



## International Road Federation

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IRF was founded in 1948 to encourage better road and transportation systems worldwide. IRF is a non-profit, non-political service organisation which helps in the application of technology and management practices to produce the maximum economical and social return from national road investments. Some 500 governments, companies and associations around the world are members of IRF and provide financial support to the three offices in Geneva, Brussels and Washington DC. National and regional road associations around the world make up the Federation. IRF is an accredited transportation consultant to the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the Organisation of American States, and works closely with other international institutions in the transportation field.

# Africa is key target for improvement

## World Youth Assembly at UN points up road safety priority

Each day an estimated 1,050 young people die on the world's roads. Road traffic injuries, not HIV/Aids, tuberculosis or malaria, are the leading cause of death among 10-24 year olds. Young road users from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are at greatest risk. In Africa, the road traffic mortality rate per 100,000 population of those under 25 is two-and-a-half times the rate of that in Europe.

These figures emerged at a gathering of young people from more than 100 countries at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, on 23 April, for the first ever World Youth assembly for Road Safety, marking the UN Global Road Safety Week.

A Youth Declaration for Road Safety agreed by the 400 delegates called on young people to "stand up and participate in local and national campaigns and programmes" and urged adults to do more. "You, our parents and guardians, our heroes and mentors, must serve as role models."

Delegates pledged themselves to adhere to long-established defensive measures, such as wearing seatbelts and motorcycle helmets, and avoiding speeding and drink-driving. While calling for the same adherence from adults, they called for more political will at the national and community level to tackle road safety.

Schools and universities should teach young people about safety; bartenders should serve alcohol responsibly; the media should report road traffic accidents more widely; celebrities and the entertainment industry should not glamorise speed and should stress that it is actually "cool" to wear belts and helmets.

The IRF has long been involved in initiatives to improve road

safety. These are written into its aims, objectives and vision. It supported the UN Week, and has recently supported the IRTE (The Institute of Road Traffic Education) Conference, Road Safety Education for Developing Countries Workshop, in January 2007 in New Delhi; held a Roadway Safety Solutions Seminar in Doha (11-12 April), and on 5-6 October it will hold the 2nd IRF Regional Conference on Road Safety, also in New Delhi ([www.irfnet.org/cms/pages/PagesUp/pdf/RSD-India.pdf](http://www.irfnet.org/cms/pages/PagesUp/pdf/RSD-India.pdf)).

A fundamental way to improve road safety is to improve the basic standards of road infrastructure networks, signage, road junction controls and surfaces, among others.

In the next article, Tony Pearce outlines some current initiatives to improve road infrastructure in Africa. A report written by Chude Ojugbana of Nigeria for the Road Traffic Injuries Research Network (RTIRN, [www.rtirn.net](http://www.rtirn.net)) is quoted below, and it gives a clear indication of the change in mind-set that is needed, quite apart from the necessary commitment of physical resources.

"In Nigeria, we have a ...road safety crisis despite the existence of a vibrant but under funded National road safety agency. The level of awareness on Road Traffic Injuries (RTIs) is very low and sensitisation is very poor ... the situation might worsen if proper research measures are not embarked upon and new strategies are not developed to mobilise all stakeholders.

"Africa has many competent people with brilliant and up to date ideas on safety issues ... they are willing to join in the fight against RTIs, but they are disconnected. The first step for road safety growth in Africa would be for us to

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look into this issue of inadequate publicity and develop specific strategies that can enhance the involvement of the civil society and private sector. It is only when this is done that we can have enough human and financial resources to monitor the implementation of known interventions and research on new interventions."

Since those words were written, and to coincide with the UN Road Safety Week, the Prompt Assistance to Victims of Road Accidents (PATVORA) organisation has secured the issuing of a national postage stamp on road safety; it has distributed copies of a road safety game to schools and commercial motor parks; provided free first-aid training of petrol station attendants on major highways, and launched a web page on media surveillance for road traffic injuries ■

## Harris elected as IRF-Washington Chair

On 1 January 2007, Peter J. Boyd was appointed as the Chairman of the IRF World Executive Board. In accordance with the IRF Statutes, he resigned as Chairman of Washington.

His departure created a vacancy that led the IRF to hold a special election to fill the remainder of his term.

As a result, the Nominating Committee of the Washington Program Center, chaired by Brian J. Stearman, unanimously selected Brian T. Harris, vice president, AECOM, as its nominee to fulfill the remainder of Mr Boyd's term. In addition, the Nominating Committee unanimously selected Dr T. Peter Ruane, president & CEO, ARTBA, to fulfill Mr Harris' term as treasurer, and William F. Troxler, Jr, president

and chairman of the board, Troxler Electronic Laboratories to fulfill Dr Ruane's term as secretary. All three were elected to fulfill these positions by a special ballot sent to the IRF-Washington membership.

Brian T. Harris, vice president, AECOM, has more than 30 years' experience in management consulting for the highway transportation industry. He is currently the global liaison of AECOM with total revenues approaching US\$2.5 billion and 17,000 employees covering A/E services for facilities and infrastructure worldwide.

Dr T Peter Ruane, president and CEO of ARTBA. Dr Ruane is the president and CEO of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), a 105-year old national federation of public and

private transportation construction interests with over 5,000 members headquartered in Washington DC. He has over 35 years of diversified experience in the economic development, transportation and construction fields.

William (Billy) F. Troxler, Jr, is president and chairman of the board of Troxler Electronic Laboratories, which manufactures testing/quality control measurement equipment for the construction industry. Troxler also provides a full range of radiological services to support users of radioactive material and radiation producing devices in industrial, governmental, medical, and educational settings. Mr Troxler has been with Troxler for more than 25 years and has been the president and chairman of the board since 2000.



## Partnership in African road development

In 1996 IRF signed a partnership agreement with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) which established cooperation in nine areas including creating an African road data bank, design and implementation of vocational and training schemes, standardisation and harmonisation of practices in infrastructure maintenance, development and use, the commercialisation of roads, road classification and route numbering systems, and the development of the Trans-African Highway.

Poor infrastructure is a critical barrier to accelerating growth and poverty reduction. In Uganda, transport costs add the equivalent of an 80% tax on clothing exports. In some regions of Africa, farmers lose as much as half of what they produce for lack of adequate post-harvest storage. Across the region, women and girls currently walk an average of 6km to collect water.

According to some estimates, increasing the stock of infrastructure by 1% could add 1% to the level of GDP - the latter figure being much higher, in

**The main Namanga-Nairobi road has suffered through bad weather**

absolute terms.

Infrastructure is a key component of the investment climate, reducing the costs of doing business and enabling people to access markets; is crucial to advances in agriculture; is a key enabler of trade and integration; important for offsetting the impact of geographical dislocation and sovereign fragmentation; and critical for enabling Africa to break into world markets. It is fundamental to human development, including the delivery of health and education services to poor people. Infrastructure investments also represent an enormous untapped potential for the creation of productive employment.

Yet, despite its clear benefits, African governments and development partners sharply reduced, over the 1990s, the share of resources allocated to infrastructure, reflecting its lower priority in policy discussions. In retrospect, this was a serious policy mistake (driven by the international community) that undermined growth prospects and generated a substantial backlog of investment.

Between 1990 and 2002, relative to total infrastructure investment in the order of US\$150 billion, private commitments for infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa totalled only US\$27.8 billion, and two-thirds of this amount (US\$18.5 billion) was for telecommunications.

But then in 1998/9 the African bodies started talking about integration. This was reflected in the creation of NEPAD (the New



**Tony Pearce with Robert Okello (third from left) and others at UNECA, Addis Ababa**

► Partnership for Africa's Development). NEPAD's short term action plans include infrastructure development, specifically several road projects. In the medium to long term there is a strategic framework for infrastructure. New projects have a regional dimension, and focus on the financing challenges, non-physical barriers (including such issues as cross-border insurance cover, axle loads, etc). The African Union is also taking an increasing interest in transport issues and is developing a transport plan.

Estimates of needs over and above current expenditures depend on objectives, on assessments of the current position, and on cost assumptions. But there is no doubt that the current needs are very large. A recent World Bank research paper estimates that sub-Saharan Africa needs to spend around 5% of its GDP between 2005 and 2015 on infrastructure investments and a further 4% on operations and maintenance. This means additional expenditure in the order of US\$20 billion a year.

The necessary expansion of investment in infrastructure on this scale means that in the short term only a small fraction could be funded by African public finances. Experience shows that only a small fraction will come from the large private sector operators unless donor countries are willing to support them through guarantees and other insurance-type schemes. Over time, and on the basis of economic growth and with improvements to investment climates, financing could

increasingly come from domestic public finances, the private sector and user charges (where appropriate and equitable).

UNECA and IRF believe that the time is right for moving forward on the area of road infrastructure. Some of the issues in the original list of priorities are no longer valid, and others such as road financing and road safety have become important. IRF will help with capacity building, possibly with a workshop, a study visit, and help in developing appropriate models for Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). Developing and promoting PPPs for infrastructure requires governments to ensure that the regulatory environment is in place to facilitate private sector investment.

African ministers responsible for health and transport resolved during the African Road Safety Conference organised in Accra from 5 to 7 February 2007, to work together to stop the growing epidemic of death and injuries on



**UNECA Deputy Executive Secretary Josephine G. Ouedraogo in Addis Ababa with IRF's Tony Pearce**

roads. In a declaration issued at the end of the meeting, the ministers reaffirmed road safety as a key development priority. They also pledged to set and achieve measurable national targets for road safety and traffic injury prevention in all member States. The "Accra Declaration" recommends that a lead agency be established and empowered to deal specifically with road safety issues and contribute to achieving the goal of reducing accident fatalities by half by 2015. NEPAD is working on this under the auspices of the African Union and would appreciate any assistance IRF can give in this area.

IRF's Tony Pearce travelled to Addis Ababa to meet senior representatives at the UN Economic Commission for Africa. He met the Deputy Executive Secretary, Josephine G. Ouedraogo, the Director of UNECA responsible for NEPAD and Regional Integration Division (NRID), Robert Okello and others. In a wide ranging series of meetings they discussed the hope that IRF and its members can help to develop Africa's road infrastructure.

The Trans-African Highway project has not really moved forward. Robert Okello said that he had found in the archives detailed plans for the Trans-African Highway including consulting engineers' drawings for the routes. The African Development Bank (AfDB) is very interested in developing integrated road infrastructure. A roads master plan is being developed by the African Union, and the Regional Economic Communities (COMESA, CEN-SAD, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC and UMA) are expected to take a lead on realising the master plan.

UNECA is interested in reviving African national road associations (NRAs - grouping the public and private sectors) under the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Project (SSATP) initiative. It was felt that these would be particularly useful in trying to get better maintenance in place.

For their part, African governments must re-prioritise the importance of infrastructure in their poverty reduction strategies. They must place sufficient emphasis on the on-going maintenance of infrastructure, commit to working with the private sector and with poor people in determining infrastructure priorities, put in place the right investment climate to attract private sector investors, and take a lead in tackling corruption in procurement ■

## Ministers sign up for Black Sea Ring Highway

The Black Sea countries have signed up for the development of the Black Sea Ring Highway. Meeting in Belgrade on 19 April, the agreement was signed by the foreign ministers of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Turkey. Ukraine is expected to sign the agreement soon.

A coordinated construction of a Black Sea Ring Highway by the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) countries will create a highway ring of about 7,000km together with the maintenance, reconstruction and the building of adjacent major and secondary road infrastructure. The goal of the partner-countries is for a road to be built that would guarantee security, speed and comfortable traffic and will facilitate economic and social development in the region.

The BSEC foreign ministers strongly supported the IRF's First Black Sea and Fourth Silk Road Conference, held in Istanbul, on 14-16 May, 2007 and invited transport authorities of the BSEC Member States to take part in the Conference at ministerial level. Many ministers from the Black Sea countries and the states of central Asia and China have already confirmed their participation in this major conference.



**Martin Marmy (IRU Director General), Abdullah Gül (Turkish Foreign Minister and new President-in-Office of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation) and Ambassador Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos (Secretary General of BSEC) send off the Black Sea Ring Convoy**

## IRF Regional Conference

For the first time, the International Road Federation (IRF) has designed an event in the United States specifically addressing the needs of the Latin American road industry.

The IRF is conducting its Regional Conference: Issues Affecting Latin American Policy in conjunction with Intertraffic North America in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, from 9-11 October, 2007.

The conference will feature nine different technical sessions on issues pertinent to Latin America. These sessions will be conducted

completely in Spanish and will be spread over two days. Topics covered will range from road safety and data collection to new tools for transferring knowledge, managing road infrastructure assets, and many more.

On Thursday 11 October, a round table discussion will be held to discuss issues affecting Latin American road policy. Representatives from every Central and South American country have been invited to present their countries' needs and expectations from the road industry.

Representatives from the World Bank, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) will be on a panel to determine how their organisations can help the road industry in Latin America.

All conference attendees will have access to the Intertraffic North America (INA) exhibit, the transportation construction industry's most comprehensive show, addressing the latest trends and newest technology in the traffic management, safety, parking and infrastructure business. Conference attendees will be able to see and touch the latest technologies and concepts in the road industry by visiting the INA show floor. More than 80 exhibit booths have already been sold to exhibitors from around the world, including China, Spain, Russia and Japan.

Hundreds of road experts from around the world are expected to attend Intertraffic North America. The IRF Regional Conference will give its attendees the chance to network with these experts and to learn the best practices being used in the road industry. These experts will include representatives from road authorities around the world and from lending institutions such as the World Bank as well as private industry, consultants, contractors and academia ■



The 2006 INA exhibits

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