

An Urgent Call to Action for Asia Region

RATIONALE

The world suffers an estimated 1.19 million road traffic deaths (2021), corresponding to a rate of 15 road traffic deaths per 100,000 population¹. Without serious action, road crashes will cause an estimated 13–17 million more deaths and 500 million more injuries in the current decade².

UN Member States have adopted a resolution 74/299 *Improving Global Road Safety*³ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (target 3.6)⁴ and are therefore mandated to reduce road deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030. We know what works to achieve this target: the actions needed are set out in the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030⁵.

Every person must be guaranteed safe, affordable, accessible, sustainable mobility using the road system. It ensures access to education, work, and the choices that enable any individual to achieve their maximum potential, leaving no one behind. This is fundamental to creating a fair, healthy, prosperous society.

Safe mobility is our right.

REGIONAL CONTEXT⁶

According to WHO regional data⁷, the Southeast Asia Region accounts for 28% of global road

1 - [World Health Organization. \(2023\). Global status report on road safety 2023. WHO, Geneva. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA](#)

2 - WHO & UN Regional Commissions. (2021). Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>; Job, RFS. (2019). Development of a Safe System Approach, Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, 13 January 2019, Washington DC.

3 - United Nations General Assembly. (2020). Resolution A/74/L86 Improving Global Road Safety. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N20/226/30/PDF/N2022630.pdf?OpenElement>

4 - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

5 - WHO & UN Regional Commissions. (2021). Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>

6 - We note different classifications of Asia are used between organizations such as the WHO, ADB, and UNESCAP. The Alliance Asia region includes countries in the WHO South-East Asia region, Eastern Mediterranean region (excluding countries in the Africa continent) and Western Pacific region (excluding countries in Australasia - Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands). We do not recalculate the numbers for the Alliance's Asia region but provide a general picture of the region based on the regional data provided by WHO and UNESCAP combined.

7 - [World Health Organization. \(2023\). Global status report on road safety 2023. WHO, Geneva. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA](#)



deaths, the Eastern Mediterranean Region 11%, and the Western Pacific Region 25% - these three regions combined carry 64% of global road deaths. Across these regions combined, powered two- and three-wheelers on average account for 28% of total registered vehicles and their users account for 32% of all road traffic deaths⁸. Pedestrians and cyclists on average account for 28% of all road traffic deaths⁹.

The WHO South-East Asia Regional Status Report on Road Safety (2024)¹⁰ specifically stresses the urgent need for targeted interventions for vulnerable road users—motorcyclists, pedestrians, and cyclists. In response, the UNESCAP Regional Plan (2024)¹¹ calls for policies prioritizing the safety of these road users, with a particular focus on motorized two-wheelers, including motorcycles and scooters. It recommends adopting a safe system approach, safeguarding motorized two-wheelers, pedestrians and cyclists. The significant risks faced by motorcyclists, pedestrians, and cyclists in the region are also recognized by the Asian Development Bank (ADB)¹² and Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO)¹³. The APRSO¹⁴ and the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory (AIRSO)¹⁵ serve as vital regional platforms, assisting member countries in analyzing crash data, fostering collaboration, and sharing best practices. The UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) also highlights the urgent need to address the vulnerabilities of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists¹⁶.

The Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific, No. 94¹⁷ stresses that urgent protection of motorcyclists, pedestrians, and cyclists, investment in public transport, data-driven interventions, and regional cooperation are needed for a safe road system. The WHO South-East Asia Regional Status Report on Road Safety (2024)¹⁸ also highlights the importance of public transport for road safety and recommends countries to develop policies and make investments to increase the share of public transport use and integrate multimodal

8 - World Health Organization. (2023). WHO Road Safety Data [Mobile application software]. (3.0). Geneva, Switzerland

9 - World Health Organization. (2023). WHO Road Safety Data [Mobile application software]. (3.0). Geneva, Switzerland

10 - World Health Organization. (2024). [WHO South-East Asia regional status report on road safety. World Health Organization, Regional Office for South-East Asia](#)

11 - [UN ESCAP. \(2024\). Road Safety in the Asia-Pacific Region.](#)

12 - Asian Development Bank. (n.d.). Transport overview: Urban transport. Retrieved January 16, 2025, from <https://www.adb.org/what-we-do/topics/transport/overview#urban-transport>

13 - [Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory. \(2021\). APRSO annual report 2021: Visual summary. Asia Pacific Road Safety Observatory.](#)

14 - Asia-Pacific Road Safety Observatory. (n.d.). About APRSO. Retrieved January 15, 2025, from <https://www.aprso.org/about-aprso>

15 - [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia \(ESCWA\). \(2023\). Information note on the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory \(AIRSO\). United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.](#)

16 - [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia \(ESCWA\). \(2023\). Information note on the Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory \(AIRSO\). United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.](#)

17 - [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. \(2024\). Transport and communications bulletin for Asia and the Pacific, No. 94: Road safety. UNESCAP.](#)

18 - [World Health Organization. \(2024\). WHO South-East Asia regional status report on road safety. World Health Organization, Regional Office for South-East Asia](#)

transport into road safety strategies¹⁹. ADB calls for investments in infrastructure and policies promoting walking and cycling in urban areas and supports the expansion of accessible and safe public transport systems to reduce dependence on private vehicles and enhance mobility for all, especially women, the elderly, and marginalized groups²⁰. Similarly, the WHO's report on the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2018) calls for increased investment in public transport to ensure safer travel²¹.

The existing regional plans and initiatives provide a framework to address road safety; Asia region must fully leverage them and take concrete actions. By doing so, we will not only save lives but also improve public health, stimulate economic growth, and promote environmental sustainability.

CALL TO ACTION

We call on all governments in Asia to commit to act for people's right to safe mobility and a 50% reduction in road deaths and injuries by 2030, with an urgent focus on motorcycle users, pedestrians, and cyclists who are at greatest risk of injury in the region.

We demand:

- 1 Evidence-based actions:** prioritize interventions that have been proven to save lives and reduce injuries and other consequences of unsafe roads, with a particular focus on those who are least protected on our roads, including pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.
 - a. Ensure that national and local road safety plans are aligned to the Global Plan for the Decade of Action 2021–2030 and address the 12 global voluntary performance targets and their indicators.
 - b. Protect all road users and promote sustainable mobility for all by:
 - i. Prioritizing implementation of 30 km/h limits or lower speed limits where people walk, cycle, live, and play; pedestrian facilities; traffic calming; comprehensive motorcycle helmet laws, including enforcement and promotion, ensuring availability of safe and affordable helmets.
 - ii. Addressing the vulnerability of motorcycle riders with a particular focus on developing a national motorcycle helmet standard (if it does not exist), and enforcing it to ensure all helmets in the country meet this standard.
 - iii. Implementing laws at national, state, and local levels, that create low speed people-centered environments via 30 km/h or lower speed limits, traffic calming and pedestrian facilities.

19 - [World Health Organization. \(2024\). WHO South-East Asia regional status report on road safety. World Health Organization, Regional Office for South-East Asia](#)

20 - Asian Development Bank. (n.d.). Transport overview: Urban transport. Retrieved January 16, 2025, from <https://www.adb.org/what-we-do/topics/transport/overview#urban-transport>

21 - [World Health Organization. \(2018\). Road safety in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: Highlights from WHO's global status report on road safety 2018 \(WHO-EM-HLP-125E\). World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.](#)

- iv. Improving public transportation in urban, semi-urban, and rural areas, including last-mile connectivity to get people to their destinations safely, with particular focus on the safety of women, who face additional risks when using public transportation.
- v. Underpinning interventions with data and evidence with continual improvements in data collection, scientific crash investigation, road safety audits and assessments, and measurement and monitoring of road safety actions with KPIs.
- c. Provide comprehensive support systems for victims and their families by:
 - i. Equipping and enabling first responders to treat crash victims quickly and efficiently and guaranteeing the rights of bystanders who provide assistance;
 - ii. Guaranteeing crash victims' and families' rights and support, including psychological, social, rehabilitation, and judicial support, for as long as is needed, and, where appropriate, enabling and simplifying claims procedures.

2 Transparent and accountable investment to make mobility safe: demonstrate accountability by channeling funding into implementation of proven life and injury-saving interventions, recognizing that evidence-based interventions have a high return on investment and publicly report on road safety spending that incorporates the safety of all road users as a core element.

- a. Allocate budgets for the full implementation of the above-mentioned actions;
- b. Report annually on the budget and spending for the above-mentioned actions.

3 NGO involvement in decision-making processes: work with NGOs and communities, enabling an environment where civil society and government can work together effectively, so that evidence-based road safety decisions that save lives and reduce injuries are made at every level of government.

- a. Establish clear mechanisms for an enabling environment for NGOs to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes and support governments to fulfill their accountability for delivering the reduction in deaths and injuries from road crashes.
- b. Facilitate specific protocols for engagement between civil society and international road safety platforms, such as the Asia-Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO) and Arab Integrated Road Safety Observatory (AIRSO).

OUR ROLE AND COMMITMENT

We, as civil society, have a role defined in the Global Plan. We commit to play our part in advocating for and enabling people's rights to safe mobility and achieve a 50% reduction in road deaths and injuries by 2030.

We commit to:

1. Stand up for people's right to be safe on the roads

We empower people and communities. We show the reality of the roads they use and highlight the experiences of road victims and their loved ones who have been affected by crashes. We speak up on decisions that affect road safety.



2. Use data and evidence to show what needs to be done

We amplify data, evidence, and best practices from around the world and we collect ground-level evidence that show the impact of safe and unsafe roads on people and communities.

3. Hold our governments accountable for people's right to be safe on the road and for the 2030 target

We keep road safety on the agenda until every person is guaranteed — through commitment and action — their right to safe mobility. We monitor progress and put a spotlight on action and inaction.