



World Day of Remembrance
for Road Traffic Victims



NEWS RELEASE

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

19 November 2010, Brussels - ETSC commemorates the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims⁽¹⁾. On Sunday 21st of November all those killed and injured in road crashes, their families and friends and all others affected or involved in the aftermath are being remembered. On this day ETSC wishes to state and confirm its commitment to work for the protection of life by making roads safer.

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims was started by RoadPeace⁽²⁾ in 1993. Since then it has been observed and promoted worldwide by several NGOs, including the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR)⁽³⁾ and its associated organisations. On 26 October 2005, the United Nations endorsed it as a global day to be observed every third Sunday in November, making it a major advocacy day for road traffic injury prevention. The WHO and the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration encourage governments and NGOs around the world to commemorate this day.

The day is an opportunity to highlight the huge scale of road deaths and injuries, their impact and cost. In Europe, despite the steady progress in reducing road deaths since the setting up of a target in 2001, **the European Commission forecast foresees 33,000 deaths on the roads by the end of 2010⁽⁴⁾**. Another **1,700,000 people are recorded as injured** in police records each year and, among them **300,000 are seriously injured⁽⁵⁾**. Adding to this loss and suffering, a cost to society equal to 2% of the GDP for the whole of the EU results from road collisions.

Further, the sense of grief and distress is all the greater because many of the victims are young and because the response to road death and injury is often experienced as inadequate or inappropriate. Road traffic crashes are the 1st cause of death among 15-29 year olds, the 2nd cause among 5-14 year olds, and the 3rd caused among 30-44 year olds⁽⁶⁾. This day should be an opportunity for committing to take action. ETSC therefore stresses that if the EU is to be serious about reaching its 2020 target of halving road deaths, **the recently published European Commission Road Safety Policy Orientations need to be reinforced and translated urgently into determined action.**

At a global level the United Nations' Secretary General reminds us that we mourn an estimated **1.3 million people annually⁽⁷⁾**. Many tragedies can be avoided through a set of proven, simple measures. Globally, recognition is growing about the critical development and public health challenge posed by road deaths and injuries: earlier this year, the UN General Assembly declared the first-ever "Decade of Action for Road Safety," providing an opportunity for global action. For its part, the United Nations General Secretary issued a directive to all United Nations staff instructing drivers of UN vehicles to practice road safety, including by wearing seatbelts, obeying speed limits and avoiding the use of mobile phones and other distractions. This should be a source of inspiration for good governance also in Europe.

ETSC's Executive Director Antonio Avenoso: *"Road deaths and injuries is a Global pandemic, the European Union has a fundamental duty to protect its citizens, but also a responsibility to lead the way as a road safety champion internationally. To achieve this, the EU will have to give a real meaning, through action, to its recently published Road Safety Policy Orientations"*.

Jeannot Mersch, the new FEVR President: *"FEVR and its member organisations continue to campaign for a reduction of the danger on the roads during the next decade, leading therefore we hope to a reduction in the number of broken lives - in our countries, throughout Europe and in the whole world."*

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Notes to Editors:

- (1) The World Day of Remembrance is the day on which all those killed and injured in road collisions are remembered: <http://www.worlddayofremembrance.org/>
- (2) RoadPeace is a UK national charity for road crash victims, supporting those bereaved or injured, and working for road safety. <http://www.roadpeace.org/>
- (3) FEVR is the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims <http://www.fevr.org>
- (4) Future Road Safety in the EU at Stake? ETSC's response to the EC Communication "Towards a European Road Safety Area: Policy Orientations on Road Safety 2011-2020".
[http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC Response to EC Communication 22 Sept 2010.pdf](http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC%20Response%20to%20EC%20Communication%2022%20Sept%202010.pdf)
- (5) ETSC (2010), 4th Road Safety PIN Report, Road Safety Target in Sight - Making up for lost time, [http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC PIN Report 2010.pdf](http://www.etsc.eu/documents/ETSC%20PIN%20Report%202010.pdf)
- (6) WHO guide for World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims
[http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/activities/remembrance_da
y_handbook/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/activities/remembrance_day_handbook/en/index.html)
- (7) The United Nations Secretary-General Message on the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, 21 November 2010
http://www.who.int/roadsafety/remembrance_day/un_roadssafetyday2010_en.pdf