

World Bank & FIA Foundation Launch Road Safety fund



Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard, Transport Director of the World Bank, speaking in the UK House of Lords.

The World Bank and the FIA Foundation have launched a multi-million dollar fund to combat the 1.2 million deaths from road traffic injuries suffered each year.

The Global Road Safety Facility received an initial donation of \$5 million from the World Bank, \$5 million from the FIA Foundation and €1 million from the Government of the Netherlands. The Facility, which will be managed by the World Bank, aims to generate increased funding and technical assistance for global, regional and country level initiatives designed to enable low and middle income countries to implement their own road safety programmes.

The ultimate objective is to help reduce the high number of road deaths and injuries in developing countries. More than 2.5 million lives could be saved and 200 million injuries avoided if fatality rates in poorer countries were reduced a further 30 per cent by 2020.

David Ward, Director General of the FIA Foundation, said: "This initiative will alert governments to the need for urgent coordinated action to prevent a global catastrophe. Will the international community really stand back and allow millions to be killed and maimed every year, when we already have available the solutions and tools to prevent this hidden epidemic which

causes so much poverty and human misery?"

Maryvonne Plessis-Fraissard, Transport Director of the World Bank, added: "The road safety gap between poor and rich countries is widening. Road crashes disproportionately devastate the poor and their consequences can plunge families into poverty. We have established the Facility to support new measures that will address this global priority and help reverse the forecast trends. Achieving the goals and objectives of the Facility will require sustained commitment. We are now calling for additional support from our partners in the donor community to work with us to implement the Facility and to grow and consolidate its longer term operations."

The World Bank recently estimated road crash costs in developing countries at \$100 billion. Costs for road traffic crashes include direct costs, such as medical care and insurance administration, and indirect costs including property damage, delays on the roads, loss of earnings, lost productivity and environmental costs.