

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPALITIES
IN IMPROVING TRAFFIC SAFETY ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL ROADS
21 – 22MAY 2014, SKOPJE, MACEDONIA

Organized by the National Road Traffic Safety Council
of the Republic of Macedonia in collaboration with
the International Road Traffic Safety Organization
La Prévention Routière Internationale - PRI

The representatives of national parliaments, state institutions and organizations, representatives of the academic community, experts and chiefs of delegations, regional, sub-regional and local organizations, non-governmental organizations, the business sector, universities, research institutes, international organizations and delegates from other countries have hereby, on this day, the 22nd of May, in Skopje, adopted the following

Declaration of Skopje - Macedonia

The participants at the conference clearly recognize the leadership, the efforts and the successes of the International Road Traffic Safety Organization (La Prévention Routière Internationale PRI), in the area of promoting road traffic safety globally, as well as the efforts of the National Road Traffic Safety Council of the Republic of Macedonia, as the host and the organizer of the PRI International Conference on the Role of the Local Government and Municipalities in Improving Traffic Safety on Local and Regional Roads, 21– 22 May 2014 in Skopje, Macedonia. The highest level of road traffic safety should be a continuous objective of all competent institutions and organizations and other stakeholders at all possible levels, including citizens.

The participants at the Conference determine that a large number of road crashes still occur globally. These road traffic crashes cause huge material and immaterial (psychological) harm to individuals, to families, to the nation and the broader society. At the same time, one must consider the fact that the traffic crashes related injuries and victims still have a large share on the list of major causes of loss of life globally, and the fact that road traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for **young people** between 15 and 30 years of age. This leads to the requirement to dedicate special attention and provide continuous care, on the part of all relevant the institutions and organizations, with a view of reducing and eliminating the risks facing **young people** that participate in road traffic. In addition, the specifics and characteristics of the behavior of this group of road users should be carefully considered. This requires special education, measures and activities focused on strengthening their awareness of risks and their traffic behavior. They also must be aware of their own responsibility to themselves and other road users.

The participants at the conference emphasize that the loss of life in road traffic crashes, in addition to health related implications, also lead to negative social, economic and a lot of other negative consequences. Some forecasts suggest that failure to radically change the situation related to traffic crashes, will make road safety the fifth top cause of loss of life in the world by 2030. Hence, we need to continue to make further efforts to minimizing the risks of road traffic safety internationally, regionally, sub-regionally, nationally, as well as at the level of local governments and municipalities. These activities have to align with and be part of the Millennium Goals, the Post-2015 Development Goals and other commitments of the United Nations.

The participants at the conference determine had a **multi-sector and multidimensional approach is required** to promote road traffic safety. All stakeholders continuously need to improve their mutual cooperation to improve traffic safety, to be able to achieve sustainable results and to bring down the number of road crashes and (fatal) injuries. Having in mind the fact that most of the road traffic takes place in residential areas on local roads and (regional) roads, that crosses local municipalities, intensive and continuous measures must be taken in the (very near) future in order to strengthen the capacities of the local governmental and non-governmental institutions and to increase the support and involvement of citizens.

This is particularly important considering that fact that a large portion of the total number of road traffic crashes and road traffic victims occur in urban areas and local roads. Hence, it is especially important that, in addition to the efforts of the central governmental institutions, **local municipalities** also increase their activities and efforts to reduce road traffic safety risks, the number of traffic crashes with fatalities and to bring down the number of people injured as a consequence of a road traffic crash. This is the joint assignment for the future, which starts today. One major cause of traffic crashes inside urban areas is speeding. It is of high importance that a coherent enforcement policy is available. A system of speed cameras as part of police enforcement can contribute positively to an effective and efficient role of the police. From research we know that the combination of police enforcement and road safety campaigns has added value. The local municipalities should also develop more focus on the “new” risks and hazards caused by the increasing use of modern technologies. Distracted driving is also an issue that local communities should focus on. Local municipalities should continuously monitor the quality of the construction, maintenance and the reconstruction of streets and local roads and the road environment, which has an impact on traffic safety. The ultimate objective is the minimization or in fact the complete elimination of the risks and hazards related to traffic.

The participants to the conference insist that the issues related to road traffic safety be given a top priority in the agendas of the international institutions, the national institutions, as well as the regional and local institutions. Political commitment and societal support are also indispensable. This will provide a significant contribution to improve road traffic safety, to bring the number of road traffic crashes down and to save many lives in the future. In this light, it is of imminent importance to give top priority to the measures focused on all vulnerable categories of road users, i.e. young people, young drivers, children and youngsters, elderly people, bicyclists, pedestrians, disabled persons and persons with special needs.

The participants at the conference point out that, having in mind the increasing commitments and the ever greater promotion - globally, nationally, regionally, and locally - of bicycle use in road traffic, they insist that much greater efforts should be made to construct a great number of special and absolutely safe bicycle routes and paths. This will provide enormous social and economic benefits.

The participants at the conference emphasize that the modern technology developments could jeopardize road traffic safety. In addition to the traditional threats, such developments also produce a number of new threats to the traffic participants, also known as risks of distracted driving. Therefore, in addition to the traditional activities to eliminate the threats to road traffic safety, this also requires new forms of activities aimed at improving road traffic safety. This refers to the use of mobile telephones or smart phones, as well as a number of other modern video and audio devices, used while driving or outside of vehicles, i.e. by pedestrians, bicyclists and other road users. Here we should also have in mind that poor and improperly designed road environment also represents a threat to the road traffic safety. Distracted driving and driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs are particular risks related to young drivers and other young road users.

Having in mind the documents of the international community, and especially the documents of the United Nations, as well as the Rotterdam Declaration of 2009, the Moscow Declaration of 2009, the Marrakech Declaration of 2012, the Kiev Declaration of 2013, the Abu Dhabi Declaration of 2013, etc.

Following all the above mentioned remarks and conference presentations, the participants on the INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPALITIES IN IMPROVING TRAFFIC SAFETY ON LOCAL AND REGIONAL ROADS, 21 – 22 MAY 2014, SKOPJE, MACEDONIA, hereby determine the following:

RECOMMENDATIONS

When enacting and implementing national strategic and planning documents, the different nations should focus on the highest level of road traffic safety, as a basis for improving traffic safety on the local and regional roads;

- 1. The national strategic and planning documents should especially emphasize the road traffic safety of young road users. Also special attention must be given to other vulnerable groups of road users, such as children, young drivers (inexperienced drivers), elderly, disabled persons, persons with special needs, motorcyclists, pedestrians, and cyclists.**
- 2. In their national strategic documents, as well as in the relevant legislation the different nations should devote a lot of attention to the proactive role of the local and regional authorities, as a very important factor in the promotion of road traffic safety. At the same time, the central authorities should provide full support to the local authorities so that they can implement their role with respect to traffic safety in residential areas and local roads. In addition, the local governments should continuously make efforts to improve and develop local public transport, which, in turn will significantly diminishing traffic volumes; the same counts for the promotion of cycling transport.**
- 3. The road design and construction should bear in mind all of the aspects that have an impact on the provision of a high level of safety to the road traffic, and the road environment. The national and local systems for collection and analysis of all data (including speeding data, reports of citizens), road traffic data, and especially traffic accident data should continuously be improved;**
- 4. The post-crash care system should be continuously improved and an integrated call center 112 should be introduced in all of the countries which do not have one yet. In addition, the system for treatment and rehabilitation of people injured in traffic accidents should be continuously improved.**
- 5. It is necessary to continuously improve the system of efficient cooperation between the different institutions and organizations responsible for road traffic, which, in turn, will provide for a multi-sector and a multidisciplinary approach to the improvement of road traffic safety (capacity building);**
- 6. All involved institutions and organizations should develop and implement activities aimed at raising public awareness with a view of ensuring that all road users behave better, more carefully and more responsibly;**

- 7. The establishment of a system of continuous education of all road users, especially the professional drivers, is an important element of the development of a high level of road traffic safety (culture);**
- 8. A combination of police enforcement and road safety campaigns has added value (additional positive effects). The efforts of the police needs to be supported by a smart system of speed cameras. Except for speeding the police has also a role to play related to drinking under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, use of seatbelts and distracted driving and vehicle inspection as key topics in road safety at local and municipal level;**
- 9. It is necessary to provide greater incentives for scientific and research projects and greater interconnectivity between roads and science within all national and local institutions and organizations working in the area of road traffic safety;**
- 10. Exchange of information and experience between the countries is an important element of road traffic safety in global, regional, international, national and local level;**
- 11. All vehicle manufacturers should continuously improve and develop the vehicle safety standards.**
- 12. For the purposes of implementing this Declaration, we invite all stakeholders globally, regionally nationally and locally, to make continuous efforts aimed at the achievement of the objectives and the recommendations contained herein.**

Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, 22 May, 2014