



**12<sup>th</sup> ASECAP Road Safety Conference**  
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**Address by**

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Honorable Commissioner, Members of the Parliament, Distinguished Guests,

From the outset, let me say how pleased I am to be here at the European Parliament together with all of you to discuss the pressing issue that is road safety. On behalf of the International Road Federation, I'd like to thank ASECAP and his President Mr Bill Halkias for giving us the opportunity to meet today and to share our views.

We at IRF believe that **Sustainable Mobility is a fundamental part of the quality of life of people** beside being the backbone of the economy of any country in the world. To mark our commitment, six years ago we decided to expand the mandate of our Federation to embrace mobility at large and have given ourselves the mission to promote roads and road networks that enable **access and sustainable mobility for All**. Helping delivering safe journeys to everyone independently of where they live or what is their social status has been part of our own journey for the past 70 years.

Since 1948 the International Road Federation – an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization with members in nearly 90 countries of the world - has promoted safe and sustainable roads worldwide. It has done so by acting as a global platform bringing together major actors from the sector; it has done so by being a catalyst for cooperation between governments, the private sector and international institutions. It has done so by **raising awareness**, by **building capacity** at all levels and by **inspiring innovation** throughout the sector. Of course, we have not done all this alone. We have



always strongly believed in the power of **collaborations** and we are delighted to see many of our partners and other key organizations present today, to discuss ways in which we can effectively address the road safety pandemic and further the transport agenda as a whole.

It seems surprising that a few steps away from the end of the Decade of Action we still **need to strongly re-commit to road safety**. It seems surprising that so much **change** has already happened and yet for a great majority of the people in this world, road safety still remains a **pressing and daily threat to their lives**.

**We are here today to state loud and clear our commitment to road safety**, today more than ever as it is needed, and as we know that it is indeed achievable.

While we get ready to convene in **2020 in Sweden for a key Ministerial Meeting** that will mark the **end of the Decade of Action** and probably request a deferral of the current road safety Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) **target to 2030**, we need to keep in mind that a **long-term view always improves our view of the short term**.

**Technology is set to transform transportation** and impact society in ways we cannot fully predict **but must be prepared to manage**. These revolutionary technologies could potentially deliver the outcomes we expect in terms of **safety** but also efficiency, pollution, equity, **but do not guarantee them**. We have only started measuring the impact that these technologies have and will have. How do we determine and guide the direction of these changes? The answers to these and other questions are critically important.

Significant and sustained improvements in road safety require also **taking a long-term view and approach** which can only be developed based on **good data**. Without reliable data, we cannot put in place effective policies and interventions. It is fundamental that data on all aspects of a Safe System are properly collected and analyzed. This is the only way for us to better see, better understand and better address the problem. I am pleased to inform you that a **new IRF Global Road Data Warehouse** is being developed thanks



to the generous support of the Total Foundation and as our contribution to Regional Road Safety Observatories.

**But data needs proper funding too. Sustained funding mechanisms have to be put in place to support research, development and demonstration especially when it comes to automation.** We applaud and acknowledge the contribution that the EU is giving to research and innovation via the Horizon2020 programme. But more is needed and the private sector can and is ready to play its part.

**How the future unfolds depends on which technologies and services the consumers and businesses embrace and how policy makers respond.** What policies would best help harvest the benefits of this technology revolution and help us deliver safe and sustainable journeys? The answers to these and other questions are critical. And it is in forums like this one that we need to look for those answers.

**A high-level dialogue between authorities, industry and academia is crucial** and we as IRF are strongly engaged in creating these platforms for dialogue, exchange and coordination around the world. We have for example recently created an **IRF Africa Board** to exactly facilitate dialogue and collaboration between several of the actors engaged and operating in Africa.

**Beside a high-level dialogue we need also to encourage and facilitate people's engagement in decision making processes.** On this, an engagement of young generations is probably one of the missing links on which we need to work more. The **young generations** are not only the future of our countries and society, they are **the key that will help us unlock the door** of an effective and sustainable solution to the road safety problem and we should make sure we engage them with us on this difficult but fundamental journey. We as IRF are engaged on this front through the IRF young professionals and through the Youth for Safety NGO who is also part of our membership.



Ladies and gentlemen, **road safety is a collective responsibility: we are all concerned and all responsible and it's only by working together that we will be able to deliver the road safety outcomes we have been working for decades now.**

**IRF stands ready to play its part.** We stand ready to support. We stand ready to work hand in hand with others as we have done for the past 70 years. We are delighted to sign here today with ASECAP an MoU that will allow our organizations to work even more closely together and to further road safety and the transport agenda as a whole.

Thank you very much for your attention.