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Statement

by

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at

Second United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference

**UN Road Safety Fund High-Level Side Event: “Safe and Sustainable Mobility In
Developing Countries”**

Beijing, 15 October 2021 (remote participation)

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here with you today at the UN Road Safety Fund High-Level Side event at the 2nd UN Global Transport Conference.

As you just heard from the Special Envoy on Road Safety, Jean Todt, safe mobility is one of our biggest global challenges. And it is the world's poorest people that pay the biggest price, with 93% of road crash fatalities occurring in low- and middle-income countries. These numbers are not just statistics, these are tragedies on a catastrophic scale.

The Second Decade of Action for Road Safety and its Global Plan is an opportunity again to put road safety at the heart of the SDG agenda. The clock to 2030 is ticking and we cannot afford to delay.

So let me also jump straight to solutions. In my years of overseeing road safety work across the world, I have come to the conclusion that the crucial missing piece remains catalytic investments. This is why the UN Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) was launched 3 years ago, with the objective of leveraging funds at the global, national and individual levels, encouraging partnerships and implementing road safety projects in low- and middle-income countries.

Through its projects, the UNRSF works with a wide range of stakeholders. It taps and builds on their expertise and resources to co-create initiatives which pilot, scale or leapfrog game-changing approaches.

These projects are already showing results. The Fund has provided hundreds of kilometres of safe walking and cycling lanes, supported safer access to schools for children in multiple countries, and is incrementally working towards providing 300 million people with safer, cleaner vehicles. Most importantly, these are proofs of concepts of how road safety financing can save lives and reduce injuries. For example, in Brazil, through UNRSF financing, the road traffic rule enforcement system has been strengthened, resulting in a decrease in the rate of traffic deaths per 100,000 habitants from 17.03 in 2019 to 15.64 in 2020.

Today's event will launch 10 new high-impact UNRSF-funded project, which will further scale up these approaches in 15 countries. 11 of these are new countries for the Fund and in 4 others the Fund will continue existing engagement. For example, data management and analysis capacities will be strengthened in the Arab region, giving decision-makers the information needed to design impactful policies. A scalable, community-based urban intervention will be designed in Colombia, to citizens a voice to decide which road safety intervention can be the most effective. The post-crash response of the health care system will be strengthened in Bangladesh, saving precious lives on the road. An exciting project to make streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists in Africa will protect some of the world's most vulnerable users.

These are only some of the examples of the important and lifesaving UNRSF projects that are implemented by UN organizations, national institutions, and civil society, including youth. However, much more needs to be done. The UNRSF must scale its operations to respond to the demands from the countries and communities. I encourage you to support the UNRSF in its projects, partnerships and advocacy work.

Thank you.
