**United Nations Speech on Road Safety**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

3.400 people (WHO 2015) will not make it home tonight! Why? Simply because they had the bad luck to be killed in a car crash. 3.400 human souls that will not come home to say good night to their kids, wife, husband, parents or friends. In less than 200 days, the population of my home country Luxembourg would completely be erased.

Actually, road safety is a global public health issue, a universal responsibility and hence an international challenge for all of us. Road safety is an issue that affects each and every one of us - no matter what language we speak, or where we are from, or what social class we might fall into. Whether we are pedestrians, cyclists, drivers or passengers; road safety is a common challenge.

Therefore, it is a great honor for me to speak in front of an audience representing nothing less than the UNITED NATIONS.

To be frank and candid, the task of road safety is too important to be modest or to act in a humble way. By the way, throughout history New York has never been a place for small actions. Thus, let me say it very clear, I have a goal, a goal that cannot be negotiated or questioned, a goal that means nothing less than zero fatalities and zero severely injured in road traffic.

In the 70’s, Luxembourg counted over 100 road fatalities per year. Through a number of serious repressive measures, like

* introducing the demerit point driving license system,
* declaring war on alcohol and drugs while driving,
* enhancing training of drivers, in particular by implementing post licensing measures for novice drivers,
* improving the road network,
* introducing an efficient periodic technical vehicle inspection
* and not to forget launching awareness campaigns on a regular basis

– in doing so, we managed to reduce the number of fatalities to 32 in 2010 (- 68%).

The first figures I had to present as a newly appointed Minister in charge of Transports in 2013, showed an increase of the number of fatalities to 45 (+ 41% compared to 2010), the main cause still being exceeding speed limits or inappropriate speed.

I didn’t hesitate a single moment to aim high and to act bold by introducing speed cameras in Luxembourg.

Human error, be it speed, fatigue, drink driving or use of mobiles or other devices are the main factors in road traffic collisions in Luxembourg as well as in most other countries. They are common challenges. However, there is no need to “reinvent the wheel”.

The Luxembourg government has launched a “Road Safety Action Plan”, comprising 29 measures - a mixture of prevention and repression - aiming to tackle one by one the reasons causing road accidents. The core measures consist in:

* a reinforcement of the demerit point system and of the fines,
* safety measures related to road infrastructure (residential areas, 30km zones, shared space, safer zebra crossings, bicycle lanes, road safety audits).

In less than 4 years, the number of road fatalities dropped to 25 persons. But despite this encouraging trend in road fatalities, the efforts must go on, because every death and every seriously injured in road traffic is one too much!

I have a goal, I keep on believing in it, and I know nothing comes from believing alone, but we can and will go beyond this figure.

The UN has a clear target: to halve the number of road deaths and seriously injured by 2020, although reaching this target has become very challenging.

My vision remains zero fatalities and zero seriously injured in road traffic not only in my country but all over the world.

The heartache, the human suffering, the misery, must come to an end.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let’s do it together, let’s aim high, work hard and dream big!

Thank you!