



PRESS RELEASE – Friday 20th november

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Leading global businesses launch second phase of Global Road Safety Initiative

Four leading energy and transport companies have pledged to fund a further, five-year second phase of the of the Global Road Safety Initiative (GRSI), the world's largest joint commitment of private sector resources toward road safety in low- and middle-income countries. The Initiative will be managed by the Global Road Safety Partnership, a not-for-profit hosted project of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, based in Geneva, Switzerland.

Representatives of Chevrolet, Michelin, Renault and Shell announced the news at the First Global Ministerial Meeting on Road Safety in Moscow on 20th November, where they invited other global businesses to join the initiative.

“Mobility is a key to generating wealth – a key to economic growth and prosperity for billions of people,” said Patrick Lepercq, vice president of public affairs for Michelin, a member of the Initiative and Chair of the Global Road Safety Partnership.

“However, we also see that mobility has created a global crisis that is taking 1.2 million lives and causing 50 million injuries every year, with huge economic costs estimated at 65 billion USD per year in the low- and middle-income countries where mobility is growing fastest. Businesses can play a key role in addressing this major humanitarian crisis.”

In low- and middle-income countries, anywhere from 1 to 3 percent of gross domestic product is spent on road-crash related costs. These everyday catastrophes deny communities the chance to thrive, deprive families of bread-winners, burden local health systems and stifle economic progress.

As global companies, members of GRSI recognize the effect that road crashes have on their employees, communities and customers. Improving the road environment is vital to a stable business environment.

Created in 2004 by a group of leading global corporations, the initiative has contributed over the last five years to projects with a track record of positive, quantifiable results:

- Death and serious injury rates – and health costs – diminished in several Brazilian cities following the implementation of GRSP's award-winning Proactive Partnership Strategy, a comprehensive package of programmes, projects and systems that engages key

government departments (transport, health and education), the private sector and civil society in collaborative road safety efforts.

- 1,577 fewer people died in Vietnam in 2008 than in 2007 after a new helmet law was enacted and enforced with support from GRSI activities and other partners.
- Helmet use in Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam increased due to comprehensive legislative, enforcement and education efforts.
- Drinking and driving rates were reduced by 63 percent in two cities in China following public awareness and enforcement campaigns.
- A project to improve intersections and protect vulnerable road users (pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcycle riders) in Beijing resulted in fewer traffic conflicts, reduced speeds at intersections and better road behaviour.

The Initiative has also supported the development and use of globally recognized good practice guides (United Nations Road Safety Collaboration good practice manuals on seat-belts, helmet use, speed management and drinking and driving). GRSI supports pilot projects in which approaches can be tested in the field, then replicated if proven effective. All GRSI projects contain a component of base-line study, and before-after comparison.

‘Direct and important contribution’

In 2008, two independent, internationally respected road safety experts (Richard Scurfield and Kate McMahon) reported that GRSI projects play a vital role in spreading good road safety practices in countries where in operates:

“The Global Road Safety Initiative is making a very direct and important contribution to the implementation of the recommendations of the World Report for Road Injury Prevention, in particular the promotion of the good practice manuals for the four key risk factors – seat-belts, helmets, speed and drink-driving,” the experts reported.

For business, GRSI provides an opportunity to make cost-effective contributions because resources are leveraged through collaboration with in-country partners.

“We strongly support the partnership concept, which links the private sector with government and civil society groups,” says David Lewis, Chairman of GRSI and Manager of downstream HSSE for Shell International Petroleum Ltd. “I believe we create synergies by working together – our combined efforts are more effective than if the three sectors work on their own.”

Brent Dewar, vice president global Chevrolet agrees: "Improving road safety which saves lives is important to our customers, to our employees and to the communities in which we operate. The Global Road Safety Initiative made real progress in its first phase and Chevrolet is proud to continue its participation in the second phase. We hope to welcome more companies to join this important public-private sector partnership as it begins its next phase.”

“By renewing our commitment to the Global Road Safety Initiative, Renault is continuing to work side by side with developing countries and regions as they strive to increase sustainable mobility while drawing on the experience of high income countries to lessen the negative impacts of transport”, says Claire Martin, Renault Corporate Social Responsibility Vice President.

The second phase of the Initiative will focus on supporting the coming Decade of Action on Road Safety, being called for at the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety this week in Moscow. For more information, please contact The Global Road Safety Partnership at +41 22 730-4249 or grsp@ifrc.org.

Background information for Editors:

The Global Road Safety Initiative (GRSI) was founded in 2004 by seven companies – Ford, General Motors, Honda, Michelin, Shell, Renault and Toyota – which pledged a total \$10 million US over five years to fund road safety pilot projects in Brazil, China and countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The goal of GRSI is to reduce death and injury by implementing demonstration projects that reduce key risks by promoting good practice regarding proper helmet use, speed management, drinking and driving and use of seat restraints.

The Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the sustainable reduction of road-crash related death and injury in low- and middle-income countries. Established in 1999, GRSP is hosted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva. GRSP brings together governments, the private sector and civil society to develop sustainable solutions to the growing road safety crisis in low- and middle-income countries, where 90% of traffic deaths and injuries occur.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the world’s largest humanitarian organization, providing assistance without discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. Founded in 1919, the International Federation comprises 186 member Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies — with others in formation — a secretariat in Geneva and more than 60 delegations strategically located to support activities around the world. The International Federation, together with the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

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