

## Road safety 'morally, economically sound investment,' UN envoy tells global forum

13 November 2017 – Calling for greater efforts to reduce road traffic deaths worldwide, the United Nations envoy for road safety on Monday stressed that a proposed UN fund, along with national investments, would turn the tide of rising fatality numbers.

“If established, a global Fund would be of huge significance in the fight to turn the tide of rising fatality numbers, but only if the catalytic funding is complemented by national investments made by governments towards road safety,” Jean Todt, UN Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety told a ministerial world conference in New Delhi, India.

He said that road safety receives 1,000 times less than other causes with a similar fatality rate like AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria.

The proposal for a ‘UN Road Safety Fund,’ which is now under the UN Secretary-General’s consideration, provides for the first time a clear indication of the amount of funding required to attain relevant targets under the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

Mr. Todt, also President of the International Automobile Federation, noted that 1.25 million people die on the world’s roads every year, with 50 million more left seriously injured.

India accounts for more than 10 per cent of all road related fatalities recorded globally, despite having only three per cent of the world’s vehicles, and the reforms put forward by the Government to the Motor Vehicles Act would save many thousands of lives and serious injuries on the country’s roads, he added.

South East Asia accounts for 25 per cent of global traffic deaths, an estimated 316,000 lives tragically lost.

“The outlook is startling, especially when we take into account the expected rise in urbanization as well as increase in the number of motor vehicles which sadly, is expected to increase road traffic fatalities if no changes are made,” he said. “If we are to make progress towards the global targets, a dramatic upscaling of our efforts is urgently required.”

He said that in France, where he is from, 18,000 lives were lost in the early 1970s before road safety became a national priority. That number has since be reduced to just over 3,000 today despite car numbers going up threefold.

The turnaround is a result of a focus on safer roads, drivers, and vehicles; improved post-crash care and the enforcement of strong legislation, he added.

“The truth is that road safety is morally and economically a sound investment,” he stressed, citing initiatives, such as Mexico’s ‘Vision Zero’ Campaign that aims for a 35 per cent reduction in road traffic fatalities and Malaysia’s public declaration to upgrade 75 per cent of road infrastructure by 2020.

At the conference, transport ministers adopted the Delhi Declaration, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to effectively implement the ambitious road safety-related targets in the 2030 Agenda and welcomed the discussion on the establishment of a UN Road Safety Fund.

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## [Antibiotic resistance is ‘crisis we cannot ignore,’ UN warns, calling for responsible use of these medicines](#)

13 November 2017 – As World Antibiotic Awareness Week began on Monday, the United Nations, through its Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)), the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), called for responsible use of antibiotics in humans and animals to reduce the emergence of antibiotic resistance.

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“Antibiotic resistance is a [global crisis](#) that we cannot ignore,” said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO. “If we don’t tackle this threat with strong, coordinated action, antimicrobial resistance will take us back to a time when people feared common infections and risked their lives from minor surgery.”

Antibiotic resistance is rising to dangerously high levels in all parts of the world and threatening our ability to treat common infectious diseases. Infections affecting people – including pneumonia, tuberculosis, blood poisoning and gonorrhoea – and animals alike are becoming harder, and sometimes impossible, to treat as antibiotics become less effective.

“FAO advocates for the [implementation of good practices](#) in terrestrial and aquatic production and health systems,” said Kundhavi Kadiresan, the UN agency’s Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, as she formally opened the Week’s celebrations in the region.

This year’s theme is to seek advice from a qualified healthcare professional

before taking antibiotics. For food and agriculture, this means that one of the best ways to tackle AMR is to diminish the need of antimicrobials at farm settings through the promotion of good practices in livestock production, aquaculture farming and crop production.

“[These] are practical steps that would promote prudent use of antimicrobials in the region,” explained Ms. Kadiresan.

To tackle these problems, WHO, FAO and OIE are leveraging their expertise and working together in a ‘One Health’ approach to promote best practices to reduce the emergence and spread of antibiotic-resistant microbes in both humans and animals.

“The overuse of antimicrobials blunts their effectiveness, and we must reduce their misuse in food systems,” said José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO. “Antimicrobial veterinary medicines are a crucial tool for animal health and welfare and safe food production, but they are by no means the only tool.”

“Like in human health, veterinary medicine has tremendously progressed thanks to antibiotics. Preserving their efficacy and availability through their responsible use associated with good husbandry and prevention practices, is therefore essential to preserve animal health and welfare,” highlighted Dr. Monique Eloit, Director-General of OIE.

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## **Bonn: Financing for low-carbon, climate-resilient future takes center stage at UN climate conference**

13 November 2017 – The urgent need to raise the finances to meet the funding goals of the [Paris Agreement](#), especially to support action by developing countries, took center stage Monday at the UN Climate Conference (COP23) in Bonn, Germany.

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“We need all financial players – public, private, domestic, international – and including markets and regulators, to work together effectively to [mobilize at least \\$1.5 trillion](#) in climate finance that is needed every year,” said Eric Usher, Head of Finance Initiative at the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)).

As part of ‘Finance for Climate Day’ at COP23, high-level representatives

from across the sector highlighted their efforts to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement of keeping the average global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius and as close as possible to 1.5 Celsius.

They stressed that every dollar invested in cutting greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change gets double the bang for the buck because it directly supports the international community's [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

According to the UN Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)) Secretariat, finance for climate is flowing at a greater pace than ever, with vibrant and growing markets for renewable energy, electric vehicles, green buildings and climate-smart agriculture seeing aggressive growth, backed by exponential advances in innovative green financial instruments, indices and markets.

Equally, the finance sector is recognizing to a much greater degree where and how climate change presents risks to its existing investments and the need to adjust their portfolios away from carbon-intensive assets to reduce that risk.

However, much more is needed to secure finance and investment at the scale required to deliver a fully de-carbonized and climate-resilient global economy by 2050.

"The potential for climate friendly investment in areas such as clean energy and climate-smart agriculture is enormous," said Laura Tuck, Vice-President Sustainable Development at the World Bank. "The key is to get the funding to flow so that everyone everywhere can benefit from low-carbon and climate resilient investments."

Peter Damgaard Jensen, CEO of the Danish Pension provider PKA and Chair of the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC) said at a press conference that "it is extremely important that there is a significant increase of investor awareness and action with regards to supporting the transition [...] to a low carbon economy." "Strong investment signals from policy makers across carbon trading, energy, transport and buildings, are essential to unlock the necessary capital," he added.

Members of African civil society and members of Parliament spoke today on the urgency of climate finance as a prerequisite to ambitious action in African countries.

"Africa is the continent that pollutes the least," but "it is Africa which suffers the effect of climate change," said at a press conference Roger Nkodo Dang, President of the Pan-African Parliament, which is the legislative body of the African Union.

In an interview with *UN News*, he added that developed countries have a duty to provide additional support to Africans for their green development. "If you tell us 'do not cut the wood,' we say, 'you bring us electricity,'" he said. "It's not a favor; it's a compensation."

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## [UN ready to assist response efforts following quake in Iran and Iraq, says Guterres](#)

13 November 2017 – The United Nations stands ready to assist efforts to respond to the earthquake that struck Iran and Iraq on Sunday, the Organization’s top official has said.

UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres is [deeply saddened](#) by the loss of life and damage following the quake that struck the border regions of the two countries, said a statement issued by his Spokesman, Stéphane Dujarric.

The statement said the Secretary-General conveyed his condolences to the bereaved families and to the Governments and people of Iran and Iraq, and wished those injured a speedy recovery. He also commended the local response efforts underway.

The United Nations stands ready to assist if required, read the statement.

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## [Bonn: UN climate conference recognizes the role of women in climate action](#)

12 November 2017 – With the United Nations Climate Change Conference ([COP 23](#)), in Bonn, Germany, entering its final week of negotiations, the Fiji Presidency today announced the Gender Action Plan, highlighting the role of women in climate action.

At a press conference, President of COP 23 and Prime Minister of Fiji, Frank Bainimarama, announced that the States Parties had finalized the plan.

This recognizes the role of women in climate action, he said.

It is about integration of gender into all the work around climate policy both nationally and internationally, added Nazhat Shameen Khan, the Chief Negotiator for the COP 23 Presidency.

Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres will be attending the high-level segment of COP 23, on 15-16

November.

### ***New national and corporate climate action on forests***

Also Sunday, countries and corporations announced new initiatives to cut emissions from forest use and establish sustainable forestry management programmes.

The efforts include an Ecuadorean initiative to reduce 15 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the forest sector; a commitment to deforestation-free commodities by Walmart; Mars Inc.'s new policy to reduce their carbon footprint 27 per cent by 2025 and 67 per cent by 2050 through addressing deforestation throughout their corporate value chain; and Gabon's National Park Service efforts to combat illegal logging.

"The forests have this incredible ability to store carbon and we have underinvested in that," said Inger Andersen, Director-General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), at a press conference.

Protecting and restoring the forests is absolutely key to achieving the [Paris Agreement](#) [as well as] the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).



A wind turbine farm in Tunisia. Photo: World Bank/Dana Smillie

### ***Hundreds of companies commit to climate action***

Also today in Boon, the industry sector said that it is set to deliver much of the emissions reductions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement goal but added that closer national and international policy and implementation strategy partnerships together with governments will help business take further, faster action.

"Industry is taking action on climate change like no other period in history," said Peter Bakker, President and CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD, a global, business leaders-led organization of over 200 leading businesses working on sustainable development).

"The transition to the low-carbon economy is inevitable, and business will continue to implement the solutions necessary for fulfilling the Paris Agreement," he added.

Since 2015, over 600 companies with combined revenues of more than \$15 trillion have made over 1,000 commitments to climate action through 'We Mean Business,' a global non-profit coalition. Many are going 100 percent renewable, are implementing science-based targets and are collaborating across sectors through the Low Carbon Technology Partnership initiative (LCTPi).

### ***Local, regional leaders sign Commitment for faster climate action***

Local and regional leaders from around the world signed the Bonn-Fiji Commitment Sunday, pledging action to deliver on the Paris Agreement.

Cities are responsible for as much as 70 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels used for energy and transport, and with more than half the global population living in urban centres and this figure expected to approach two-thirds by 2050, the Bonn-Fiji Commitment pushes efforts to advance sustainable urban development.

The Commitment encompasses 19 initiatives, including The European Covenant of Mayors and Compact of Mayors joining forces to create the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy – the largest coalition of over 7,400 cities from six continents and 121 countries to reduce emissions and make societies and economies resilient to climate change.

Similarly, the UN World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), in collaboration with the UN Climate Change secretariat ([UNFCCC](#)) and in partnership with the Fijian Presidency launched an initiative to protect people living in small island developing States from the health impacts of climate change.

The vision is that, by 2030, all small island developing States will have health systems that are resilient to climate change.