BACKGROUND

Road Safety Situation in Africa

Road crashes are disproportionately high in Africa compared to other regions of the world. The continent loses annually over 300,000 people through road crashes, even though its countries are witnessing the lowest levels of motorization in the world. It has the world’s highest estimated road traffic fatality rate of 26.6 road deaths per 100,000 population compared to 17.0 in South-east Asia, a world average of 17.5, and 9.3 per 100,000 population in Europe. Thirty-eight percent of all African road traffic fatalities occur among pedestrians while 43 percent occur among car occupants. These average figures mask the wide variation among countries on the continent with many of them recording a higher share of pedestrian deaths as a percentage of total deaths. For instance, up to 46 percent of road traffic deaths in Kenya occur among pedestrians. Motorized 2-3 wheelers and cyclists account for 7 percent and 5 percent of Africa’s traffic deaths respectively. A significant proportion of road fatalities on the continent occur in urban areas. In Uganda, for example, 44 percent of all crashes and 19 percent of all fatalities in 2016 occurred in Kampala.

It is expected that the ongoing improvement of the quality and coverage of Africa’s roads will increase crashes on the continent if it is not accompanied by appropriate road safety measures. This has a huge financial implication as Africa may be losing all its investment in road infrastructure through crashes that are estimated to cost 1-2 percent of the GDP of countries. Indeed, this may be as high as 5 percent in countries such as Uganda. From another perspective, savings through improved road safety could significantly close Africa’s infrastructure financing gap, estimated to be between $137 billion–$177 billion a year.

ECA’s Long-standing Commitment to Road Safety

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) contributes to road safety in Africa through its three core functions – think-tank, convening, and operational functions. As a think-tank, the Commission has developed a methodology to measure the performance of African countries in road safety and used it to rank countries on the continent. ECA has also undertaken road safety performance reviews in African countries, including Uganda, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe in collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for...
Road Safety and the governments of these countries. With an implementing consortium led by the International Road Forum (IRF), ECA also completed successively the “Ten Step Plan for Safer Road Infrastructure,” project in Tanzania. In addition, ECA led the development of the African Road Safety Action Plan (2011-2020) in the context of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety for the same period in collaboration with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Transport Policy Programme (SSATP). Furthermore, ECA collaborated with AUC to formulate the African Road Safety Charter and to ensure its alignment with the African Road Safety Action Plan (2011-2020). ECA also collaborated with AUC in formulating the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-African Highways (TAH) adopted by African Ministers of Transport and endorsed by Heads of State of the continent, ensuring that it had an annex on road safety. In 2019, ECA and AUC jointly articulated Africa’s post-2020 Strategic Directions for Road Safety as well as the continent’s Road Safety Action Plan for the period 2021-2030. ECA is also part of the Task Force that is currently developing the Global Plan of Action for the second UN Decade of Action for Road Safety (2021-2030).

ECA has used its convening power to organize several policy dialogues on road safety in Africa during which member states, regional organizations and other stakeholders have made important decisions including the adoption of recommendations, action plans, roadmaps, and declarations. For instance, the Commission organized Road Safety congresses in Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Pretoria as far back as 1984, 1989 and 1997 respectively. These congresses significantly improved the understanding of the road safety situation on the continent. ECA also organized Road Safety Conferences in Accra in 2007 – during which the Accra Ministerial Declaration was adopted; in Addis Ababa in 2010 and 2015 to adopt the African Road Safety Action Plan and undertake its mid-term review respectively, and in 2019 to prepare the African post-2020 Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan. These conferences have been organized in collaboration with AUC, African Transport Policy Programme (SSATP) and other partners. The appointment of the Executive Secretary of ECA as a member of the FIA High Level Panel for Road Safety provides another avenue for the Commission to play its advocacy role which is linked to its convening function. ECA delivers its operational function through technical assistance and advisory services such as the performance reviews undertaken in Cameroon, Uganda, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, and the development of a road safety strategy for Eswatini and action plan for Gambia. The Commission’s active involvement in the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) enhances its operational function in Road Safety. In 2019, ECA was a member of the Road Safety Cluster of the Africa-EU Task on Transport Connectivity. The Commission was also part of the Task Force that developed the Global Plan of Action for the second UN Decade of Action for Road Safety.

United Nations System and Road Safety

Over the years, the UN has been a key player in efforts to improve road safety around the world. The UN General Assembly adopted resolution 64/255 that proclaimed 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety in March 2010. The global goal of the Decade was to stabilize and then reduce the forecasted level of global road fatalities, by increasing activities conducted at the national, regional and global levels. The UN General Assembly has also adopted resolution 74/299 that proclaims the period 2021-2030 as the second Decade of Action for Road Safety, with a goal of reducing road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50 percent from 2021 to 2030.
The UN recognizes road safety as a development issue and includes it explicitly in 2 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Target 3.6 of SDG 3 is to halve global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020. Target 11.2 of SDG 11, for its part, is to “provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons” by 2030. The appointment of the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety in 2015 and the launch of the United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) in 2018 are additional steps taken by the UN to save lives on the world’s roads.

Kofi Annan and Road Safety
The UN made great strides in the early 2000s, under the leadership of Kofi Annan, in raising awareness on the enormity of the global road safety challenge. It also garnered political will across the world to address the scourge of road crashes. This is reflected by the adoption of resolutions to improve road safety by the UN General Assembly during this period as well as the regular presentation by the Secretary General of reports on the global road safety situation to the General Assembly. It was also during Kofi Annan’s tenure as the Secretary-General of the UN that the UN Road Safety Collaboration was established.

Leadership and political will are the hallmarks of Kofi Annan’s legacy. This is epitomized by the mission of the Kofi Annan Foundation to help build peaceful, democratic and resilient societies. The Foundation mobilizes those who are in a position to influence and bring leadership to the world’s most pressing problems. This is relevant for road safety in Africa where management challenges, notably weak leadership and political will, contribute significantly to the slow-moving implementation of initiatives.

Morocco’s designation as a hosting country for the 2023 edition
Morocco is a leading country in road safety in Africa, a giant step has been made in 2020 by creating a leading Road Safety Agency, autonomous and fully funded; the National Road Safety Agency NARSA, this institution comes to crown the heritage of the National Committee for The Prevention of Traffic Accidents (CNPAC) created in 1977. Also, Morocco, makes enormous efforts to promote South-South cooperation with its African partners in the field of road transport and road safety.

OBJECTIVE
The mid-term review of the African Road Safety Action Plan undertaken by ECA, in collaboration with AUC and SSATP, in 2015 showed that most African countries performed poorly in the safety of rural roads and have taken insignificant action to implement the recommended activities in this area. They also performed poorly in road safety management and in providing post-crash response. This was confirmed by another review undertaken in 2018. The latter showed that in several countries, the fundamentals of road safety are almost absent: national road safety strategy and action plan, well-funded lead agency, updated road safety laws, reliable car inspection system, etc. The work of the international academic group, that preceded the ministerial conference of Stockholm in February 2020, identified the non-existence or insufficiency of road safety actions in countries as one of the main weaknesses of the first Decade of Action for Road Safety. This weak performance calls for innovative solutions – through initiatives and products - from governments, private sector/
businesses, civil society and other organizations as well as individuals to reduce deaths on the continent’s roads. ECA seeks to motivate outstanding contribution (excellence in thinking and action) by recognizing achievements or innovation which will reduce fatalities and injuries from road crashes in Africa. It is foreseen that giving public recognition to those who have improved road safety in Africa through outstanding initiatives would raise awareness on the scale of the challenge and motivate others to take action to save lives on the continent’s roads.

The primary objective of the Kofi Annan Road Safety Award is to motivate key stakeholders – governments, private sector, and civil society organizations – to develop and implement innovative and outstanding ideas/initiatives to save lives on Africa’s roads.

The award also aims to recognize the contribution of Kofi Annan to Road Safety.

MODALITIES

Type of award and selection criteria ➔

The award will be in the form of certificates of recognition delivered to governments, private sector, civil society and other organizations as well as individuals who have made outstanding contributions to road safety in Africa. The second edition of the award will be given to governments that are taking serious measures and actions to achieve the objective of the second UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, to halve road deaths by 2030. The selection of award winners is based on a methodology that takes into consideration the elements of the Global and Regional Action Plans on Road Safety, which includes but not limited to:

- Road safety management (An autonomous leading Agency, fully funded, assuring strategic roles of coordination, legislation, monitoring and evaluation)
- Innovation in road safety fields
- Reliable data management system
- Efficient communication efforts for road collision prevention
- Domestic financing for road safety

In addition to countries, awards could be given to organizations – private sector, NGOs, consultancies, research institutions, among others – that have made outstanding contributions to road safety in Africa, with a focus on African organizations.

Considerations will include:

- Demonstrated strong partnerships with government
- Formally registered organizations
- Plan of work that contributes directly to achieving existing national, regional and international frameworks (national road safety action plans, African Road Safety Plan, SDGs)

Nominations ➔

- Call for nomination: 26 June 2023
- Closure of the call: 30 July 2023
- Assessment/selection of nominees: August 2023
- Notification to nominees: August 2023
- Celebration of the Award in Marrakech (Morocco): 25 – 26 September 2023
ECA will also publish judging criteria; as well as all the useful information concerning the whole process.

**Participants and Format of Award Ceremony →**

High-level political leaders of the host country (the Kingdom of Morocco), the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety, the Executive Secretary of ECA, and a senior official of the World Bank will attend the ceremony. The award-winning countries will be represented at the level of ministers.

The event will consist of a hybrid of physical and virtual participation. It is envisaged that the following groups of participants will attend the meeting physically:

- High-level political leaders and senior Road Safety officials and experts of the host country (Kingdom of Morocco)
- Ministers of recipient countries and their delegations
- The UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety and the Executive Secretary of ECA and their delegations
- Representatives of UN Agencies
- Representative of the African Union Commission
- Representative of the World Bank/SSATP
- Representative of the African Development Bank
- Senior Leadership of the Kofi Annan Foundation
- The Director of the Africa CDC
- Celebrities (football; music; etc)

Road Safety officials from other African countries, other stakeholders and the public will join the event (physically or online). The award ceremony will provide an opportunity to present concrete actions that have started in countries in the frame of the implementation of the African Road Safety Action Plan for the period 2021-2030.

The event will be preceded by a hybrid Road Safety Seminar. Potential topics to be covered by the seminar include Road Management (legislation, finance, monitoring and evaluation, research, promotion, etc.), UN Road Safety Conventions, and safety standards for used vehicles in Africa.

**DATE & VENUE**

Marrakech, Morocco
25-26 September 2023
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