



**6th IRF Regional Conference
Road Safety Strategy in India – Action Plan
3-5 October 2011 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi**

Transcript of Inaugural Session

Welcome Address by Mr. N.K. Sinha, Chairman, International Road Federation India Chapter



Mr. B. K. Chaturvedi, Hon'ble Member, Planning Commission, Mr. K. K. Kapila, Chairman, International Road Federation - Geneva Programme Centre, Mr. R. P. Indoria, Director General of Road Development and Special Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Dr. V. K. Yadav, President, Indian Roads Congress, Mr. Hubert Nove-Josserand, Operations Advisor - India, World Bank, Ms Sibylle Rupprecht, Director General, IRF - Geneva Programme Centre, delegates, invitees and exhibitors, ladies and gentlemen, Good Evening.

On behalf of International Road Federation India Chapter and on my own behalf, I extend a warm welcome to Hon'ble Member, Planning Commission, Mr. B. K. Chaturvedi, who kindly consented to be the Chief Guest of this inaugural function of the Conference. We are extremely grateful to you, Sir, for sparing your valuable time from your extremely busy schedule. The International Road Federation India Chapter, which is affiliated to IRF, Geneva Programme Centre, has so far organised five regional conferences in India. This is the sixth IRF regional conference and the theme is 'Road Safety Strategy in India - Action Plan'. Road safety is a global concern. Many countries have taken serious steps and been able to reverse the trend of road traffic fatalities and injuries.

This Conference will provide a platform for evolving a strategy in India during the UN Decade of Action. The topic is very vast and engrossing. Along with the Conference, Intertraffic India 2011, the international trade show of equipment and road infrastructure, including safety, has also been organised jointly by IRF India Chapter and Amsterdam RAI.

I also extend a warm welcome to Mr. K. K. Kapila, Chairman, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Mr. R. P. Indoria, Director General of Road Development and Special Secretary, MoRT&H, Dr. V. K. Yadav, President, Indian Roads Congress, Mr. Hubert Nove-Josserand, Operation Advisor, World Bank, Ms Sibylle Rupprecht, Director General, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, for their presence in the inaugural function in spite of their busy schedules. They have been providing valuable guidance in organising this Conference. I extend a hearty welcome to all the delegates, invitees and exhibitors, some of whom have travelled from abroad. Their presence here is of extreme importance to us and the Conference. I also welcome the press and media for coverage of the Conference and the function. In the end, I once again welcome all of you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you.

Ms Sibylle Rupprecht, Director General, IRF Geneva Programme Centre



Mr. B. K. Chaturvedi, Member of the Planning Commission and other dignitaries on the dais, distinguished guests, invitees and very dear friends! It is a great privilege and honour that I welcome you today to the 6th IRF Regional Conference on Road Safety. I remember the very first one. There were not so many people in the hall. And now, I look at all of you and see that the road safety awareness has increased. Today, we have gathered here with the same objective and desire to make our roads safe for us, for our friends and for our loved ones. It took many years of lobbying to achieve the UN Decade of Action and sheer determination and hard work to produce the action plan. IRF was indirectly involved in its writing. In fact, we chaired the group, which wrote the Pillar number 2 and its objectives..

But the real work is now ahead of us. A lot of progress still needs to be made. Actually, the real progress needs to be made now. We will have very inspiring presentations and discussions over the next two days and we will learn a lot. But what counts is, how we translate it into concrete and sustainable actions that save lives. It will take determination and courage to overcome all obstacles, but together, we will be able to achieve to make roads safer. So, let us join hands, and I would like to invite all of you to join the IRF as a member and to show your commitment to safer roads together with us. At this moment, I would like to thank the IRF India Chapter, its Chairman, Mr. N. K. Sinha and his team who have organized, under the wise guidance of Mr. K. K. Kapila, IRF Geneva Chairman, this Conference and

this Exhibition. A lot of hard work and a lot of motivation were involved. I also would like to acknowledge all the supporters and sponsors at this point. Once again, I wish you all a very warm welcome, very fruitful deliberations and discussions over the next days and let us hope that we could all translate these and go home with something we can contribute to safer roads. Thank you.

Mr. Hubert Nove-Josserand, Operations Advisor - India, World Bank



Mr. Chaturvedi, other dignitaries on the dais, ladies and gentlemen, Good Evening.

I am actually very pleased to be here and addressing you on behalf of the World Bank. As has been said, I have worked during most of my career in transport sector and I discovered that road safety is really like plague, and it has to be addressed very seriously. Therefore, I am very happy and the World Bank is very happy to be associated with this event. As you know, the road safety situation is very serious in India as also in the world.

We have in India 130,000 fatalities per year and many more injuries and unfortunately, this high toll is likely to continue to increase because the motorization in India is just beginning and the growth of the number of vehicles is very high. This problem was already expected and I have seen in many other developing countries too. But there are certain countries that lead the way and have started to abet the rate of growth of vehicles. China and Brazil, for instance, are on better paths. In China, apparently it is through improved post-crash management and regulatory measures. The World Bank is more and more concerned and is trying to involve itself on this topic through its transport and road projects. In India, our portfolio for road and transport has reached almost 5 billion dollars, and about 5 to 6% of these investments would directly go towards improving road safety management in various states, in various local governments or at the national level. We are supporting the government in the national highways sector but also at states level in roads, transport or urban transport. There are already a few examples

that India can mention. For instance, we are happy to be associated with the excellent accident management system in Tamil Nadu and the road safety fund created in Kerala and things like that. We are also working actively in using the fund of the Global Road Safety Facility and the Bloomberg Foundation resources to undertake International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP) of about 3000 km of road safety inspection on national and state highways across several states in India. This programme is going to recommend the desired safety improvement measures, which would be funded by the upcoming World Bank's Road Improvement Project particularly in Karnataka. Another aspect is the famous telephone number 108 in India. This is a life saving telephone number, which can be called by anybody in case of emergency, and the ambulance would be on its way to take charge of the accident victim and take him or her to the nearest hospital. We are now working to improve and expand the reach of this system, in particular through certain projects that we have in road and health sectors in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In the Urban Transport side also, we hope that some investment through dedicated cycle tracks and improved pedestrian facilities would help reduce the fatalities. Finally, we are also working on standards. For instance, we are working with NHAI to improve the construction safety standards through another project with them. I hope that this is only the beginning and with that I wish you an excellent Conference. Thank you.

Dr. V.K. Yadav, President, Indian Roads Congress and ADG, BRO



Hon'ble Member, Planning Commission, Shri B K Chaturvedi, Chairman, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Shri K K Kapila, Director General Road Development and Special Secretary, MORT&H, Shri R P Indoria, Director General, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Ms Sibylle Rupprecht, Operational Advisor of World Bank in India, Mr. Hubert Nove-Josserand, Chairman, IRF India Chapter, Shri NK Sinha and Secretary, IRF India Chapter, Mr. Raj Pal

Distinguished dignitaries on the dais, delegates and invitees, ladies and gentleman, it gives me great pleasure to be amongst you today on the occasion of inaugural function of this 6th IRF Regional Conference on Road Safety, being organized by International Road Federation India Chapter. The subject matter of this Conference is indeed very topical in the present day scenario. It's a reality that India accounts for about 10% of total world's road fatalities. In our country, over one lakh persons get killed and more than 4.5 lakh persons injured every year in road accidents. The vulnerable road users constitute 60 to 80% of the total traffic fatalities in India. The number of fatalities in the last two decades have seen a huge increase due to exponential growth of vehicles on our roads. The socio-economic cost of road accident has been estimated to be around 3% of GDP. With massive investment being made in development of roads, it has become necessary to have a system which integrates the various disciplines that influence road safety, for example Engineering, Education, Enforcement, Environment and Encouragement along with medical and behavioural science. All road designs should

be compromised between the ideal and the reasonable outcome in terms of cost, safety, service life, environmental and social issues. We can take all the measures to implement better road safety, but the road agencies, automobile manufacturers, associated institutions and most importantly the people need to believe that road accidents are largely avoidable. The Indian Roads Congress has played a crucial role in formulation of standards, code of practice, guidelines and specification for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the roads and bridges in the country. Having realized that gravity of the current situation on road safety and the goals set for all of us, the Indian Road Congress has been doing a commendable job by publishing following codes, guidelines, manuals on road safety: IRC SP32 the Road Safety for Children, IRC SP44 Highway Safety Code, IRC SP55 Guidelines for Safety in Constructions Zones and IRC SP88 Road Safety Audit Manual, Manual for Safety in Road Designs. Besides the above, the other aspects pertaining to road safety have also been dealt in the following IRC publications: Recommended Practice for Traffic rotaries, road signs, road delineators, Guidelines on design and installation of road traffic signals, Guidelines for pedestrian facilities, Manual of specification and standard for two-lane, four-lane and six-laning of highway through Public Private Partnership and Guidelines for the expressways. IRC is also instrumental in promoting awareness about road safety. In keeping with this, IRC recently organized a Workshop on Consideration of Road Safety in Design of Road Projects, in the month of March 2011 at New Delhi. I extend a very warm welcome to you and hope that deliberations during this Conference will go a long way in suggesting new methodology and prompting relevant best national and international practices in roads and road user safety and traffic management and to create awareness among all sections of the road users. Thank you. Jai Hind.

Mr. R.P. Indoria, Director General (Road Development) and Spl Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Govt of India



Mr. B K Chaturvedi, Hon'ble Member, Planning Commission and other dignitaries on the dais, delegates from India and abroad, invitees, ladies and gentleman and friends from the media. I am indeed grateful to the International Road Federation India Chapter for having invited me to this Inaugural function of the 6th IRF Regional Conference and providing me an opportunity to participate in this important Conference on Road Safety Strategy in India – Aaction Plan. Road infrastructure has emerged as a critical component for the country's socio-economic, developmental and central to all inclusive growth. Accordingly, the Government of India has embarked on a prestigious road development programme, comprising building of upgraded and improved two-lane, four-lane and six-lane facilities and creation of expressways. This programme is aimed at providing world class infrastructure to support the economic growth and thereby improve the plight of the common people. Historically, at the dawn of the independence, the country was faced with the problem of providing connectivity to a large geographical area of the country, which it is. Combined to this problem of connectivity, we also had the scarcity of resources, because there was pressure from other important social sectors like health and education. The roads were built as mode of providing connectivity to the people. Many a time, we followed this path of constructing in stages - do something now and add something later. With the overall economic growth and industrialization, there was a demand for faster and smoother movement of passenger and cargo traffic. So from connectivity, there was a shift in philosophy to providing quality roads and that is why this programme. Coupled with this qualitative improvement in the road infrastructure, which

basically means high speed corridors, the phenomenal increase in registered vehicles and, for the sake of statistics, in 1951 we had a total of 3.1 lakh registered vehicles in the country and these were 1,150 lakh in 2010. So, there has been tremendous increase in vehicle population and 75% of these vehicles are two wheelers. Further, our roads are not access controlled and one can find even two wheelers on high speed corridors and unfortunately, many a time, they are victims of road accidents. Besides that, we also have a large road network of more than 42 lakh re. It is probably the second largest in the world, and out of this, the national highways comprise of only 1.7%, but they carry more than 40% of the passenger and cargo traffic. In our effort to build more and more capacity, one of the fallouts has been higher speeds of travel, which no doubt improve the productivity of travel in terms of enhanced mobility and accessibility served by our roads, but at the same time, it has an adverse impact on the road safety issues. There is a relationship between speed and accidents occurring on roads. Road safety is a socio-economic problem having enormous social implications and needs lots of technical input for resolution. Road safety problem in India has grown in the last one decade at the rate of 6 to 8% per annum. I will not repeat much of this road accident statistics, because besides being repetitive it's very gloomy, it's very sad and unfortunate. This enormous loss must be arrested by systematic efforts from all stakeholders and the trend must be reversed as soon as possible. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, being the nodal ministry for road safety, is seized with all related problems and working very closely with all other stakeholders to make an early difference. The global trends show that the industrialized world has been successful in tackling the problems of road safety, inasmuch as the accident rate is diminishing. On the contrary, in the developing world there is a phenomenal increase in road accident deaths, reaching an epidemic proportion. The situation would tend to become worse in future decades in the developing world, as the vehicle fleet continues to increase rapidly. It is therefore imperative, globally and more so for developing countries like India, to undertake the requisite measures to arrest the increasing trend in road accidents and also to bring about an overall reduction in road fatalities. The other unfortunate part of road accidents is that most of the road accident victims are in the productive working age group and this leads to not only the economic loss but also the loss of livelihood for many families. The road accident victims, many times, are of 5 years to 44 years age. It has also been seen that the road accidents have been killing more people each year than malaria, aids or cardiac problems. Unless immediate and effective action is taken, it is estimated that about 24 lakh deaths will occur due to road accidents each year by 2020, which shall further increase progressively. This is partly because of rapid increase in motorization without commensurate improvement in road safety network, road safety strategies and land use planning. We all drive on roads and see many people doing many strange things on the roads. Reducing road accidents and fatalities will free huge amount of resources for more productive development oriented works and it will also enable maintaining the productive workforce. Since the task of arresting road accidents involves a multi pronged approach, it is necessary for all stakeholders namely the government, the private sector, the electronic and print media, the NGOs and the academia all to join hands to collectively address the issue and concern of road safety, so that precious human lives can be saved. The MORT&H has already undertaken a number of measures. For example, we are in the process of amending the Motor Vehicles Act with a special focus on reducing road accidents, promoting road safety campaigns, display of hoardings, featuring of promotional films on road safety in cinema halls, print and electronic media and seeking support of the print media to carry forward the road safety campaigns. Our Ministry is right now

taking up a very massive media campaign about the road awareness, incorporating requisite engineering measures and a system of road safety audits through design, construction and operation stages to have assured?. My colleague Dr. Yadav gave you a detailed list of IRC publications. I will only dwell on one particular document, that is the Road Safety Audit Manual, which provides that whenever we design a highway project, it has to be subjected to road safety audit at various stages, namely at feasibility, at the preparation of detailed project report, during construction, during operation and maintenance. This road safety audit brings about the black spot analysis and corrective measures to be taken. Besides that, our Ministry is also in the process of launching two major initiatives. These programmes go by the names Vahan and Sarathi. The programme Vahan aims at centralizing the entire data of vehicle registration in the country and the Sarathi is about centralizing the data about issuance of driving licenses. It has been felt that issue of driving license needs to be regulated and controlled, because we need to give a driving license not a license to kill. We are also involved in setting up of appropriate driver training schools with simulators to enhance driving skills of drivers and implementation of uniform school curriculum of road safety education for creating a safety culture in the future generations. I will be dishonest if I did not talk about engineering, when talking about the initiatives. I will have to admit that till the recent past, highway design standards usually ignored the needs of pedestrians and other non-motorized traffic, popularly called vulnerable road users. Unfortunately, such standards may often be too high, which means taking care of the vulnerable road user would be costly or require excessive maintenance for the countries to afford. In such circumstances, the emphasis tends to focus upon the constructional instead of the operational aspects. Important operational elements, such as road signs or pedestrian facilities, are often left out for later addition, which many times comes a bit too late. Even where such elements are included, the shortage of trained professionals and the limited resources available for maintenance works often mean that overgrown footpaths and damaged traffic control facilities are mostly left unattended. Efforts should therefore be made from the planning stage to use the solutions which require minimal maintenance. It should be the question of balancing the cost against risk. As highway planners, we are often faced with the dilemma of doing more kilometre of roads or doing safer roads. There is always an element of cost. So, our attempt should be to balance the cost against risk, rather than simply attempting to decide which solution is correct and which is incorrect. There is no fit-all solution. Since it is not possible to create a road that would have no crashes on it, each design would have to be more safe than less safe as compared to other alternatives. The design should not be an adopt generalization to justify adopting some inferior and unsafe features to save money, and I emphasize to save money. Finding the appropriate balance should be our foremost priority. With these words, ladies and gentlemen, I hope that the above initiatives will help, to some extent, in mitigating the problems of road safety. It is essential to ensure compliance of road safety rules by the road user also, for which MORT&H is launching campaigns, to bring about awareness amongst road users. The government duly recognizes the necessity for an appropriate institutional arrangement and for that we are contemplating to establish a road safety board and a road safety fund. When in position, this would enable the requisite institutional capacity to address the issue of road safety. The Conference, for which we are all here is very well structured and provides for sessions to deliberate on necessary institutional arrangements, covering all aspects of road safety. I keenly look forward to the recommendations which we would like to consider for early adoption and I take this opportunity to wish the deliberations all success. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

Mr. K.K. Kapila, Chairman, IRF Geneva Programme Centre



Mr. B K Chaturvedi ji, Hon'ble Member, Planning Commission, Govt. of India, Mr. R P Indoria, DGRD and Special Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Mr. Hubert Nave-Jossarand, World Bank Operations Advisor, India, Dr. V K Yadav, President, Indian Roads Congress, Mr. N K Sinha, Chairman, IRF India Chapter, Ms. Sibylle Rupprecht, Director General, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Mr. Raj Pal Arora, Secretary, IRF India Chapter, distinguished Delegates, Invitees, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Road safety is a serious concern globally for all nations, as more than 1.3 million people are dying violently every year in road crashes. About 80 to 90% of the total fatality is in the less developed countries, where the vehicle ownership is far lower than the developed world. Yet, the poor road infrastructure and traffic indiscipline brings a huge loss in every such less developed country, amounting to as much as 2 to 3% of their GDP, which these countries can ill afford. It also works as a retarder for development of these nations. All the achievements realized under the millennium development goals are largely overshadowed by this man-made calamity, which is worse than a natural disaster or an epidemic. To address this global crisis, the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration was established as a follow up to the General Assembly Resolution 58/289 of April 2004. Most of the time, road traffic death and injuries remain almost invisible to the society at large, since these are scattered all over the country. The lack of visibility of road traffic injuries and deaths has a direct bearing on lack of political will to recognise, accept and address this problem. This in turn leads to lack of political priority and

therefore leading to lack of resources and reluctance to take ownership of the issue by the concerned government departments and authorities.

The economic loss to the nations, even in India, is mind boggling Rs 100,000 crore every year, which is about US\$ 23-24 billion. The world loses almost US\$ 500 billion on road accidents and fatalities, which is more than the budget of ten poor nations. Being seized of this human tragedy, across the globe and more prominently in the economically derived nations, United Nations has adopted a resolution 64/255 in the General Assembly in March 2010 to make collective efforts to contain this menace with the objective of reducing the forecast level of road deaths in 2020 by 50%. The UN has launched globally Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 on 11th of May this year. The UN urges all governments to commit to attain the goals of Decade of Action by implementing an action plan designed to address the five pillars of road safety i.e. build management capacity, influence road design and network management, influence vehicle safety designs, influence road user behaviour and improve post-crash care. The government should accordingly establish 2020 targets for improved road safety. The road fatalities in India are one of the highest with more than 130,000 deaths and about five lakh injured grievously every year. Thus, 10% of the worldwide deaths are in India, with 2 to 3% of the motor vehicles in the world. When an air accident takes place, you see the news for rest one week in the entire media, be it electronic or print. In case of roads, equivalent of 10 Jumbo jets crash every single day in this world with zero survivors. Yet you hardly see the news or hear about it. Through global collaborations, we have the tools and knowledge to undertake this challenge. A political will is required to implement the series of actions, as per the recommendations of the Decade of Action Plan and as per its requirements. Through the work of UN Road Safety Collaboration, the International Road Federation, the World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility and the Global Road Safety Partnership, there is already a road safety community poised for action. The trend of road traffic accidents is an epidemic on wheels, which needs to be immediately reversed to make sustainable achievement and development possible and also to manage the high growth of our economy.

The 6th IRF Regional Conference is being organized on a very specific theme, Road Safety Strategy in India – Action Plan. It's meant for detailed deliberations amongst the experts and delegates to arrive at the most appropriate strategy and action plan that needs to be adopted in India for implementation during the Decade of Action. The concurrent Intertraffic India exhibition, being jointly organized by IRF India Chapter and Amsterdam RAI, will showcase the latest internationally available traffic technologies in more than 120 stalls presenting and demonstrating the innovations and also promote safety in development of road and traffic systems.

A number of initiatives has been taken in the country, like in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, which were mentioned by Mr Nove-Jossarand from the World Bank. We are grateful to the World Bank for the assistance and support they are giving in this area. We have to continue these more vigorously in the entire gambit of road network that we create. MORT&H has been very supportive and have taken a number of decisions in this regard. In April 2010, they issued a circular giving out detailed road safety requirements, which must be taken into account while designing and making a road. However, their implementation needs to be further ensured. I appeal to the leadership to resolve today that we shall

do our utmost by using latest technology to bring in safer transportation in the country. We will do everything humanly possible to achieve the targets set forth in the Decade of Action plan for reducing road accidents and road fatalities by 50% by the end of 2020 in India. For achieving this, we will come out, besides the action plan, with an accountability agenda. Whatever is to be done and whatever is planned to be done must be accounted for and people must be made responsible to achieve those targets, and only then the desired road safety level will be achieved in the country. With these words, ladies and gentlemen, I appeal to all of you to, by yourself, take all initiatives for road safety when you are driving. Let us start from our own homes first and then continue with the deliberations elsewhere. Thank you. Jai Hind.

Mr. B.K. Chaturvedi, Hon'ble Member, Planning Commission – The Chief Guest



Mr. K K Kapila, Chaiman, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Mr. R P Indoria, Director General and Special Secretary in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Dr. V K Yadav, President, Indian Roads Congress, Mr. Hubert Nove-Josserand, World Bank Operations Advisor, India, Ms. Sibylle Rupprecht, DG IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Mr. Sinha, Mr. Raj Pal and distinguished invitees. I am indeed very happy to be here today amongst a galaxy of professionals from India and abroad on the occasion of the inauguration of this extremely important Conference on Road Safety Strategy in India - Action Plan, being organized by the India Chapter of International Road Federation. Road safety is no longer a task, which can be put on the back burner. It cannot be neglected at any cost. We all know and as the earlier Speakers have mentioned that globally, in road accidents, more than nearly 1.3 million people die and nearly 50 million people get injured every year. In India, as was mentioned earlier, nearly 350 persons leave home to work for attending for other activities but never return as they become victim of the disaster of wheels every day. Road accidents being dispersed in time and space across the whole country, do not become visible to all and individual cases are not considered sensational enough by media to project repeatedly. Thus, these small events across the nation give rise to this monstrous disaster wiping out a population equivalent to that of small size cities every year. In addition, a huge population, many more times the number of deaths, is injured and disabled for life. A study by the Planning Commission had indicated in the year 2000, and it was mentioned earlier by a number of speakers, that around Rs 55,000 crore are lost every year. Now in terms of money, this amount would be much more and it is now around 2 to 3% of the GDP. The GDP is presently around US\$ 1.4 trillion,

which is really enormous. United Nations resolution in March 2000 has felt that governments, international financial institutions, donor community and development activists, all have to collectively meet this challenge and commit to Decade of Action for Road Safety. Accordingly, the theme of the Conference is totally aligned to the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety, which was launched globally on 11th of May 2011.

International Road Federation is a worldwide organization and doing a yeomen service to the road sector across the globe, in all the key aspects of sustainable development of road network through its technical support system covering safety, financing, technology and environment. For last five to six years, International Road Federation India Chapter has been playing a leading role to attend to the gigantic problem of road safety in India. The government as well as the private agencies are being motivated to realise the gravity of the road safety problems and to contribute to the cause in the best possible way. Road Transport Ministry has already suggested, as Mr. Indoria in his very detailed presentation mentioned, a number of steps and initiatives being taken by them in this regard. In addition, as India prepares for its 12th Five Year Plan, and the Planning Commission is engaged in this task along with the various ministries, we have to consider how we can undertake this task and achieve the objective which was mentioned earlier by Mr. K.K. Kapila. The major objective is how to reduce the road accidents by 50% by 2020. This is a huge task and for achieving that, an action plan will have to be devised. As we prepare for this action plan, which will be a part of this 12th Plan exercise being conducted by us currently, and we hope to finalize this some time by March of next year. We hope that we will take a number of initiatives. Let me enumerate some of them. One will be series of legislative initiatives regarding the amendments in the Motor Vehicles Act and having new provisions for road safety boards, and others, which will really strengthen the legislative framework for road safety.

Second one is the key area of education. This education should be of all the stakeholders and in my opinion should start right at the beginning. I find that MORT&H has taken steps to work out C.B.S.E. curriculum for road safety education. At present, in CBSE curriculum, it starts much later. It is important to initiate sensitizing children from class I to class V, which is the formative stage of the children. If we are able to instill in them the feeling of road safety, that this is important for them, it is going to stick in their mind for all time to come. It is therefore important and we would try to work with the MORT&H and Ministry of Human Resource Development to develop a strategy for sensitizing children and having a curriculum in which this is an important part along with the other activities. There is also a need for educating other stakeholders - the persons who are driving the vehicles, those who are engaged in building roads, all those pedestrians who are using it. There is a need for sensitizing all other stakeholders and this process also has to be worked out as a part of a very conscious strategy by us.

The second important area is the infrastructure development. Presently, we develop roads on the public-private partnership basis, expanding them from four lane to six lane, trying to have access control and so on. But this alone will not be adequate. We have to see the requirements of pedestrians, the requirements of users of roads and to ensure that when we build these roads, there are no unallowed or prohibited users using the road. Because when that happens, it is a sure recipe for an accident. It is therefore important that when we build these roads, we provide for facilities for the people, who are

living on either side; for instance they are able to cross the road conveniently. Wherever required, it is important that we provide such underpasses or bridges for people using the road.

Similarly, for the infrastructure development in the towns and even smaller towns, we have to see that as the roads get widened, we provide appropriate safety measures.

Next is the need for trauma centres. Some trauma centres have been opened, but these are not adequate and we have to expand, so that these facilities are available across the length and breadth of the country. Infrastructure here, should also include the ambulances at call so that the accident victims are transported quickly.

So, extensive development of the road infrastructure for users of vehicle and education are the two important areas.

The third important area, I would say, is technology. New technologies have been coming up. We just now saw a demonstration, how the technology is being used for collection of road accident statistics. It is also important that we use all modern technology for road signages, for road demarcations, etc. It should be easy for the drivers and for other users to use the roads. We also have to develop technologies that provide for safe use of roads by pedestrians and also cyclists. We have to therefore give importance to these four areas in the 12th Five Year Plan: A) Legislation, B) Education, C) Technology and D) Infrastructure. If we can take care of these four important areas, I feel, we would be able to bring out an action plan. I hope that as the deliberations take place in the Conference, these would be given adequate importance. These Conferences, being held under the aegis of IRF India Chapter, are making a mark, because they focus on quality and contents. This is an annual event of very high significance. Government and road authorities can heavily draw upon from the recommendations of such a conference and we, in the planning commission, will really look forward to its recommendations. The organizers have planned the conference in a very systematic manner, as I find from the technical sessions for each sub-theme. I understand that huge detailed sessions have been planned for each of the five pillars of the Decade of Action for Road Safety.. India is yet to draw up a complete action plan for alleviating the road safety concerns. As I mentioned, we would be able to base our plan on these recommendations and as we prepare for our 12th Five Year Plan, we would be able to prepare a road safety plan, where we reduce the number of fatal accidents to 50%.

I am confident that discussions based on the shared knowledge and experience from other parts of the world will help us formulate an appropriate action plan. I look forward to having a set of final recommendations, so that it can be appropriately taken up within the overall scheme of our 12th Plan. I would like to thank IRF India Chapter for taking up such a vital and most appropriate theme for deliberations, recommendations of which will be of enormous value to all of us. I wish the deliberations of next two days all the success, extremely fruitful for every participant, to the conference and for all the users. The concurrent activity of Intertraffic India is also a mega event for exposition of traffic technology from all over the world with the innovative products and services and I am sure that everyone here will be benefited from this exhibition, which is being held at Pragati Maidan. With these words, I once again thank the organizers for giving me an opportunity for addressing the gathering of

such galaxy of technologists, engineers and experts from all over India and a number of other countries. I shared my thoughts with you. I once again wish the deliberations of the Conference all success.

Vote of Thanks by Mr. Raj Pal, Secretary, International Road Federation India Chapter



Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Evening. It is my proud privilege to propose a vote of thanks in this inaugural function. On behalf of IRF India Chapter and on my own behalf, I thank the honourable Member, Planning Commission, Mr. B.K. Chaturvedi ji for accepting to be the Chief Guest, in spite of his extremely busy schedule. Sir, your illuminating address will serve as a guide for the Conference. I thank Mr Kapila ji, Chairman, IRF Geneva Programme Centre, Mr. Indoria ji, Director General, Road Development and Special Secretary to Govt of India, Dr V K Yadav, President, Indian Roads Congress, Mr. Hubert Nove-Josserand, Operations Advisor - India, World Bank, Ms Sibylle Rupprecht, Director General, IRF Geneva Programme Centre and Mr. N K Sinha, Chairman, IRF India Chapter, for their presence and valuable addresses, despite their busy schedules. Special thanks are due to the Principal Sponsors, Sponsors and Co-Sponsors for their support and I also thank the delegates, the exhibitors and the invitees for participating in this function and making it a success. My thanks are also due to the press and media for coverage of this function and the Conference. Thank you all. Jai Hind.