



CONCEPT NOTE ON THE 2019 THEME FOR THE WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMSⁱ:

"LIFE IS NOT A CAR PART"

The slogan for this year's commemoration of the **World Day of Remembrance** relates to **Pillar 3 of the Global Decade of Action: Safer vehicles**. In addition, it accords with the general theme of the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety that will take place in Stockholm in February 2020 – "**Achieving Global Goals 2030**".

Notwithstanding global efforts to the contrary, the type of road mobility that is in place throughout the world still fosters an **unbearable number of deaths, serious injuries and illnesses every year**, both as the immediate consequence of road traffic crashes and through air pollution.

Every year, at least 1.3 million die and as many as 50 million more are seriously injured due to road crashes around the world. To this, we must add an estimated 4.2 millionⁱⁱ premature deaths caused by outdoor air pollutionⁱⁱⁱ, many of which result from transport-related causes. In addition dozens of millions more people suffer from pollution-related diseases caused in part by exhaust fumes and brake and tyre particles.

Global statistics don't generally compound data concerning road traffic deaths and injuries, with those concerning pollution-related fatal illnesses. When we talk of road traffic victims we tend to focus our attention and concern on the former, not on the latter. But there is every reason to take a more comprehensive view of the global tragedy if indeed we wish to search for better and more sustainable answers.

The simple truth is that motorized vehicles are dangerous machines, not only due to their internal and external design but also due to the pollution they cause. Hence, recognising that **twice as many people are fatally victimised by exhaust fumes and brake & tyre micro-residues as are from road crashes**, is an essential step to **take decisive action and change the present paradigm of road mobility**. Our **right to life – and to health** – is doubly put into question every day on the world's roads and streets. It is thus urgent to admit the short-sightedness of the present models of road safety, which don't incorporate measures to tackle pollution fatalities, as only then can we confront the complex reality of this pandemic and do justice to the memory of all victims.





We need to take a deep reflection on the type of mobility we have today, which is based on values of immediacy, selfishness and materialism, and which doesn't take into account the serious social, economic and ecological costs that it entails for all humanity.

Motorised road vehicles are built to offer users freedom of movement and a sense of personal power through speed. These very properties make them appealing yet risky machines. **Human life is not a car part that can be replaced if broken.** So, the danger of being killed by them, either through lack of kinetic control or by absorption of deadly exhaust particles, is not a removable accessory: danger is an integral component of their design.

Thus, to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals 3.6 and 11.2 (better health and more sustainable urban environments), we must embrace a truly holistic vision and understand that **Zero Vision** is not only a desired goal in terms of the immediate consequences of a road traffic crash through **lighter and safer vehicles** that respect occupants and other road users, but it also entails aiming for **zero emissions** (exhaust fumes, and brake & tire residues), promoting other, **softer and more active means of transportation**, and **reducing long distance travels by focusing on "zero kilometre products"** (that is, promoting local production).



ⁱ ORIGIN OF THE WDoR: Held on the 3rd Sunday of November each year, this Remembrance Day was set up to highlight the devastation caused by road crashes, give recognition to the suffering and lack of justice experienced by road crash victims, and to thank all those who assist victims in the aftermath of a crash. Initiated in 1993 by Brigitte Chaudhry MBE (Founder of RoadPeace (UK) and 2nd FEVR President) and observed since 1995 by FEVR (European Federation of Road Traffic Victims) and its member organisations, the World Day of Remembrance was adopted on 26th October 2005 by the United Nations as *'the appropriate acknowledgement for victims of road traffic crashes and their families'*. WHO played a pivotal role in UN's recognition of the World Day.

ⁱⁱ Data related to 2016

ⁱⁱⁱ [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-\(outdoor\)-air-quality-and-health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/ambient-(outdoor)-air-quality-and-health)



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