Speech of Ms President Dilma Rousseff, President of the Republic of Brazil, in the opening ceremony of the 2nd Global High Level Conference on Road Safety.

Centro Internacional de Convenções do Brasil, Brasilia-DF, 18 November 2015

I would like to address a special greeting to Zoleka Mandela, ambassador for the Safe Roads Program. Her daughter, Zenani Mandela, 13, who died in a car crash, represent all those on whose behalf I salute the representatives of associations and families of road traffic victims.

Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization,

Ladies and gentlemen representing international organizations and members of foreign delegations here present,

His Highness, Prince Michael of Kent,

Minister of Health, Marcelo Castro; Minister of Justice, José Eduardo Cardozo; Ambassador Sérgio Danese, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs; Minister of Transport, Antonio Carlos Rodrigues; Minister of Cities, Gilberto Kassab,

Mr. Jean Todt, Special Envoy of the United Nations for Road Safety

Ms Diza Gonzaga, president of Thiago de Moraes Gonzaga Foundation – Vida Urgente,

Sir and Madam Journalists, photographers and cinematographers here present.

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great satisfaction that we welcome delegations from over 120 countries representing governments and civil society for the 2nd Global High Level Conference on Traffic Safety here in Brasilia. We have reached the middle of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety. This the time to take stock of the results achieved so far. And to advance in reducing the number of deaths in the next five years, especially when the projections of the World Health Organization announced an increase of 30% of fatal road crashes by 2030.

Developing countries play a fundamental role in this process. Developing countries account for over 90% of deaths, although only 54% of the fleet travel on their roads.

At the UN General Assembly, I have announced the support of Brazil to Sustainable Development Goals, including the halving, by 2020, the number of road traffic crash victims. And also the objective of ensuring the quality of urban mobility. This
objective, which goes beyond the expected in the Decade of Action, shows the priority that we give to road crash prevention.

In Brazil, we are all committed to promoting safe mobility for all citizens, especially the most vulnerable ones, the most exposed to heavy traffic. WHO’s report points out that half the victims are pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and public transport users. Here, a significant proportion of the victims are motorcyclists. Sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, efficient and modern public transport, speed limits and paved streets, are important steps to do so. More efficient and safe mobility means healthier living, sheltered life, sustainable living. The use of bicycles reduces CO\textsuperscript{2} emissions. The recognition of pedestrians encourages physical activity. A more collaborative traffic encourages peaceful coexistence and better use of public spaces.

Ladies and gentlemen,

International cooperation in events like this allows us to identify common challenges, shortening the path to also common solutions. Simpler measures have the potential to save lives, such as the requirement for seat belts and helmets and the necessary barring of the use of cell phones while driving.

Brazil has successful examples. Between 2012 and 2013, the “Dry law” helped reducing deaths by 6%, from 44,812 to 42,266. However, alcohol related deaths are still very high. This reduction, to which I referred, is the first consistent reduction after more than a decade of increases. We make also mandatory the use of child restraint devices, the front airbag and ABS brakes. We created the National Mobility Urban Policy and the National Traffic Policy. The mandatory use of seat belts was, in a sense, an achievement of Brazilian children who persuaded their parents to use the seat belt.

The battle against road traffic violence, however, is more than a matter of new laws. It is necessary an awareness campaign that promotes a new traffic culture, which is why we created in 2011 the Parada Program – a National Pact to Reduce Road Crashes, promoting mobilization and education actions. Health systems must be prepared for post-crash situations on an emergency basis and in rehabilitation. Brazil has, among others, the Mobile Emergency Care Service, the SAMU, whose coverage reaches about 150 million people in 2,291 municipalities.

Investing in safety also brings economic benefits, economic benefits that are certainly secondary benefits while compared to actual preservation of life, quality of life. Nevertheless, it must also be said that it brings economic benefits as they avoid property loss and reduce health care costs. The damage caused by road crashes
are estimated at 3% of world GDP, a figure that reaches up to 5% in developing countries.

While included in the 2030Agenda, the subject requires collective solutions built with the primary responsibility of governments, but with essential contribution of civil society. It is essential that the auto industry incorporate safe technologies on production lines in the world, it is essential to standardize equipment, such as helmets. It is thus the responsibility of governments to engage in the UN forum discussions for harmonization of vehicle regulations.

Dear friends,

The Decade of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals bring a great responsibility: to go from the current situation of stabilization in the number of deaths and injuries to a gradual reduction of road traffic crashes in the world. I wish you a good job. I hope that in five years we can make a positive assessment of the Decade of Action. In fact, you are right Ambassador Mandela, "no, there are no excuses."

I thank the presence of all, especially the delegation from Russia, which organized the first conference. I thank also to the presence of international organizations, in the person of Dr. Margaret Chan, Director General of WHO, co-sponsor of this event. I too thank the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his message.

I would like to end with a heartfelt appreciation to the families of the victims here who give us testimony of trauma caused by road traffic violence. Their presence means love, greatness and the solidarity of those who, despite the suffering that comes from their memories, chose to engage to prevent other families from going through the same pain. One of these families created almost 20 years ago in Porto Alegre, the city where I live, the Thiago Gonzaga Foundation, promotes educational and cultural activities to make more responsible behaviour in road traffic. This is the spirit that must move us all.

Thank you.