



MEMORANDUM TO 27th ASEAN TRANSPORT MINISTERS MEETING

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 100,000¹ 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 deaths², and in some countries in the region such as Thailand and Indonesia, rider fatalities can be as high as 74%¹.

Country	WHO estimated deaths	WHO estimated death per 100K	Population	% death from powered 2/3 wheelers
Brunei	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cambodia	2803	17.8	15,762,370	73%
Indonesia	31726	12.2	261,115,456	74%
Lao People's Democratic Republic	1120	16.6	6,758,353	N/A
Malaysia	7374	23.6	31,187,264	N/A
Myanmar	10540	19.9	52,885,224	65%
Philippines	12690	12.3	103,320,224	5%*
Singapore	155	2.8	5,622,455	44%
Thailand	22,491	32.7	68,863,512	74%
Timor-Leste	161	12.7	1,268,671	N/A
Vietnam	24,970	26.4	94,569,073	N/A

Table 1. Road fatality profile of countries in ASEAN region
*94% of road fatalities by road user category were listed as unknown

3. Road trauma is a predictable and preventable humanitarian crisis. In addition to the tragic loss of lives and health, it also results in huge social and economic losses that could be significantly reduced in all South East Asian countries. According to the World Bank, on average a 10% reduction in road traffic deaths raises per capita real

¹ World Health Organisation. (2018). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018.

² <https://www.unescap.org/announcement/road-safety-status-asia-pacific-region>

GDP by 3.6% over a 24-year horizon³. For too long, however, road injury prevention has been overlooked as an issue of sustainable development.

4. Fortunately, this has recently changed as road safety is now recognised as a major issue of public health and sustainable development. Significantly, road injury prevention has been included in the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030)⁴. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for ‘Good Health and Well Being’ and for ‘Sustainable Cities and Communities’ both refer to road safety and have specific targets for road injury prevention (targets 3.6 & 11.2)⁵. In 2020, The 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety was held in February. The key takeaway was the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration which included a target to halve road deaths and injuries by 50% by 2030. Following this, in August 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted a new resolution on ‘Improving Global Road Safety’. The resolution *‘proclaims the period 2021-2030 as the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety, with a goal of reducing road traffic deaths and injuries by at least 50 per cent from 2021 to 2030...’*⁶
5. These declarations represent the strongest ever global mandate for action to reduce the number of people being killed and seriously injured on the world’s roads. Countries and governments are encouraged to address the negative health impact that road trauma has on their citizens and to implement effective road safety solutions to help meet this target.
6. To inspire greater actions amongst governments and stakeholders to help meet the 2030 target, a new Global Plan⁷ has been launched by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations (UN) Regional Commissions and UN Road Safety Collaboration stakeholders. The Global Plan describes what is needed to help achieve the target and calls on governments and partners to implement an integrated Safe System approach to road trauma reduction. One of the key elements of the Safe System approach is improved vehicle safety to help reduce trauma. The Global Plan includes key recommendations on vehicle safety (pages 13 & 14), including ones specifically for improving motorcycle safety.
7. In addition, in April 2018, the UN General Assembly endorsed 12 road safety performance targets for implementation by 2030⁸ to assist countries to measure their road safety performance. Target 5 for vehicle safety sets an ambitious goal of: *By 2030, 100% of new (defined as produced, sold or imported) and used vehicles meet high quality safety*

³ See: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/01/09/road-deaths-and-injuries-hold-back-economic-growth-in-developing-countries>

⁴ See: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

⁵ See: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

⁶ United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/299, 31 August 2020

⁷ <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-plan-for-the-decade-of-action-for-road-safety-2021-2030>

⁸ https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/12GlobalRoadSafetyTargets.pdf

standards, such as the recommended priority UN regulations, Global Technical Regulations, or equivalent recognized national performance requirements. One of these priority regulations is UN Regulation 78/ UN Global Technical Regulation (GTR) 3 for Motorcycle ABS.

Reg. 14	Seat belt anchorages
Reg. 16	Safety belts & restraints
Reg. 94	Frontal collision
Reg. 95	Lateral collision
Reg.140 (GTR 8)	Electronic stability control
Reg.127 (GTR 9)	Pedestrian protection
Reg. 44/129	Child restraints
Reg. 78 (GTR 3)	Motorcycle ABS

Table 2 - Recommended Priority United Nations (UN) Vehicle Safety Standards

8. 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%⁹.
9. 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.
10. The safety of a vehicle can be a function of the vehicle safety regulations of the producing country. While the UN World Forum for Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) provides a legal framework for a range of vehicle safety standards for UN member states to adopt voluntarily, many countries do not. The lack of universal adoption of the minimum standards creates a loophole in which manufacturers can produce and sell sub standard vehicles in countries that have not applied the standards, typically in low and middle income countries.

⁹ Rizzi, M., Strandroth, J., Kullgren, A., Tingvall, C., & Fildes, B. (2015). Effectiveness of Motorcycle Antilock Braking Systems (ABS) in Reducing Crashes, the First Cross-National, Traffic Injury Prevention 16, 177–183.

	UN Vehicle Standards							
	Seatbelts R16	Seatbelt anchorages R14	Frontal Impact R94	Side Impact R95	Electronic Stability Control R140/ GTR 8	Pedestrian Protection R127/ GTR 9	Child Seats R44/129	Motorcycle ABS R78/GTR3
Brunei	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cambodia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Indonesia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lao People's Democratic Republic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Malaysia	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-
Myanmar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Philippines	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Singapore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Timor- Leste	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thailand	Y	Y	-	-	-	Y	-	-
Vietnam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3 – Status of priority UN vehicle regulations in ASEAN countries ^{1,2}

11. UN Resolution 74/299⁶ reaffirmed the role and importance vehicle regulations have in facilitating road safety and invites Member States to implement UN vehicle regulations or equivalent national standards to ensure all new motor vehicles meet applicable minimum regulations and for active safety systems to be fitted as standard equipment. Furthermore, UNESCAP recommends its member countries to adopt the priority UN vehicle safety standards through integrating with their national vehicle safety standards².
12. 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)

13. It would, therefore, be a powerful demonstration of commitment to road injury prevention if the ASEAN Transport Ministers **were to endorse a region wide mandate to regulate for motorcycle ABS to be fitted as standard on all powered-two wheelers that are capable of travel speeds greater than 50km/h** in a bid to reduce the high burden of motorcycle fatalities and injuries in the region.

Conclusion

14. The ASEAN Transport Ministers have a great opportunity to reduce road deaths and serious injuries among its member countries and also play a leading role in global road safety with the new Decade of Action and 2030 target. There is significant scope for improvement in vehicle safety in the South East Asia region and countries are encouraged to systematically implement the recommendations of the Global Plan. Due to the high rate of motorcycle fatalities in the region, ASEAN Transport Ministers are especially encouraged **to endorse a region wide mandate to regulate for motorcycle ABS to be fitted as standard on all powered-two wheelers that are capable of travel speeds greater than 50km/h.**