prepared. We implemented a “user pays” programme on Mozambican roads, which generates funding for the maintenance and repair of road infrastructure and ensures its sustainability. We also made it mandatory to carry out periodic inspections of vehicles, cars and trailers. And we set up emergency medical services for pre-hospital care, including post-accident transport.

The outcomes of those actions encourage us to continue to undertake such measures. Our cooperation partners have embraced them, particularly in drawing up road safety and prevention standards. Finally, I would like to reaffirm Mozambique’s commitment to implementing decisions and measures conducive to road safety in order to foster sustainable development. We would also like to reaffirm our commitment and

willingness to exchange and share experiences with other Member States on this matter.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jacob Hara, Minister of Transport and Public Works of Malawi.

**Mr. Hara (Malawi):** Allow me to express my delegation’s gratitude for the convening of this meeting.

Road traffic deaths and injuries constitute a major public-health crisis in Malawi. Between the years 2011 and 2020, Malawi registered 10,265 traffic deaths and 8,326 serious injuries against a vehicle-to-human-population ratio of 1:50. Therefore, in order to further the objectives of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, Malawi has put in place the following measures towards its implementation.

First, we are developing a multisectoral national road safety strategy, which builds on the global Decade of Action and will be completed by the end of this year. Secondly, we are conducting baseline studies on drink and drive, speeding and the use of seat belts. Thirdly, we plan to accede, by 2024, to the 1968 United Nations Convention on Road Traffic. Fourthly, Malawi is undertaking to ensure that all imported vehicles, whether used or new, meet high-quality safety standards. Fifthly, we are committed to ensuring that most motorcycle riders are using standard-approved helmets. Sixthly, we are working to ensure safe road infrastructure at all levels, right from the design stage, for both new and existing roads. Seventh, we are improving services for post-crash response along our major road networks. And finally, we are providing steady financing for road safety interventions.

The Government of the Republic of Malawi therefore reaffirms its determination to achieve the goals of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, and commits to undertaking the following measures. First, we will implement our national road safety strategy by the year 2030. We will develop and implement national targets to reduce fatalities and serious injuries as a result of road accidents by at least 50 per cent by 2030. We will develop and adopt evidence-based interventions to address key risk factors with regard to road safety. We will implement evidence-based road safety awareness and training programmes in order to inculcate a safety culture among all categories of road users. And finally, we will ensure that all vehicles meet the minimum

insurance requirements to provide appropriate support for victims of road traffic crashes.

Despite all the challenges we may face, Malawi echoes its commitment to mainstreaming road-safety issues as an integral part of Malawi's Vision 2063. Malawi agrees that the time to act is now. The intolerable death and injury toll gives the global community the impetus to do things differently. Malawi is more committed than ever before to achieving the goals of the Decade of Action.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Maria del Carmen González del Porro, Vice Minister and Executive Director of the National Traffic and Road Safety Agency of Paraguay.

**Ms. González Del Porro (Paraguay)** (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of Paraguay, we greet the authorities of the General Assembly, the representatives Member States, members of civil society and all those present here in the Hall. We welcome this opportunity to reflect on global road safety.

Given my experience, first as a founding member of the Association of Family, Friends and Victims of Road Accidents in my country, and also of having lost a daughter to a road accident at the very young age of 16 years old, I have come to understand that we are all compelled to put a human face to the statistics compiled by our respective observatories. Today, therefore, as a Government representative with sufficient sentimental authority, I stand before the Assembly to call on everyone, wherever they may be, to do everything possible to protect the lives of young people on our roads.

Through the recently created National Traffic and Road Safety Agency, in collaboration with other institutions, the State of Paraguay is addressing road safety through proposals for improvements, and we call on the competent authorities to spearhead the changes that can save lives, in close collaboration with all stakeholders. In that regard, we are coordinating initiatives on safe roads, safe and accessible means of public transport, mandatory accident insurance — a report on mandatory accident insurance is currently before our national Parliament — as well as training and education for road users. We are aware of the burden that traffic accidents impose on society, and we recognize road safety as an urgent public-health and development priority.

Paraguay welcomes the establishment of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 and the political declaration adopted today (resolution 76/294). Moreover, the preparation of Paraguay's national road safety plan 2030 is in its final stages, in line with the Global Plan, and we are working to bring it to completion. We trust that we can depend on the cooperation of members as a means to effectively achieve substantial improvements in our societies. Paraguay is therefore grateful for the collaboration of international organizations that support various initiatives in our country, as well as the people and the leaders who have assumed this crusade for life as a prominent and inspiring flagship.

In conclusion, we call on members to exercise collective leadership by bolstering efforts both to prevent road accidents and care for the victims thereof. I reaffirm the unwavering willingness of my country's Government to continue to seek ways to mitigate the terrible consequences of road accidents in all areas with a view to reducing the death rate among children and young people in my country.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Kristine Ghalechyan, Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia.

**Ms. Ghalechyan (Armenia):** Today's high-level meeting of the General Assembly on global road safety is a timely opportunity to take stock of the progress made and the challenges we face in the implementation of our collective commitments under the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. Road crashes have become a silent pandemic that kills millions of people globally, with a particularly devastating impact on the younger generation, having become a regular cause of death among children and youth. In that regard, the statistics are worrisome in Armenia as well, as more than 300 people die on the roads in our country every year. Behind every crash or accident is a story of loss and lives being permanently altered.

The safety system of Armenia is fraught with challenges, including those relating to the improvement of infrastructure; the post-crash care system; the crash data management system; road safety laws and law enforcement; vehicle safety; the efficient planning and governance of transport systems for vulnerable road users; the strengthening of institutional capacity;



unsafe road-user behaviour, in particular with regard to unawareness of traffic safety rules; speeding; and drink driving. Those problems, as well as the dramatic increase in the number of road accidents, require immediate action. In response to public demand, ensuring road safety has become an important priority for the Government of Armenia.

Armenia is currently holding fast to its ultimate goal of Vision Zero, as defined by United Nations, specifically, to achieve zero fatalities and serious injuries on the roads by 2050, as well as the intermediate target to halve the number of fatalities on the roads by 2030. Those objectives lie at the heart of our national road safety policy, which comprises the comprehensive strategy and specific measures to be undertaken over the next 20 years.

Despite our many efforts and achievements, including the introduction of speed cameras, compulsory insurance, regulatory changes in road construction, road markings, safety elements and road safety auditing, *inter alia*, Armenia still has a long way to go if we are to catch up with the best performers worldwide in terms of reducing road crash fatalities. The successful experience of many well-performing countries should guide and inspire us as policymakers at the national level. It should also inspire the entire road safety community to follow the ambitious agenda of the United Nations and to tackle the vital road safety work of the next decade with new energy and resolve.

We still need to implement and improve safety systems at the country level in order to ensure safe vehicles, safe infrastructure, safe road use and better post-crash care, which are all long-established and important factors in the safe-systems approach. The measures undertaken to improve road safety in Armenia are still suffering from numerous gaps that affect the interconnected implementation of the five pillars of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. For the safe-systems approach to work, our experience tells us that all actors need to play their part in a coordinated manner. The public authorities responsible for road safety objectives nationwide and locally, including with respect to transport and infrastructure, the environment, education, the police, public health, justice and tourism, need to work together closely at all levels. In addition, effective implementation requires the active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, including

non-governmental organizations, schools, researchers and many others.

In order to address the current challenges, Armenia has initiated numerous reforms that envisage the establishment of a road-safety management system and modern institutional framework, which will integrate and coordinate activities on the five pillars of road safety and hopefully result in the establishment of a public-relations framework and improving road safety. Our policy orientations set strategic targets and goals with regard to education and awareness-raising, which are supported by strong and sustained compliance and enforcement regimes, since they have an important role to play in making sure that road users are capable and willing to use roads and vehicles safely. The primary objective of that effort is to reduce the number of deaths and injuries from road accidents, which will be achieved through effective implementation and financing, securing political and social acceptance, innovation, cost-effectiveness and undertaking action in the relevant focus areas.

In line with the five pillars of the United Nations road safety strategy, the targets in our national strategy will relate to the following aspects: establishing a new road-safety management system with efficient tools and regulations; encouraging the deployment and use of vehicle safety devices using modern technologies; ensuring increased responsiveness to post-crash emergencies; improving the inherent safety and protective quality of our road networks, especially for the most vulnerable users; and developing comprehensive programmes to improve road-user behaviour and knowledge.

Through a national project entitled “Reframing road safety in Armenia: Connecting data, people, and policies for safer roads”, the Armenian Government, together with the United Nations Development Programme in Armenia and UNICEF, is delivering innovative solutions to address some of the most pressing road-safety challenges in our country. The project is being financed by the United Nations Road Safety Fund and will focus on instilling evidence-based and experiment-informed road-safety policies in Armenia by utilizing data and behavioural science. Importantly, the project will develop an analytical tool in order to identify the black spots in Armenia’s road network and provide continuous insight into the causes of road accidents.

Increased attention is being paid to the gender aspect of road safety. Armenia is firmly committed to making progress in that area in the most efficient manner possible. In that regard, a behaviour-informed and gender-responsive intervention is currently being planned together with UNICEF, making use of its extensive knowledge and experience in the field of training families on road safety, with a special focus on ensuring child safety. The intervention will target a region with a high rate of accidents and will be implemented by UNICEF via its network of parental education centres, under the chapeau of social mobilization and community education, in order to help reduce the number of child deaths and injuries caused by road accidents.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Serghei Diaconu, Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Moldova.

**Mr. Diaconu (Republic of Moldova):** It is my great honour to represent the Government of the Republic of Moldova at this plenary meeting of the General Assembly. I wish to thank the United Nations for guiding the preparations and organization of this high-level meeting on global road safety.

During the first Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, the Republic of Moldova demonstrated an unwavering commitment to achieving its goals. Road fatalities in Moldova were reduced by 46 per cent and road injuries by 39 per cent, and that at a time of rapid growth in motorization in our country. Prior to 2013, Moldova had the most alarming road-safety indicators in Europe. On average, there were more than 100 deaths and 855 serious injuries per 100,000 motor vehicles. In having adopted a safe-systems approach and thanks to the strict enforcement of safe traffic rules, that picture changed considerably. Whereas in 2012 around 16 per cent of road crashes were fatal, in 2021, even with many more vehicles per capita, the fatality rate dropped to about 9 per cent — the lowest in 10 years.

Moldova's support for road safety continues to be undiminished in the new Decade of Action. We will do our utmost to meet the new global goals to reduce both road fatalities and injuries, as agreed by the States Members of the United Nations. We are aligning our existing national framework with the values and principles of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, including by bringing in strategic coordination and institutional monitoring

measures in order to achieve its ambitious objectives. We have initiated discussions with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe with a view to launching a road safety performance review in the Republic of Moldova. That will broaden the scope of our interventions and create many more opportunities to help meet our common targets.

I am happy to announce that, just two weeks ago, the Moldovan Government approved a new package of legislative amendments. Among them, the penalties for drivers who systematically break traffic rules were greatly increased. We hope to reduce road collisions and make drivers more self-regulating, thereby improving safety for all road users. However, we know that will not be enough if we are to achieve our long-term goals. Moldova is still impacted considerably by road deaths and injuries, and we would welcome assistance from our international partners in order to implement all the improvements that are needed.

Moldova is now facing an additional crisis, with major challenges impacting road safety. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, more than 500,000 refugees, whom we warmly welcomed, have entered the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Our country hosts more refugees per capita than any other European country. The refugee crisis has put great strain on all our resources, including those associated with road-safety management. Our roads are not fit for the volume of traffic that has been triggered by the influx of refugees. Our police and family-support services are stretched beyond capacity in working to keep safe the vulnerable displaced women and children. Moldova will do everything possible to meet its road-safety obligations. At the same time, we count on international assistance in dealing effectively with the multiple consequences of the refugee crisis.

We can all play a role in greatly reducing the number of fatalities and the severity of the injuries that occur on our roads. The new Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety calls on every Government to adopt a broader focus. We must think differently about land use and multimodal transport, making our roads more pedestrian- and child-friendly and our cities more people-centred. A focus on people rather than cars will help us achieve many important Sustainable Development Goals, such as reducing emissions and making our society more inclusive, accessible and safer for all.

I underline the importance of involving all stakeholders in achieving road safety. Moldova has benefited enormously from the activities of international and non-governmental organizations, such as the World Health Organization, the FIA Foundation, the World Bank, the Eastern Alliance for Safe and Sustainable Transport, and Fire Aid, all of which have worked with us over many years to help improve our road-safety performance.

If a developing country has been able to achieve tangible results, so can anyone else. We urge Governments to adopt comprehensive and realistic road-safety plans as soon as possible. They should stop complaining about a lack of resources and funding and start investing in safety for all road users, especially young people. Safer road infrastructure, better safety education and smart law enforcement can save lives, and a future engineer, plumber, teacher, nurse or police officer being protected from a road crash can ensure a happier society, a stronger economy and a more dynamic development of the country in question. We hope that the steady implementation of the commitments made under the Global Plan will provide tangible progress and address the current problems and emerging challenges.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the Republic of Moldova's commitment to achieving the goals of the Decade of Action for Road Safety, with the valuable support of our development partners.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Saúl Antonio Castelar Contreras, Vice Minister of Transportation of El Salvador.

**Mr. Castelar Contreras** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Government of El Salvador, I thank the President of the General Assembly for having organized this high-level meeting on improving global road safety, which is an issue of critical importance, in particular given that, according to the World Health Organization data mentioned today, there will be eight road fatalities during the time it takes me to deliver this statement, 90 per cent of which take place in low- and middle-income countries.

El Salvador reiterates its commitment to accelerating the implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety in order to achieve the goal of halving the number of deaths and serious injuries caused by road accidents by 2030, as well as to work towards safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, in line with the

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also reiterate the need to achieve Vision Zero, namely, to achieve zero fatalities or serious injuries from road accidents by 2050.

In that regard, I am pleased to highlight that, in the course of our Government's three-year term, road accidents have been reduced by more than 14 per cent thanks to the contributions of our National Road Safety Plan and National Road Safety Observatory, the latter of which has a unique format in the region and has become a key component in designing and reviewing our public policies on road safety, which seek to make the problem a national issue.

I would also like to underscore certain measures that have contributed to the achievements made in our country, such as increasing the number of roadside checks, engaging in a permanent dialogue on accident prevention and respect for traffic signals, introducing higher fines for breaches of the law and continuously promoting a road culture based on respect. As a result of those measures, for instance, on 20 and 21 June, we recorded zero deaths from road accidents nationwide, which is an achievement we hope will become the norm, given that, on average, there are four road fatalities in our country every day.

El Salvador recognizes the importance of comprehensively addressing this public-health issue, which also has social and economic ramifications. In that regard, I should like to highlight that, over the past three years, we have provided almost \$7 million dollars in aid to the families of victims killed or injured in road accidents, and we have developed a comprehensive rehabilitation programme to help mitigate the impact on those victims. We also support the Streets for Life initiative, which was launched at the sixth United Nations Global Road Safety Week in 2021, and we have subsequently created a 30-zone initiative in the San Salvador metropolitan area. As a result, our first 30 zone was established last year, with more to be introduced in areas with medical centres and schools in order to impose a speed limit of 30 kilometres per hour and thereby protect the most vulnerable road users.

El Salvador is also drawing up a plan to modernize its public transport and provide a decent service to the population, which will resolve issues concerning traffic, pollution and inefficiency, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. We are also very proud of the fact that we will host the fifth International Child Road

Safety Forum in 2024, and we warmly invite members to attend that important event.

In conclusion, El Salvador calls for strengthened international cooperation on road safety, bolstered support for the transfer of technology and data, capacity-building and the promotion of good practices, *inter alia*, so as to help achieve the goals of the Decade of Action by 2030 and the Vision Zero initiative by 2050. We can achieve those goals worldwide if we work hand in hand to do so.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Shaikh Nasser bin Abdulrahman Al Khalifa, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior of Bahrain.

**Mr. Al Khalifa (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*):** It is a pleasure to be here in the Assembly Hall today to participate in this high-level meeting on improving global road safety. I would like to underscore the Kingdom of Bahrain's commitment to strengthening cooperation with other countries around the world through the United Nations in order to promote road safety.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is keen to support all efforts aimed at improving road safety, developing road traffic systems and raising awareness among road users in order to ensure their compliance with the relevant rules and regulations. Road awareness and culture constitute an essential basis for sustainable development, since they provide the means, *inter alia*, to protect people's economic capabilities, which may be negatively affected by road accidents. The Kingdom of Bahrain has therefore been determined to develop strategic plans and programmes, through its competent authorities, in order to spread road awareness and culture throughout the year, right from the very beginning of road traffic being present in Bahrain in the year 1914, following the introduction of the first motor vehicle into the country. We also benefit from all forums that disseminate and promote road culture among the various categories of road users, which has had a significant impact in enhancing road safety.

The plans and strategies of the Kingdom of Bahrain have been positively reflected in the efforts to disseminate road awareness and culture with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals that were adopted by States worldwide. In that regard, it is important to point out that the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development

Programme believe that road accidents will become the seventh leading cause of death by 2030 unless sustainable measures are taken, including by adopting the goal of halving the number of deaths from road accidents by 2020. That comprehensive strategy led to a 60 per cent reduction in road traffic fatalities and injuries between 2008 and 2021. The Kingdom of Bahrain continues to implement that strategy in order to enhance road safety and establish the foundations of a society that comprehends its responsibilities on the road.

In conclusion, we wish this meeting every success and hope it will fulfil its desired goals and objectives.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nadhapit Snidvongs, Vice Minister of the Interior of Thailand.

**Mr. Snidvongs (Thailand):** At the outset, Thailand would like to express its appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for holding this first United Nations high-level meeting on improving global road safety and for his leadership that has led to today's adoption of the political declaration (resolution 76/294).

Global road safety can make important contributions to sustainable development and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Target 3.6 of the Sustainable Development Goals seeks to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents, while Target 11.2 seeks to provide safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport for all.

Improving road safety is one of Thailand's national priorities, with a goal to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50 per cent by 2030, in line with the global goals that have been set under the second Decade of Action for Road Safety. In order to achieve that goal, our road-safety policies integrate a safe-systems approach and the Sustainable Development Goals as frameworks for implementation. The Government also works closely with the private sector and civil society towards that common goal. Between 2020 and now, the number of fatalities resulting from road accidents in Thailand has decreased from 27.2 to 22.8 per 100,000 population. More than 5,000 lives have been saved over that two-year timespan.

Thailand will soon launch the fifth National Road Safety Master Plan 2022-2027 with the main goal of reducing the number of lives lost in road accidents to 12 fatalities per 100,000 population by 2027. The



Master Plan will elaborate on the core elements of the safe-systems approach, while focusing on key issues such as reducing motorcycle crashes, speed-limit control, implementing policies through local mechanisms with effective monitoring, enhancing law-enforcement capacities, strictly enforcing vehicle and transportation safety standards and enhancing post-crash care. Moreover, it places importance on data collection and analysis, as well as the use of technology and innovation, in order to prevent and reduce road-traffic crashes.

Thailand also strongly believes that local communities must be the driving force for road safety, as our statistics show that more than 60 per cent of road-traffic injuries and fatalities during long-weekend holidays occur on local roads, not highways. We must therefore work from the ground up. The Government has established road-safety operation centres at the local administrative level as a collaborative mechanism for Government agencies, the private sector and partner organizations.

Together with other countries and partners, Thailand is committed to working towards achieving the global goals on road safety by 2030, which will be essential to attaining all the other SDGs, including poverty eradication, health and sustainable cities, and ultimately the promotion of human security.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Bamoquina Zau, Secretary of State for Home Affairs of Angola.

**Mr. Bamoquina Zau (Angola) (*spoke in French*):** At the outset, on behalf of the Angolan Government and my delegation, allow me to thank the President of the General Assembly for having organized this important high-level meeting to enable us to share our modest progress and national experiences with regard to global road safety.

As we all know, and as referred to in the concept note, according to international statistics, road accidents cause millions of deaths and injuries every year all over the world, thereby claiming the lives of children, women and young people. Those are grim and horrifying statistics that could well and truly be avoided or at least cut in half. Unfortunately, in many of our countries, the road transport system remains one of the most dangerous environments for people in their daily lives.

The Government of the Republic of Angola and its President adhere to this cause and have done everything possible to create the conditions necessary to improve road safety throughout our national territory, thereby contributing to reducing the number of fatalities caused by road accidents. In 2013, we set up the National Public Transport Council, an advisory body with executive power whose actions are based on our National Accident Prevention strategy 2019-2022. We are currently in the final stage of that important policy framework on road safety, despite the fact that there have been a number of constraints arising from the economic and financial downturn, which was aggravated by the coronavirus disease pandemic and has had a subsequent negative impact on the implementation of so many other projects. Despite that, we were able to achieve the following objectives.

We approved a number of documents complementary to the highway code, including the National Road Plan, which is an important instrument that makes it possible to map the country's entire road network. We built new infrastructure equipped with advanced technologies in order to improve the mechanisms for evaluating candidates on their driving tests, and gradually set up centres for the compulsory technical inspection of vehicles. We also trained and retrained traffic police on road safety and accident prevention. With regard to the prevention and management of accidents, as well as road crime, the establishment of Integrated Public Security Centres in the capital and certain provincial towns have come to reinforce the roadside check mechanisms already in place, including by installing video-surveillance systems.

In conclusion, the Government of the Republic of Angola reiterates its commitment to increasingly improving and strengthening road safety and a safe public transport system throughout its national territory with a view to achieving target 11.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on the strengthening of road safety, as well as Goal 10 of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, on world-class infrastructure across the continent.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Pere Navarro Olivella, Director General for Traffic of Spain.

**Mr. Navarro Olivella (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*):** As a representative of Spain, we welcome the initiative of the General Assembly to promote road safety.

In Spain, we have adopted a national road safety strategy with a time frame of 2030, in line with the United Nations goal of halving the number of road fatalities and serious injuries by the end of the current decade. We also wish to underscore that we have a road safety commission in the National Assembly, which has enabled us to align all political parties with the strategy and ensure that road safety is a State policy. We also have a national road safety observatory, which gathers data and develops indicators. Without data, there can be no road-safety policy. We cannot improve what we do not measure. It is therefore essential to be able to evaluate and monitor measures once they are adopted.

The strategy is underpinned by the principle that we are unwilling to negotiate road traffic measures in exchange for human lives. Road safety must be prioritized above any other consideration when it comes to road management. The strategy creates a link between road safety and sustainable mobility. We know that if mobility works, we can ensure road safety, but if mobility does not work, road safety certainly cannot be guaranteed. Safe mobility means prioritizing train travel for middle- and long-distance journeys and opting for public transport to move around our cities.

The strategy stipulates that enforcing traffic regulations is the most effective way to reduce road accidents and their tragic consequences. The deployment of traffic police, the use of new technologies for surveillance and control and the handling of penalties are the basic and fundamental elements of our road-safety policy. The strategy also focuses on speed as a risk factor. We have approved a speed limit of 30 kilometres per hour for all single-lane roads in our cities, because that is the only speed that guarantees safe coexistence between the different modes and methods of moving around the city.

The strategy prioritizes the protection of vulnerable road users, given that, since 2019, 53 per cent of all road-accident victims have been in that category, that is to say, more than half of road-accident victims were pedestrians, cyclists or motorcyclists. For pedestrians, we are prioritizing traffic-calming measures by enforcing a speed limit of 30 kilometres per hour in our cities. For cyclists, we are prioritizing the construction of separate cycle lanes. And for motorcyclists, we are prioritizing safe-driving courses and airbag jackets for motorcycle users on the roads. The strategy is also firmly committed to promoting connected vehicles, which enables them to communicate with road

infrastructure and other vehicles in such a way that averts any possibility of a fatal accident, even in the event of human error.

With regard to road education, the strategy aims to ensure that when young people leave the education system, they are trained in the values of road safety and, above all, as safe pedestrians and cyclists. The strategy puts victims at the centre of our road-safety policy, which gives them a voice and visibility, amplifies their stories and ensures they receive adequate post-crash care. In Spain, we have a public prosecutor specialized in road-safety violations who protects and defends victims in criminal matters.

Finally, we believe that countries that have achieved tangible results have an ethical and moral obligation to share their knowledge and experience with other countries. We are doing that in Spain, including by cooperating with our friends in Latin America and the Maghreb. We know where we are, we know where we want to get to, and we know how to get there. That is why we remain convinced that we can achieve the goals set by the United Nations for the current decade.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Pyotr Ilyichev, Director of the Department of International Organizations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

**Mr. Ilyichev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia welcomes the convening of this first-ever high-level meeting of the General Assembly on improving global road safety. We welcome the fact that the initiative introduced by our country to hold this meeting received unanimous support. We hope it will generate renewed impetus for the implementation of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 and lead to a new level of international cooperation.

We believe that the prevention of road accidents is an important factor in achieving sustainable development and an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Reducing the number of fatalities and accidents on our roads should remain our undisputed priority. A systematic intersectoral approach, in which people are the central link in building road safety, is key to facilitating an effective solution to the problem. Those principles underpin the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, for which we express our support. The political declaration we have adopted today (resolution 76/294) sets clear guidelines for the implementation of the Global Plan.

The World Health Organization, in partnership with the United Nations regional commissions and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety, should play a leading role in providing assistance to countries. In order to prevent road-traffic accidents, we need to establish comprehensive regulations, modernize the road network and improve infrastructure, introduce intelligent transport systems and develop a culture of safety and compliance with traffic rules. The success of those measures depends on sustainable funding at all levels. The United Nations Road Safety Fund has become a unique mechanism for providing resource support for specific projects, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Russia is the Fund's largest donor, having allocated \$4 million to it since 2018.

Our country was one of the first to advocate including this issue on the United Nations agenda. We hosted the first Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow in 2009. For us, it is a priority at both the international and national levels. Our work is based on the Road Safety Strategy in Russia 2018-2024, as well as a specialized federal project with target indicators. Over the past decade, the number of road accidents in our country has decreased by more than a third, and the number of fatalities resulting from them has been halved. Detailed information about our work is expounded in the video message by the First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, Colonel-General of the Police Alexander Gorovoy, on the occasion of today's meeting, which is available on the website of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize once again that reducing injuries and saving lives on the roads is one of our country's top priorities. We hope that, during the interim review of the implementation of the Decade of Action in 2026, the General Assembly will be able to record positive developments in this area without any politicization, which, regrettably, was not the case in preparing for today's meeting. For its part, Russia will continue to work constructively, including by preparing a draft resolution of the General Assembly. We stand ready to cooperate with others and call on all countries to do the same.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Zeki Bal, First Degree Chief Superintendent, Deputy Head of Traffic Department, General Directorate of Police in the Ministry of Interior of Türkiye.

**Mr. Bal (Türkiye):** The traffic phenomenon, which is at the centre of our lives in many respects, is unfortunately defined as a global public-health issue by several international organizations. It is believed that traffic accidents cause an average of 1.3 million preventable deaths and 50 million injuries per year. In the period from 2011 to 2020, the target of reducing traffic casualties by 50 per cent was adopted as a Government policy, under the leadership of our President, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and a strong promise was therefore made to our nation and the world. For that reason, the Road Traffic Safety Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2020 was put into effect, by decree of the Prime Minister, and many multidimensional and result-oriented studies were carried out through the Traffic Safety Implementation Policy of the Ministry of Interior, which is a document dated 2017.

During the first Decade of Action for Road Safety, although the number of vehicles increased by approximately 60 per cent, the number of drivers by 45 per cent and the population by 13 per cent, the loss of life from traffic accidents was reduced by 56 per cent, from 13.4 to 5.8 per 100,000 people. The Republic of Turkey therefore achieved very important success in having attained the target of reducing the number of deaths caused by traffic accidents by 50 per cent between 2011 and 2020. In accordance with resolution 74/299, and in line with the principles of the safe-systems approach and Vision Zero, which place the human person at the centre of the traffic ecosystem, in 2021 we published a Road Traffic Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and a Road Traffic Safety Action Plan 2021-2023, by presidential decree, with a view to halving the number of traffic fatalities by 2030 and achieving zero fatalities by 2050.

For that purpose, a strong structure has been put in place by presidential decree. In order to ensure interministerial coordination and carry out studies in a multisectoral, multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder manner, we established the Road Traffic Safety Strategy Coordination Board, under the chairmanship of the Minister of Interior. In addition, we set up the Road Traffic Safety Strategy Monitoring and Executive Board, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister, in order to monitor activities and studies. Affiliated to that Board, we have formulated expert groups, including with the participation of experts from stakeholder organizations, on priority areas; traffic safety management; road infrastructure and the

environment; vehicles; education and training; traffic enforcement; and post-accident response.

As our Minister of Interior, Mr. Süleyman Soylu, underlined in his video message to the General Assembly on 3 December 2021, based on our achievements in the area of traffic safety, and in having recalled our previous successes, we firmly believe that we will achieve the respective targets for 2030 and 2050, and that our global and regional cooperation and exchanges, under the umbrella of the United Nations, will also contribute to that.

I should like to pay my respects and offer my condolences to the relatives of those who have lost their lives in traffic accidents. I wish members every success in their work, while recalling the motto repeated throughout our traffic safety campaigns: “We are all together on the road to traffic safety”.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Malki, Secretary of the National Traffic Safety Committee in the Ministry of Interior of Qatar.

**Mr. Al-Malki (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*):** Today we meet at this high-level meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the most important challenges facing our countries and peoples in the area of improving road safety, as contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also meet so that stakeholders can engage in discussions with a view to achieving further positive results, as well as promoting interactive dialogue on investing in road safety and sharing our experiences and lessons learned in order to address the remaining gaps in the implementation of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030.

As members are aware, road safety is a collective responsibility shared by all countries, since it is considered to be one of the key pillars for the development and progress of countries. In that connection, the State of Qatar is participating in this high-level meeting to discuss the most important collective issues affecting countries and peoples alike and the challenges we face with regard to road accidents, which are the biggest threat to the social and economic development of countries given that they affect millions of victims every year, between death and permanent disability, and cause suffering to many families worldwide, especially in developing countries, which have poor road infrastructure owing to the lack of adequate safety

standards that are necessary to provide security and safety for their users.

The State of Qatar attaches great importance to the issue of improving road safety and has unique experience in the Middle East and among developing countries in that regard. Road safety and saving people’s lives are a priority of my country’s socioeconomic policy. That is why we established a pioneering National Road Safety Committee, which is responsible for drawing up general road-safety policies and providing solutions and proposals to improve the level of road safety throughout the country in the engineering, technical and human fields. Since it was established, the Committee has played an active role in improving the level of road safety and implementing measures that have led to positive results in that area.

The State of Qatar, as a representative of the countries of the Arab region from the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) on the Advisory Board of the United Nations Road Safety Fund, would like to draw the Assembly’s attention to the situation of road safety in the Arab region and the challenges it faces. The statistics indicate a high incidence of fatalities in the region, which demands that we provide the necessary support to confront those challenges and limit their dangers, especially in low- and middle-income countries, which are lacking in road safety and require assistance if they are to achieve the targets set for the second United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. Those countries also need help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and in building sustainable capacities to develop and implement evidence-based policies, strategies and action plans so as to improve road safety in an efficient and effective manner.

Turning to Qatar’s experience of road safety, I would like to underscore the following.

First, we have developed a 10-year national road safety strategy, in line with the goals of the first United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, as contained in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All relevant sectors have worked to implement the strategy, which has contributed to reducing the fatality rate from 13 deaths per 100,000 population in 2013 to less than 5 deaths per 100,000 population in 2021. Those are very positive results that exceeded our expectations and propelled Qatar to one



of the highest-ranking countries worldwide in the area of road safety.

Secondly, we have also adopted an educational framework and curriculum on road safety, which is taught in schools at all levels, from kindergarten to pre-university, in all educational institutions across the country with the aim of instilling and spreading road culture among all segments of society.

The State of Qatar hosted the twenty-fourth World International Traffic Medicine Association Congress in November 2015, which addressed health-care services for the victims of road accidents. The Congress achieved results and made recommendations that have contributed greatly to the development of health care in our country, as reflected in the fact that we have reduced the number of lives lost as a result of road accidents. My country also organized the first International Traffic Safety Conference in November 2018, which provided an opportunity for dialogue and discussion at the global level on all issues relating to the present and future situation of road safety. It also provided a space for those concerned to express their views with regard to finding solutions to road-safety problems at the institutional and individual levels and to deliberate on how best to translate ideas into strategies on the ground and benefit from them in achieving road safety.

One of the most important achievements made by the State of Qatar during the implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, consistent with our national road safety strategy 2013-2022, has been the reduction in the number of deaths resulting from road accidents to 49 per 100,000 population. The reduction in the average time taken to answer emergency calls to less than five seconds and the reduction in the average response time of ambulances and emergency services attending accident sites to less than eight minutes contributed to saving the lives of several victims and therefore reduced the death rate.

Thirdly, we have also improved, developed and extended our road network in order to ensure the highest standards of road safety, and we have created nearly 300 kilometres of pedestrian walkways and cycle lanes, which has led to a reduction in the number of road accidents.

Fourthly, we have also worked to increase the level of awareness among our communities by launching a series of awareness-raising programmes between

2010 and 2020, which have served to improve the behaviour of road users, including drivers, passengers and pedestrians alike, thereby reducing the rate of road accidents. My Government has also adopted all relevant United Nations resolutions on road safety and the Sustainable Development Goals.

With regard to our current and future plans, the State of Qatar is determined to implement a number of projects and programmes in order to improve the level of road safety in our country. One of the most important among those projects is the launching of a national road safety strategy 2023-2030, which will be aligned with the United Nations Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. We will work to achieve its goals so as to reduce the number of deaths and injuries from road accidents by at least 50 per cent by 2030.

Another ESCWA project is being implemented in three Arab countries — namely, the State of Qatar, Lebanon and Tunisia — which aims to strengthen evidence-based interventions in order to improve the level of road safety in the Arab region by increasing the effectiveness of data collection, processing and analysis, which will pave the way for the establishment of the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory in the countries of the region.

We also intend to organize the second International Traffic Safety Conference in March 2023, which aims to strengthen cooperation between the countries of the world in the area of road safety, providing the opportunity for experts and specialists in the field to exchange their positive experiences and expertise, in particular in countries that have made great progress in improving road safety and reducing road accidents.

Based on its experience of improving road safety, the State of Qatar proposes and recommends that all countries cooperate and work together in order to achieve the objectives of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, given the importance of road safety to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; the establishment of a secretariat to coordinate the work of civil society organizations and regional and national bodies in order to strengthen their role and enable them to play an active part in efforts to improve road safety; the formation of a technical team of experts and specialists in the field of road safety, under the auspices of the United Nations, in order to provide technical support to poor countries and help them enhance their level of road safety; and

the creation of an effective mechanism for the exchange of information and experience in order to enhance and improve road safety in all countries.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Mihnea Drumea, State Counsellor in the Office of the Prime Minister of Romania.

**Mr. Drumea (Romania):** Romania aligns itself with the declaration to be delivered by the European Union (EU). On behalf of the Prime Minister of Romania, I would like to make some remarks in a national capacity.

Today's meeting is about the implementation of international, regional and national standards in the field of road safety. As an EU member State concerned with ensuring safe mobility for all road users, Romania joins the European effort towards the goal of reducing both the number of deaths and the number of serious injuries caused by road accidents by 50 per cent in the period 2022-2030. In that context, I am pleased to inform the Assembly that my Government recently adopted a national road safety strategy for the period 2022-2030 and its subsequent action plans. The strategy complements other Romanian public policies in the fields of digitalization, urban mobility, energy and climate change. The strategy is also timely given that the road transit of persons and goods has significantly increased in Romania as a consequence of the war in Ukraine.

The priority of the Romanian Government is to increase road safety by reducing the number of accidents and mitigating their consequences, which is why we have implemented a holistic approach in terms of actions and measures aimed at improving infrastructure, the technical condition of vehicles, human behaviour and post-accident interventions. To that end, my Government puts a strong emphasis on preventive education. Road-education campaigns and other preventive activities are organized throughout the country, which target specific groups with the help of traditional media and social media platforms, the involvement of youth in road-education classes in schools and the distribution of leaflets and street campaigns, including with the support of civil society.

As a lesson learned from the coronavirus disease pandemic, we have invested in a great number of measures to ensure safer and more secure parking spaces for drivers in the professional category. In particular, we strive to alleviate the dangers posed to their safety, as well as to offer conditions that are

conducive to increasing the quality of driving by professional drivers, which is a measure with a direct impact on road safety.

From a digital perspective, the Romanian Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure is keen to use new and advanced technological solutions in the field of road safety with a view to implementing the 2+1 alternative traffic system and maintaining readable infrastructure that addresses all road users and is implemented by the road administrator through messages and information signs concerning the correct and proper use of the relevant infrastructure. In the same vein, the increasing use of automated traffic management systems will facilitate the video monitoring of traffic in order to allow for quicker interventions of emergency crews or those necessary to clear snow or restore road practicality, as well as to enable the qualitative and quantitative analysis of road traffic and automatic licence plate recognition, inter alia.

In conclusion, allow me to point to the financial ramifications of road safety for my country. Sadly, the financial impact of the economic and social losses caused by road accidents are estimated at around 1.5 per cent of Romania's gross domestic product. In that context, the national road safety strategy includes provisions for increasing administrative capacity and inter-institutional cooperation in order to ensure that there is capacity to spend the estimated funds and certify an efficient course of priority projects.

Owing to time constraints, we will submit a longer version of this statement in writing.

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to Mr. Saif Saeed Ghobash, Director of Land Transport at the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure of the United Arab Emirates.

**Mr. Ghobash (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*):** It is a pleasure and honour to be here today at this high-level meeting of the General Assembly on global road safety.

Roads are an essential part of our everyday lives. We all use them on a daily basis, and we must all play a role in making them safer. Recent decades have demonstrated that effective and comprehensive road-safety strategies can reduce the number of road fatalities despite increasing road traffic. We are currently experiencing the most turbulent era in the history of transportation and mobility. The goal for all

of us is therefore to create a sustainable transportation network that guarantees a safe future for the generations to come.

The United Arab Emirates launched the National Smart Mobility Strategy based on its vision to be among the world's leading countries in the field of smart multimodal mobility by the year 2030. Road safety and sustainability are among the main goals and objectives of our national strategy. We have set a target to reduce the annual number of fatalities caused by road accidents from 440 to zero by the year 2030, thereby reducing the number of deaths from road accidents by 100 per cent. We also aim to accelerate universal access to safe, sustainable and low-cost transportation, which would enable our system to overcome the issue of social inequity that is inherent in transportation systems across the world.

Our strategy also focuses on adopting zero-emission vehicles in order to contribute to our country's ambition to achieve net-zero emissions by the year 2050. The United Arab Emirates has invested \$40 billion dollars in clean energy over the past 15 years, which, according to our leaders, shows that our country is fully committed to seizing every opportunity to cement its leadership in combating climate change in the Middle East and North Africa region, thereby helping to advance development and growth and create new jobs, while driving our economy and country towards net-zero emissions.

It is worth noting that autonomous vehicles can help achieve both safety and sustainability in a

transportation system. Moreover, automation can help reduce collisions, prevent injuries and save lives by reducing the potential risks associated with human error. The development of automotive technology would also raise the level of social equity, reduce air pollution and traffic congestion and increase public access to transportation. In that regard, the National Smart Mobility Strategy of the United Arab Emirates aims to ensure that 25 per cent of all journeys in the country are autonomous by the year 2030.

The road transport system is one of the most dangerous environments that people use. Therefore, in addition to the importance of improving the efficiency of infrastructure in order to improve safety, there is an urgent need to raise awareness among people, because being cautious and careful today can ensure their survival tomorrow.

I would like to thank the United Nations for having worked together with all Member States and expert speakers and panellists in order to discuss and exchange a wealth of ideas on the fundamental issue of road safety. We reaffirm the commitment of the United Arab Emirates to cooperating with all countries present here today in order to ensure a better and safer tomorrow.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker for this morning. The Assembly will continue the plenary segment of the high-level meeting at 3 p.m. in this Hall, when we will continue to hear the remaining statements.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*