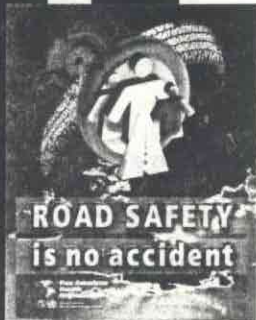


Declaration



FOR WORLD HEALTH DAY 2004 ON ROAD SAFETY

"SAFER ROADS IN THE AMERICAS"



Whereas April 7th is World Health Day, celebrated annually to commemorate the founding of the World Health Organization and to raise awareness of global public health challenges;

Whereas the world's health and traffic safety leaders recognize that road crashes are no accident and that road crashes are preventable;

Whereas World Health Day 2004 is dedicated to Road Safety, highlighting the grave consequences and enormous costs of road traffic injuries in the Americas and worldwide through the launch of the first World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention as a resource that can help to prevent and avoid deaths and disabilities;

Whereas 1.2 million people are killed on the road annually and millions more are injured or disabled throughout the world, including nearly 130,000 deaths registered in the Americas;

Whereas traffic crashes kill almost 43,000 people per year in the United States, and are the leading cause of death for Hispanics under 34 years of age;

Whereas economic costs of road traffic injuries worldwide are estimated at U.S. \$518 billion per year, including \$100 billion in developing countries and \$230 billion in the United States, and hinder the human development called for in the goals of the Millennium Declaration;

Whereas about half of road traffic fatalities worldwide involve persons aged 15-44 years, many of whom are primary breadwinners for their families;

Whereas the health systems of the countries of the Americas are strained by the toll of injuries among drivers, passengers, cyclists and pedestrians affected by road traffic crashes;

Whereas the Pan American Health Organization has designated the reduction of deaths, injuries and disabilities from traffic crashes in the Americas as one of its priority areas for action;

Whereas the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Transportation have a long history of commitment to policies for road traffic injury prevention and control and safer roads in the United States;

Whereas April 7, 2004 marks the launch of the first World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, a resource that can help guide efforts to prevent and avoid deaths and disabilities from motor vehicle crashes;

Whereas the World Bank has co-sponsored this new World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention and has expressed concern about the negative impact on development for low-income and middle-income countries experiencing traffic-related deaths and injuries;

Whereas collaboration across sectors is needed to reduce deaths and injuries from traffic crashes in the Americas;

Now therefore, we, the undersigned, declare:

We will work to reduce avoidable deaths, disabilities and injuries, and the immense loss and suffering they cause, by encouraging integrated, effective and sustained programs and policies aimed to improve road safety and to prevent road traffic crashes;

We will work to protect victims of road crashes through comprehensive approaches that improve vehicle safety, road infrastructure, road user behavior, and emergency response capability;

We will promote safe walking and biking paths for transportation and recreation as a way to cut the toll of pedestrian and bicyclist injuries;

We will work to increase seat belt and child restraint use through integrated policies and legislation;

We will work to prevent impaired driving, whether impairment is due to alcohol or other drugs by increasing education, improving laws and their enforcement, and ensuring appropriate treatment and sanctions;

We will work to develop effective ways to promote driver safety and reduce speeding, focusing on the major causes of injury and death in road crashes;

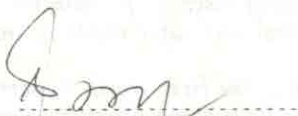
We will promote increased use of helmets by motorcyclists and bicyclists to reduce head injuries from crashes and falls;

We will encourage using data to assess the road traffic injury problem, as well as science-based research on safer roads and ways to prevent deaths, injuries and disabilities from road traffic crashes;

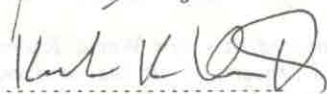
We will work with partners and all interested parties to promote effective and sustained educational programs to improve safer road use and consequently reduce injuries and deaths from crashes;

We call upon all countries of the Americas to join us in this Declaration.

Signed




On behalf of the
Pan American Health Organization



On behalf of the
U.S. Department of Transportation



On behalf of the
US Department of Health and Human Services



On behalf of the
World Bank

Mirta Roses-Periago, Claude Allen, Kirk Van Tine, and David De Ferranti
Washington, D.C. 7 April 2004