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Statement

by

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at the

“Geneva Friends of Road Safety Network”

Workshop on UNRSF Call for Proposals

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[5 minutes]

Ambassador Stevens,
Special Envoy for Road Safety,
Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to participate in today's workshop on the UN Road Safety Fund 2019 Call for Proposals organized by the EU Delegation to the UN and the Special Envoy for Road Safety under the framework of the Geneva Friends of Road Safety Network.

I must preface my remarks with reference to a sobering reality – while under target 3.6 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the global community committed to halving global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes by 2020, we are very far from achieving that target.

So what can we do?

I am convinced that we need to fundamentally transform the way we address road safety. We need to bring together our disparate and often uncoordinated efforts into a structured approach that builds and strengthens national road safety systems in low- and middle-income

countries.

In order to advance this national road safety system approach effectively, we must collaborate and pool our limited resources to achieve high-level strategic impact. Unfortunately, despite the scale of the challenge, road safety initiatives often do not attract the scale of funding that they need.

It is for this reason that the UN Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) was established in April 2018. Hosted by UNECE, the UNRSF is a multi-stakeholder financing instrument bringing together UN organizations, governments, private sector, academia and civil society.

The Fund has reached nearly \$20 million USD in pledges. While this is a good start, we need to go much further to reach the ambition of the Fund to substantially reduce death and injuries from road crashes. Every year, 1.35 million people die in road crashes - more than from all other modes of transport combined and - and the scale of resources that go to other safety measures is far, far larger. We must also have high ambitions and I take this opportunity to also call upon you for your support to the Fund.

My UNRSF colleagues will brief you in more detail about the

practicalities of the 2019 Call for Proposals. As one of the Fund's Advisory Board members and founding members, I just wish to emphasize two key points in relation to this Call. First of all, it is imperative that the Fund demonstrates results – all funded projects must contribute tangibly and immediately to a reduction in road fatalities and injuries. We must remind ourselves that almost 3,700 people die on the world's roads every day. These tragedies can be prevented with our timely and strategic leadership in the new way to do business.

Secondly, substantially reducing death and injuries from road crashes in often complex settings, cannot be achieved by one actor alone. We want to see diverse actors from the UN, government, private and social sectors, developing and implementing integrated and complemented solutions together so that the impact is multiplied. This new paradigm of networks of partnerships must supersede the traditional silos that have too often dominated our work in the past. I encourage you to keep this in mind when you are considering an application to this or future Calls for Proposals.

I am convinced that informal networks such as the Geneva Friends of Road Safety can play an important role in this changing our “business as usual” approach towards road safety. By providing a flexible space

for dialogue and information exchange, I hope that we will see more joint and synergistic efforts in road safety and collective ownership of the UN Road Safety Fund. I strongly believe that success is best when it is shared, and it is by leveraging networks such as this one that the UN Road Safety Fund can be the game-changer that it has the strong potential to be.

UNECE also has the pleasure of hosting the secretariat to the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety, Mr. Jean Todt. I have worked closely with Mr. Todt in his role as Special Envoy for over two years. I remain inspired in each of our interactions by his dedication, intellect and ability to bring diverse individuals together to find creative and effective solutions. The establishment of this network is yet another example of this. We are privileged to have him leading the charge in our fight to strengthen road safety.

In conclusion, I hope you find this workshop useful in understanding how to submit strong and impactful project proposals to the UNRSF 2019 Call for Proposals so that we can begin to fulfill the vision of the Fund to save lives on the road.

Thank you.
