

Towards Zero Foundation Written Statement for UNESCAP Ministerial Conference on Transport, Fourth Session

1. Globally, over 1.35 million people lose their lives to road traffic crashes and millions more are seriously injured. Locally in the South East Asia region, the rate of road traffic deaths is one of the highest in the world at 20.7 per 100,000 population, which is significantly higher than the global average of 18.2 per 100,000 population.
2. Riders of powered two and three wheelers account for the majority of the road fatalities in the region. Globally, powered two and three wheelers represent 29% of all deaths and in the Asia Pacific region, this figure increases to 39%. Alarming, in South East Asia, this figure surges dramatically to 62% of all deaths, and in some countries in the region such as Thailand and Indonesia, rider fatalities can be as high as 74%.
3. Motorcyclists are vulnerable due to the lack of protection as compared to car occupants. Due to this lack of protection, it is vital to focus efforts on crash avoidance technologies in order to increase motorcyclist safety. One of the most effective motorcycle safety technologies available to date is motorcycle anti-lock braking system (ABS). Research has shown that motorcycle ABS can increase rider stability, reduce stopping distances and decrease rider fatalities by 31%.
4. To increase motorcyclist safety, there is an urgent need to democratise safety globally through the application of a motorcycle ABS standard. Every motorcycle sold that is not equipped with ABS is an opportunity lost.
5. Despite the availability and effectiveness of motorcycle ABS, penetration of the technology (and other vehicle safety regulations) in South East Asia has been low due to the absence of government legislation and consumer awareness. Despite the availability and effectiveness of motorcycle ABS, penetration of the technology in South East Asia has been low due to the absence of government legislation and consumer awareness. While discussions are ongoing in Thailand and Malaysia to legislate for motorcycle ABS, not one country in the region has yet applied a regulation for motorcycle ABS to accelerate its uptake. An opportunity exists for more activities to facilitate greater consumer awareness and encouragement of governments to mandate the technology (UN Regulation 78/GTR 3)
6. It would, therefore, be a powerful demonstration of commitment to road injury prevention if the UNESCAP 4th Ministerial Conference on Transport **was to endorse a region wide mandate to regulate for motorcycle ABS to all powered two wheelers that is capable of travel speeds greater than 50km/h** in a bid to reduce the high burden of motorcycle fatalities and injuries in the region.