

The Second Latin American and Caribbean Road Safety Forum

Rio Grande, Puerto Rico—December 5-6, 2007

A Summary of the Forum Proceedings

BACKGROUND ON ROAD SAFETY IN THE REGION

In January 2006, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) ¹, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), the World Bank, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Chilean National Traffic Safety Commission (CONASET) and the Global Road Safety Forum conducted a planning meeting in Santiago, Chile to help organize a long-term regional, multisectoral road safety initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean to reverse the rapidly expanding epidemic of road traffic injuries and deaths in the region. Stakeholders from 11 different countries participated. The group developed plans for a region-wide forum and formed five working groups to advance a regional plan of action: Political Will, Information Systems, Communications and Culture Change, Knowledge Sharing and Infrastructure. The First Latin American and Caribbean Road Safety Forum was held eight months later. Stakeholders from 24 countries gathered in San José, Costa Rica on September 12-14, 2006 to develop a regional approach to road safety, to integrate all relevant sectors, and to engage national governments and policy-making bodies. The overarching goal of the Forum was to create an effective, collaborative, and sustainable mechanism to reverse the road traffic injury epidemic throughout the region. The meeting was convened to develop a regional response to the epidemic and concluded with the signing of the Declaration of San José, calling for the mobilization of relevant national ministries, the commitment of funding resources, and the development of a regional road safety committee. A panel of experts from throughout the region volunteered to serve on the Transitional Commission and participate in the creation of the Regional Committee; President Óscar Arias Sánchez agreed to serve as Honorary Chair. The Transitional Commission hosted the Second Forum to share their work with the larger stakeholder community, to review and revise the Regional Committee charter, to prepare for a possible 2008 Regional Ministerial Conference, and to organize future regional advocacy efforts.

¹ The Inter-American Development Bank and the Pan American Health Organization were early pioneers in road safety in Latin America and the Caribbean. IDB gathered road safety experts in Brasilia in 1998, and issued the *Declaration of Brasilia* calling for a collaborative, multisectoral solution to road safety in the region. The Pan American Health Organization conducted a series of meetings in the region in 2004 and early 2005 to discuss implementation of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injuries*.

THE REGIONAL ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVE



THE SECOND FORUM

The Transitional Commission on Road Safety in Latin America and the Caribbean held the Second Latin American and Caribbean Road Safety Stakeholders Forum in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico on December 5th and 6th, 2007. Stakeholders representing 18 different countries from across the region gathered to review work completed by the Transitional Commission over the past year and to learn about new collaborative projects. The Second Forum provided an opportunity to enlarge the regional stakeholder community through a joint event with the Puerto Rico Traffic Safety Commission. The Forum followed the 2007 Road Safety Congress of the Americas, organized by the Puerto Rico Traffic Safety Commission, and designed for the first time to convene participants from throughout the region. The three-day Road Safety Congress included exhibitions and best practice sessions with key participants from law enforcement, infrastructure, emergency response, and commercial vehicle safety. José Delgado, Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Traffic Safety Commission, welcomed Forum participants on behalf of Carlos González Miranda, Secretary of Transportation and Public Works for Puerto Rico.

Pedro Luis Castro Fernández, Vice Minister of Public Works for Costa Rica, brought greetings from the Transitional Commission Honorary Chair, President Óscar Arias Sánchez, and Karla Gonzalez, Minister of Transport of Costa Rica, and reported that President Arias had introduced the issue of road safety at the Ibero-American Summit held in Santiago, Chile

in November. President Arias requested that the Secretaría General Iberoamericana (SEGIB) convene a regional ministerial meeting on road safety; the meeting will be scheduled close to the 2008 Regional Heads of State meeting to maximize national government mobilization on road safety in the region.

Julio Urzúa, Executive Secretary of the Transitional Commission Secretariat, provided a status overview of regional road traffic fatalities. At 26 fatalities per 100,000 persons, Latin America and the Caribbean have the highest regional fatality rate in the world. Projections for 2020 indicate the region will continue to lead globally with 31 deaths per 100,000 persons. Fatalities, and non-fatal injuries estimated at 20-50 times this rate, cost the region over \$18 billion USD annually; 1.5% of GNP.² While there are many highly effective local efforts, there is little evaluation and no effort to scale-up and spread these programs to larger geographic areas. Information exchange and coordination among countries or even between provinces within the same country do not happen. A lack of political support and commitment to road safety ensures that road safety efforts will remain geographically localized and further prevent coordination across sectors. Road safety requires a multisectoral solution that encompasses transport, health, education, public works, finance, and law enforcement. The Transitional Commission has worked over the past 18 months to define the structure, framework and governance of a Regional Committee on road safety that will provide a multisectoral approach to advancing safer roads throughout the region.

The Regional Committee will be a permanent mechanism to promote collaboration between all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, civil society and the private sector to prevent road traffic injuries and deaths in the region. Citing lessons learned in Europe and Asia, the Transitional Commission Secretariat stressed the functional advantages of a regional committee that could operate across sectors and with greater speed and efficiency than a government agency. Efforts of the Regional Committee and its five working groups will focus on strengthening individual country capacity for road safety, implementing the *World Report* recommendations, and developing resources for specific regional and country level interventions. Working groups evolved from the five working groups established at the Santiago planning meeting in January 2006 and were organized around key regional objectives. They include Multisectoral Membership, Political Will and Advocacy, Data & Road Safety Information Systems, Harmonization, and Knowledge Sharing. Potential projects identified by the stakeholders include a comprehensive road safety assessment and capital management review of each country, establishing lead agencies and national road safety plans, and developing collaborative approaches for road safety data collection.

THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE – A VALUE PROPOSITION

A panel of speakers representing key stakeholder groups outlined the unique contributions a regional committee structure offers from their perspectives. The Transitional Commission asked the speakers to define how the Regional Committee could be valuable to their organizations; and what contributions their organization could make to preventing road

² World report on road traffic injury prevention. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2004

traffic deaths through this collaborative regional effort. Perspectives of key stakeholder sectors are summarized.

GOVERNMENT: Emilio Oñate, Executive Secretary of the Comisión Nacional de Seguridad de Tránsito de Chile (CONASET), views the Regional Committee as a significant partner that can inform governments on road safety and build political will within countries throughout the region. Mr. Oñate stressed the importance of private sector and civil society participation in increasing the effectiveness of road safety efforts. The Committee is further viewed as a significant mechanism to facilitate public policy development and implementation. Institutionalization of road safety in a Regional Committee will increase the legitimacy of road safety advocacy and help to establish safe roads as a permanent national and regional priority. CONASET anticipates working with the Regional Committee to continue supporting road safety, to review implemented road safety projects and to identify opportunities for improvement; to carefully consider and review the Regional Committee's recommendations; to offer expertise as requested by the Regional Committee, and to implement pilot projects supported through Committee-arranged financing.

LENDING INSTITUTIONS: Steve Brushette, Lead Transport Specialist at The World Bank, values the increased coordination a Regional Committee will provide across the region and within countries from one locality to another. The World Bank Global Road Safety Facility is focused on strengthening the capacity of the countries and the region to reduce road traffic deaths. The Facility is uniquely positioned to facilitate incorporating road safety elements in infrastructure development projects. Through the Facility's relationship with the World Bank, it has the capability to promote and foster sustainability of country programs, increase coordination of road safety efforts, and focus on management for "results."

MULTILATERAL UN ORGANIZATIONS: Eugenia Rodrigues, Regional Advisor on Road Safety for the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), sees value in the Regional Committee as a key partner in country program and training manual evaluations, and as a vehicle to support PAHO in its data collection project funded by the Bloomberg Foundation. The Committee's widespread and multisectoral representation is an excellent resource to facilitate the intersectoral data collection that the Bloomberg Foundation project needs. These data will, in turn, provide feedback to prioritize and evaluate country program efforts.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: As President of the Gonzalo Rodríguez Memorial Foundation and a member of the Transitional Commission, Nani Rodríguez, values the "stronger voice" and political access the Regional Commission provides NGO's in every country. In addressing the region's significant gaps in road safety, Nani cited the Committee's emphasis on technical expertise and multisectoral collaboration across the region as an effective mechanism to facilitate coordination of funding, knowledge and program execution between countries.

PRIVATE SECTOR: Mike Dreznes, Deputy Director General of the International Road Federation (IRF), an organization with 400 members in over 80 countries, spoke on behalf of the private sector. The IRF works across private and public sectors to develop sound transportation. Mike highlighted market contributions the Regional Committee could make

by identifying specific interventions needed, mobilizing best practices in the region, harmonizing regulations and road signs, and creating demand for road safety products.

FOUNDATIONS: Bella Dinh-Zarr, Director of Road Safety, for the FIA Foundation for the Automobile & Society, sees the Regional Committee as a valuable catalyst to effect real change. The Foundation views the Committee's representation as key to establishing objectives and uniting priorities across the region. The multisectoral collaboration will facilitate comprehensive target setting and increase road safety effectiveness on both country and regional levels.

THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE CHARTER

José Agustín Aguerre, Chief of the Infrastructure & Environment Sector at the Inter-American Development Bank, and Lisa Hayes, Associate Director of Programs, The Global Road Safety Forum, presented the draft charter outlining the proposed structure, operating principles, institutional framework and governance of the Regional Committee. The draft Regional Committee charter was distributed to the participants for their review and comment. Breakout discussion groups convened to further discuss the charter's development. Participants were asked to respond to specific questions regarding the charter on setting priorities for the Regional Committee, membership and roles, obtaining country buy-in, and resource mobilization. The second day of the meeting opened with reports from the discussion leaders on stakeholder feedback and revisions to the draft Charter and Working Groups.

Setting priorities: The group suggested the Regional Committee can provide validation of agencies and organizations working in the region, and support country advocacy efforts; e.g. enforcement of the 10% rule.³ It was also suggested that the RC set its first priority as approval of its charter and establishment of the working body. The committee's second task is to select a series of priority projects with discrete products and measurable outcomes that are feasible given the amount of resources the RC can mobilize.

Membership and roles: The stakeholders endorsed a Regional Committee structure with a balance between permanent seats for the founding patron organizations, and rotating seats for others. Each sub-region should be represented on the RC. Regional law enforcement was viewed as a key committee participant and the group proposed designating a seat that will rotate between Caribbean and Latin American regional law enforcement organizations. The Committee will be headed by a rotating chair; President Arias will be asked to serve as the first chair of the RC.

Obtaining country buy-in: The support and participation of every country in the region should be the goal, even though many smaller countries may not have the resources to have representation at every Stakeholders Forum. It is important to reach out to each country and

³ The Commission for Global Road Safety recommends that at a minimum 10% of all road infrastructure projects should be committed to road safety and that this principle should be rigorously and consistently applied by all bilateral and multilateral donors.

identify the set of liaisons for the RC; a detailed explanation is provided below in Multisectoral Membership.

Resource mobilization: Attending stakeholders viewed the Regional Committee as a positive vehicle to attract attention and resources to road safety, stressing the need for a multisectoral collaborative body that can help articulate the region’s significant needs and serve as a liaison to the donor community. Stakeholders suggested the Regional Committee’s role might be similar to the role of the Green Light Committee.⁴ In global efforts to combat multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB), the GLC links technical assistance and support in resource procurement by helping countries obtain critical drugs to treat tuberculosis at a greatly discounted price in exchange for the country’s agreement to follow official guidelines for appropriate use of these drugs. An analogous situation for road safety might have the Regional Committee assist countries in obtaining grants or reduced interest rate road safety loans conditioned on the country’s adherence to the “10% Rule”. The “10% Rule” authored by the Commission for Global Road Safety mainstreams road safety into the development agenda by recommending that at least 10% of infrastructure development funds be dedicated to road safety.



WORKING GROUPS - MOBILIZING REGIONAL TECHNICAL EXPERTS

Discussion groups led by Greg Speier, Secretary of the Transitional Commission, Arturo Cervantes, Director General, CONAPRA, and Bella Dinh-Zarr provided the opportunity for all Forum participants to give feedback on proposed working group structure, priorities, membership and resources. In the small group discussions there was a lot of

⁴ The Green Light Committee, defined by the GLC Initiative serves as a technical advisory body to the Stop TB Partnership and WHO on MDR-TB.

enthusiasm for the different working groups and suggestions for priorities and projects. There was a clear consensus that the membership of these working groups should not be limited to the Transitional Commission members, but should reach out to include the best expertise in the region, as well as occasional experts from outside the region. Each working group will need a strong leader to chair and champion the group. It was also felt that each group should start with a discrete and feasible project that will result in a defined and useful product rather than attempt to cover the whole area that might be included in its domain. Stakeholders recommended the working groups be organized by broadly defined functions that would benefit from multisectoral collaboration rather than have them divided by sectors. For example, rather than designating a working group on infrastructure, this topic could be addressed as part of the knowledge-sharing working group. Within the broader and permanent working groups, smaller groups or “task forces” could be assembled to address specific issues. A “task force” would be task-specific and convened only for the duration of the group’s assignment. In addition, each working group will develop a work plan and budget. Each group will need administrative support for organizing meetings, recording notes, and preparing key documents. Participants expanded on each of the initial working groups proposed in the draft Regional Committee Charter:

Multisectoral Membership will identify and engage key individuals to represent their countries and organizations through the Regional Committee’s coordinating board, working groups, and stakeholder forums. These key decision makers will participate in formalizing and establishing the permanent regional body on road safety and advancing this initiative in their home countries and throughout the region. A minimum of five representatives from each country will be invited to participate in the stakeholder forums: one each from civil society and the private sector and three from the government sectors, representing the ministries of Transport, Health and Law Enforcement. Key challenges are to identify Committee and Working Group candidates with core area expertise and the ability to commit sufficient time to the initiative. Participation by representatives of organizations working in multiple countries within the region is welcomed. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) is a key participant in this working group and can use its links with all the countries of the region to facilitate government participation.

Private sector and civil society representation is equally important. Valuable private sector contributions go beyond funding to include providing industry-specific expertise and training and advancing corporate social responsibility. Identified industries included infrastructure, development, tourism, vehicle manufacturing and insurance. Civil society participation includes researchers and academia, victim and other political advocacy organizations, and other professional organizations. Civil society contributions include research, program implementation, and joint funding opportunities.

Political Will and Advocacy will be charged with engaging senior government officials to support road safety efforts in their country. Working group members will ask national government representatives to support the Regional Committee, approve the Regional Committee Charter, make road safety a national priority in their countries, and support Regional and Global Ministerial Conferences on road safety. The advocacy working group will develop strategic standardized communications plans, engage media participation

and develop citizen awareness through grass roots organizations. The stakeholders suggested the church could be an important advocacy partner in the region. It was noted, for example, that the Pope had recently issued a new set of “10 Commandments for Road Safety” within a larger document on the human, moral and ethical responsibilities of road users.⁵

Data & Road Safety Information Systems will focus on strengthening country data collection and developing compatible data systems across the region. Accurate and uniform data are needed to quantify the problem and its causes, suggest appropriate interventions and evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions. Stakeholders proposed that the group develop plans for harmonization of data measurement to facilitate cross-country comparisons, and formulation of national cost estimates for road traffic fatalities and injuries as some initial projects for this working group. Additionally, the data working group will be immediately engaged in two projects underway in the region.

Vilma Gawryszewski, consultant to PAHO, presented an illustration of the role the working group on Data and Information Systems might play in organizing key contributors to the PAHO/Bloomberg Foundation data collection project, and the role the Regional Committee could provide in advancing these efforts to a Regional Ministerial Conference in 2008. The Regional Committee and the broader stakeholder community were asked to help mobilize national and regional support for this project and advocate government participation in the data collection program.

Chris Smith, Senior Economics Affairs Officer with the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Fernando Flores, a researcher at UNECLAC presented a target-setting project organized by the UN Regional Economic Commissions. The proposed project will include target-setting seminars to reduce fatalities. UNECLAC has requested the Regional Committee’s help in gathering information on existing targets and target-setting methodologies currently employed in the region. Ricardo Sanchez, Senior Economic Affairs Officer at UNECLAC will be the focal point for this project. The UNECLAC project also plans to use a methodology developed in collaboration with CONASET, the Índice de Seguridad de Tránsito Región Metropolitana (INSETRA). This is a road traffic index that utilizes traffic data and known risk factors to evaluate and analyze intersections and specific stretches of roadway. The index allows comparison of subject sites.

Harmonization will focus on harmonization of laws, vehicle and roadway standards. Possible future projects for this working group include: identifying nations with good national road safety policies, defining the critical elements of effective legislation, cataloging legislative gaps, and reviewing and developing a manual of traffic control devices. Because the area is so large, this working group will build on guidelines and standards that have already been developed in other regions, such as the Vienna Convention developed by UNECE.⁶ This group will make recommendations rather than enforce region-wide regulations. It was strongly suggested that this working group start with a small and very discrete area. One proposal for the initial project for the Harmonization Group is to work with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank to develop

⁵ Document of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People: “Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of the Road”, Part One The Pastoral Care of Road Users. Vatican City. 19 June 2007.

⁶ The Conventions on Road Traffic are legal documents drafted by the UN Economic Commission of Europe in 1949 and 1968 and subsequently ratified by over 90 countries. These agreements provide a coordinated international road safety policy among adopting nations.

procedures and protocols for developing and using grants and loans to fund road safety initiatives.

Knowledge Sharing will focus on identifying and spreading best practices on a variety of topics. Stakeholders suggested the following: effective legislation, impaired driving enforcement, instituting cultural change, the impact of substance abuse and effective infrastructure products. Two possible projects were considered as the first focus for this working group. The first is focused on developing a regional child road safety initiative; a pilot project is currently underway in Uruguay. The second project will develop a roundtable group on policing and law enforcement in road safety. The roundtable will formulate a package of law enforcement recommendations for legislative adoption. Both group interaction and active learning as well as web-based knowledge transfer is central to the success of the knowledge sharing group. Stakeholders proposed creating a regulatory databank to provide a framework for legislative harmonization, creating a mechanism for web consultations, and establishing a road safety research network that incorporates university and institutional work. The first task of this working group will be to develop a work plan and a priority project, as well as a plan for the RC website.

MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

In addition to the leadership of President Óscar Arias and Karla Gonzalez, Minister of Transport of Costa Rica, the Transitional Commission members and Secretariat, the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility, The FIA Foundation, The Automóvil Club de Chile, and the Global Road Safety Forum have all supported the Transitional Commission. To ensure the Regional Committee is successfully launched and sustained, three years of funding will be required at the outset. Forum participants discussed alternative funding structures and sources in small discussion groups. Financial support is critical to allow the RC to get underway, including funding for the basic administrative functions of the Secretariat as well as specific funding for working group projects. A membership fee of \$10,000 was proposed for institutional sponsors and member states with a possible fee reduction to countries that meet established safety standards. In addition to international bank and agency funding, stakeholders proposed additional funding sources might include institutional and industry sponsors, traffic agency funding through law enforcement proceeds, joint programs with university research funding, earmarked funds from national road or fuel taxes, UN member country contributions, and a volunteer corps with governmental or organizational sponsorship.

2008 REGIONAL MINISTERIAL MEETING

The Forum provided an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss planning for a Regional Ministerial Conference on Road Safety. Led by Minister Karla Gonzalez, members of the Transitional Commission (TC) attended a planning meeting for a regional ministerial conference organized by FIA in Paris in September of 2007 and summarized the progress

made by the TC. This meeting was an important step in engaging the General Secretariat for Ibero-America (SEGIB) in our efforts. There was a strong interest in collaborating and reducing duplication of efforts. In October 2007, Mark Rosenberg met with Enrique Iglesias and his Chief of Staff and Deputy in Madrid to discuss the next steps for a possible regional ministerial conference. The participation of Milagro del Arroyo, the Head of Cabinet, of Spain's Directorate-General for Road Traffic, in the Second Forum brought us another step toward forging closer cooperation between the Regional Committee and DGT. Milagro del Arroyo, discussed road safety advances made in Spain and shared the discussions held on this topic at the recent Ibero-American Summit. The experience of DGT suggests that the Regional Committee will be valuable in providing briefing materials based on available research and road safety efforts in the region and raising political awareness to ensure full regional representation by relevant ministries. Bella Dinh-Zarr and Roy Rojas, Executive Director of COSEVI and a Transitional Commission member, summarized the key requirements for conference preparation: stakeholder leadership with a designated spokesperson for each country, and development of country profile backgrounds on the magnitude of the road safety problem from a multisectoral perspective that encompasses all countries and subregions.

RESOLUTION

Stakeholders adopted by consensus a resolution acknowledging the leadership of President Óscar Arias Sánchez and Karla Gonzalez on road safety in Latin America and the Caribbean. The resolution thanks President Arias for his service as Honorary Chair of the Transitional Commission and invites him to continue in this leadership role as the Regional Committee evolves. The document formally requests that President Arias communicate with regional Heads of State and recommend that road safety be made a priority for their countries, that they support the Regional Committee and its efforts to build road safety capacity in the region, and that they prepare to participate in the 2009 United Nations Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety. The resolution was initiated by Transitional Commission members, Lucien Jones, Vice Chairman and Convener of the Jamaican National Road Safety Council, and Nani Rodríguez, President of the Gonzalo Rodríguez Memorial Foundation. It was drafted by meeting participants including Milagro del Arroyo, Roy Rojas, and Arturo Cervantes working under the leadership of Emilio Oñate.

THE ROAD AHEAD

The Transitional Commission members and sponsoring organizations brought together a diverse stakeholder community to participate in defining and building a regional body to facilitate regional collaboration to stop the epidemic of road traffic deaths. The Second Forum welcomed the participation of other organizations working to advance road safety in the region, established the charter and work plan for a region-wide body, and enlarged the active stakeholder community in Latin America and the Caribbean. The stakeholders'

contributions moved the Regional Committee charter forward with recommendations on organizing and supporting the working groups, identifying priority projects for the region, and developing sustainable funding. Making the Regional Committee a sustainable and productive organization is clearly the next big challenge.

Building on earlier planning meetings, the Transitional Commission welcomed DGT as an active member of the stakeholder community. Commission members look forward to the Regional Committee's participation with DGT and SEGIB in planning for the 2008 Regional Ministerial Conference on road safety. The groups will also explore other opportunities to collaborate with one another in the region.

2008 provides the opportunity to assist the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on two separate but complimentary projects in data collection, a priority objective of the Regional Committee. This next year may also be an opportunity for the Regional Committee to play an important role in assembling a multi-sectoral working group to compile guidelines on how to develop plans for large-scale road safety projects for the countries of the region.
