

**2nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN ROAD SAFETY
OBSERVATORY**

OPENING ADRESS FOR CHAIR OF THE STC-TTIE

HON MINISTER

Hon Lebohang Monaheng

Minister of Transport

Kingdom of Lesotho

22 March 2022

- H.E Dr Amani Abou-Zeid, AU Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy
- Mr. Jean Todt, UN Special Envoy for Road Safety & FIA president
- The Representative of the UNECA
- Distinguish friends of Road Safety:

1. Allow me first to convey the gratitude of the African Union Commission, the UNECA, the WB and partners for organizing this important 2nd general Assembly of the African Road Safety Observatory.

2. As you may recall, the new decade for road safety proclaimed by the United Nation's General Assembly in August 2020, oblige all stakeholders for action. For Africa, it is time to save almost 300,000 lives annually. The importance of accurate and timely road safety data cannot be over emphasized.

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- Distinguish participants,

3. Although it is runing on a transitional institutional basis, the African Road Safety Observatory is already achieving prominent results after only three years of work. Let me highlight some of these achievements. First, the ARSO is connecting. In fact, at least 44 of the 55 African countries have participated in one or more of ARSO-related meetings. Also 6 African countries are actively participating in the Transitional Steering Committee that oversees progress of the 2018-2021 ARSO Working Plan. 25 African countries have already formally designated a National Data Coordinator which is to be the link between the regional observatory and national data systems, the first ever report of the ARSO has been issued.

4. Secondly, *the African Road Safety Observatory has fostered:*

- An agreement between countries on minimum crash-related variables to be shared between countries,
- Workshops with WHO and National Data Coordinators to address the most limiting data element for Africa,
- Participation with WHO in Global data collection on non-crash related efforts,
- Gathering of the first African road safety report over the past months.
- Piloting data collection platform tool that WHO intends to use for Global Status reports
- Initial talks with EU to set up communication links between vehicle registration databases to allow better identification of vehicles imported into Africa

5. I would like to thank all the partners that are working actively to ensure the the African Road Safety Observatory is up and running. Allow me to thank our key partners namely: the World Bank, the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa, the "Federation Internationale de l'Automobile", the European Union, the African Transport Policy Programme, the World Health Organisation, and all the others.

The African Union Commission recognised the urgency of establishing a permanent institutional status and sustainable financing of the ARSO. For this reason, during its recent ordinary ministerial meeting of the STC-TTIIIE, the Ministers responsible for road safety urged the AUC to produce the institutional, legal and financial implications of the ARSO.

I m glad to note that this 2nd General Assembly will consider the report of the consultancy commissioned by AUC to implement the recommendation of the Member States. I therefore urge other Member States to support the ongoing process to establish a sustainable continental road safety observatory.

6. With these few remarks I also invite AU Member States, all friends of Africa, whether you are Public Institution, civil society or Private Sector, to join AU Ambitions to continue supporting the ARSO and make it a full, well settled and fully operational as a specialized Agency of the AU dedicated to Road Safety.

I thank you and wish you fruitful deliberations