

**SPEAKING NOTES FOR  
ANNE-MARIE LECLERC,  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
WORLD ROAD ASSOCIATION**

**On the occasion of the opening of the  
24th World Road Congress, Mexico City**

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary of Communications and Transportation,

Mr. Organizing Committee Chair,

Honourable Council members,

Distinguished colleagues,

Let me begin by thanking the Mexican organizing committee for its monumental efforts in making this a relevant, appealing and rewarding congress for everyone through its choice of themes, its special sessions and its many announcements.

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to be here in Mexico City.

I am sure that the warm Mexican hospitality and the friendships that will be made in this inviting atmosphere will be a delight to all Association members and all delegates.

The World Road Association is a non-governmental organization initiated by automakers and car owners in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Association was founded after the first World Road Congress, held in Paris in 1909.

Today, the World Road Association has been in existence for over a century and boasts 118 government members along with several other partners from over 140 countries. This longevity is a testament to members' willingness and commitment to make their Association a world-renowned forum for international exchanges.

Promoting cooperation in the road and road transportation industry is essential to developing solutions that in the best interests of communities everywhere.

To me, it is quite clear that several innovative policies and practices contributing to safer, more effective management of road transportation networks benefit from being shared and from being transferred to other road agencies.

Through benefiting from everyone's experiences—both successes and failures—the Association's members can develop policies that are more effectively adapted to their situation and integrate new technologies faster and with greater success.

Opening discussions and working with other specialists in the economic, social sciences or environment fields resulted in the gradual emergence of sustainable mobility.

The Association therefore deliberately and quite resolutely focused its work on themes with great potential for the future. Looking to reach this delicate balance between the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable mobility is a challenge that all countries are called upon to meet.

Each country within its means of course but with all motivated by the same desire to serve the public.

To contribute to advancing the concept of sustainable mobility, the Association deals with quite a broad spectrum of topics related to roads and road transportation, including the economy, the environment and road safety, not to mention funding, construction, maintenance and infrastructure management. These topics are dealt with in a perspective where service to the public is a central focus of the decisions made by various public authorities.

In our respective societies, access to safe and sustainable mobility establishes itself as a fundamental freedom to which people are entitled.

The strategic plan guides the technical committees' work and activities and allows for the development of possible solutions that can lead to the creation and implementation of a long-term vision of mobility in societies.

Under the theme "Roads for a Better Life: Mobility, Sustainability and Development," this World Congress in Mexico City will contribute to this long-term thinking about mobility:

- by promoting a comprehensive approach to challenges that the transportation and road sector must face; and
- by shedding new light on the future of mobility.

The World Road Association exists to serve its members. Its work leads to improving the state of knowledge and the identification and sharing of best practices, as well as the development and promotion of effective decision-making tools that will allow for safer, more effective and more sustainable use of roads and transportation networks.

Thanks to a series of publications and events whose content, form and dissemination method vary, the Association has contributed for more than a century to giving everyone the right to safe, environmentally friendly mobility.

If the World Road Congresses were part of the origins of the Association, today they point to four years of remarkable work done by several hundreds of people designated by government members and National Committees worldwide.

They also allow us time to pause and reflect, engage in discussions, and start a dialogue among experts in various specialties.

In closing, I remind you that it is with this desire to decompartmentalize specialties and to deal with strategic issues that concern the international road community that the Association reasserts its role as a privileged forum for discussion, especially on road safety.

In this respect, the Association Council has confirmed its commitment to road safety by drawing up a declaration that fully supports the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety.

This is a concrete example of everyone's collaboration and initiative in the direction of safer mobility.

I encourage you to take full advantage of the coming days to further this emergence of new ideas. I hope you all have a most rewarding Congress.

Thank you and Buen Congreso a todos.