81st Commission Session

Side Event: Road safety and sustainable urban transport development in developing countries

22 April 2025 (12:45 to 13:45 UTC+7)

Organizer(s)

The Secretariat of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety
The Embassy of France in Thailand
The French Research Institute on Contemporary Southeast Asia (IRASEC), and
ESCAP's Transport Division

Event Focal Point

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Background

Urbanization and rapid urban growth in Asia and the Pacific present significant challenges to the development of safe, sustainable, and resilient urban environments. As cities expand, the demand for efficient transport systems intensifies, often placing road safety at risk due to inadequate infrastructure, traffic congestion, and insufficient safety measures. Integrating road safety into urban transport planning and urbanization strategies is crucial for protecting lives, promoting sustainable mobility, and reducing congestion and emissions. Road safety should be seen not as an isolated concern but as an integral element of broader urban resilience and sustainability. By prioritizing road safety within urban transport development, cities can cultivate safer, more liveable environments, contributing to long-term resilience and sustainability in alignment with regional cooperation goals.

Road travel is the most dangerous form of transport: 97 per cent of injury-related deaths in the global transport system are caused by road transport.

The Global Plan: Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 and the Regional Plan of Action for Asia and the Pacific for the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030 as the guiding documents to support the implementation of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 identified “multimodal transport and land Use planning.” as important starting point for the implementation of a Safe System. It is important to optimize the mix of motorized and non-motorized transport modes to ensure road safety and equitable access to mobility, while responding to diverse needs and preferences of a community.

Land use planning must consider travel demand management, mode choice, and provisions for safe and sustainable journeys for all.

For motorized road users, including cars and motorcycles, land use planning is vital in managing traffic flow and reducing speed, both crucial for road safety. Speed control through road design, speed limits, and traffic calming measures help mitigate risks, particularly in areas with mixed-use developments. Strategic land use planning can ensure that residential, commercial, and recreational zones are designed with adequate buffers between motorized traffic and pedestrian spaces, enhancing safety by reducing the likelihood of high-speed traffic in densely populated areas.

For non-motorized transport users, such as cyclists and pedestrians, land use planning should prioritize active mobility infrastructure like bike lanes, footpaths, and crosswalks. These facilities not only promote sustainable transport but also ensure safety for vulnerable road users. Well-planned land use connects bike lanes to key destinations and maintains continuous pedestrian paths, reducing conflicts between road users. Moreover, crosswalks and bike lanes should be integrated into urban fabric, ensuring accessibility, visibility, and safe crossings on busy streets.

These infrastructure elements are vital in fostering a sustainable and equitable urban transport system where safety is prioritized for all. By integrating road safety into urban design, cities can create more resilient and sustainable environments for their growing populations.

Objective and Scope

This side event will be the occasion to address urban road safety challenges in the Asia-Pacific region through high-level and expert-led discussions. Speakers from Asia and Europe will share insights on key issues, international best practices, policy approaches, and technological solutions to improve urban mobility safety. The session will foster dialogue among policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders to advance sustainable and effective road safety strategies for the region.

Expected Outcomes

- Raise awareness among government officials and road safety stakeholders about the importance of improving road safety policies to align with sustainable urban development goals.
- Emphasize the significance of multimodal transport solutions, safe infrastructure to accommodate urban road traffic mix as well as the use of technologies in enhancing urban road safety.
- Promote dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to reinforce commitments towards creating safer, more resilient, and sustainable urban environments.

Event Format

The event will take place in person and will be conducted in English.

Tentative Programme

Time	Programme
12:45 – 13:05	*Opening remarks* • Mr. Jean Todt, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety • H.E. Mr. Jean-Claude Poimboeuf, Ambassador of France to Thailand *Keynote addresses* • Mr. Chadchart Sittipunt, Governor of Bangkok, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), Thailand • Mr. Hee-up Kang, Chairperson of Metropolitan Transport Commission, Republic of Korea
13:05 – 13:35	**Road safety and sustainable urban transport development** • Intermodality and road security in Hanoi, Viet Nam Dr. Emmanuel CERISE, Architect and urban planner, Director of PRX-Vietnam • Enhancing Road Safety through AI Dr. Pawinee Lamtrakul, Faculty of Architect and Planning, Thammasat University, • Road safety policies in urban contexts – sharing of best practices Mr. Yeon Shin, Senior Deputy Director, Urban Vitality Division, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport
13:35 – 13:45	*Closing remarks* • Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP
Closing of the event	