

PRESS RELEASE

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Asia Needs to Act on Road Crashes

4th International IRTAD Conference on Road Safety: Seoul, 16-17 September 2009

“Crashes result in an unacceptable burden of deaths and serious injuries on the roads in all countries”, said Jack Short, Secretary General of the International Transport Forum, explaining the purpose of the 4th IRTAD Conference in Seoul on safety data collection and analysis. “In Asia over 2000 people die on the road every day, accounting for 60% of casualties at global level. It is essential that all governments in the region treat the issue as a major policy priority”.

The conference brought together 120 leading safety experts from 33 countries to discuss targets for reducing the death toll. Effective targets require a long-term vision, to eliminate deaths and injuries, supported by interim targets that are both ambitious and realistic. These have to be based on solid data analysis if they are to be credible.

“Quantitative, ambitious but realistic targets, as well as top level political commitment, are essential to improve safety”, said Fred Wegman, Chairman of IRTAD group of safety data experts. He continued, “The essential first step is to develop good quality data reporting and analysis systems. Data helps understand the problem, motivates the public and politicians and is the only way of monitoring progress”.

The IRTAD group of the ITF and OECD convened the meeting to make its expertise more available to countries in Asia and, in co-operation with the World Bank’s Global Road Safety Facility, will be developing a program to assist low and middle income countries to build capacity and develop effective data reporting and analysis systems.

Conclusions from the meeting will be taken up at one of the panel discussions to be held during the first Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow on 19-20 November 2009, which is expected to launch a Decade of Action for road safety worldwide.

See: IRTAD Seoul Statement

<http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/irtad/pdf/seoul/Conclusions.pdf>

IRTAD Website www.irtad.net

Conference website www.irtadkorea.org

Global Ministerial Conference Moscow www.1300000.net

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