

## **UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals**

### **Hearing on Sustainable Transport**

**UN Headquarters, New York, 7 January 2014**

#### **Remarks by Saul Billingsley, Acting Director General, FIA Foundation**

Honourable Co-chairs of the Open Working Group. I would like to thank you and the Major Groups coordinators for allowing the FIA Foundation this opportunity to discuss the role of transport in the post-2015 goals.

Transport is of course about connection, moving people and goods from point A to point B. The objective is to do this as efficiently as possible.

But what do we mean by efficiency? There is a fundamental, and often fatal, disconnect when transport efficiency is calculated only according to narrow economic criteria. When it forgets or neglects the human dimension. An all too typical example is road building and rehabilitation designed to increase vehicle volume and speed, without considering the wider or long-term safety or environmental impacts.

So our objective for the post-2015 agenda should to restore the human dimension to transport policy, to design transport systems that do no harm, and to integrate transport policies with wider development objectives in a way that supports the delivery of the new sustainable development goals.

2030 targets, of the kind proposed in the TST brief, for halving road traffic deaths; doubling urban access to mass transit; bringing an additional 1.5 billion urban residents within WHO air quality thresholds; and doubling the fuel efficiency of new vehicles are both the right approach and are achievable.

There is a strong and growing consensus behind these targets, which are supported by road safety, environmental and health NGOs as well as other groups in partnerships including SLoCaT, the Partnership on Sustainable Low Carbon Transport; the UN Road Safety Collaboration; the Global Fuel Economy Initiative and the Partnership for Clean Fuels & Vehicles.

I would recommend to you the new SLoCaT paper on targets and indicators which demonstrates that these and other partnerships are already developing some quite sophisticated data sets and interventions to support transport-related targets post-2015.

And the Multilateral Development Banks have pledged to make available to countries loans worth \$175 billion to support safe and sustainable transport over the next decade.

But to succeed this effort needs political support, it needs countries to build capacity and to catalyse action. And it needs to be integrated within wider development objectives.

Because transport will be a vital component in the delivery of almost every new post-2015 development goal. And if we fail to support and integrate safe and sustainable transport we undermine the delivery of those goals.

Let me illustrate this point with the example of one real 8 year old girl whose family I met last year in Tanzania.

Jennifer was the successful target of investments in her mother's maternal health, in under-fives vaccinations and in primary education. She could have been a poster child for the Millennium Development Goals.

But in 2013 Jennifer died outside her school under the wheels of a truck.

She was killed on a road that had recently been upgraded to enable higher speed. Transport infrastructure that was no doubt designed with the best of motives, to encourage economic progress. But a transport policy that failed to protect or to consider the needs of a child whose life, in every other regard, was a priority for government and the international community.

This disconnect undermined the MDGs and squandered the investment in Jennifer's life. Her story is one of millions. Millions of people whose lives are blighted by unsafe roads, high levels of air pollution, or the social exclusion that results from a lack of access to reliable, affordable transport. This is allowed to continue, in part, because over the past decade or more transport objectives have been divorced from MDG objectives.

Let's not make the same mistake twice. Incorporate these defined, measurable, achievable targets and we can deliver safe, clean, fair and green mobility that supports and enhances the wider health, social and economic goals of the post-2015 agenda.