

## Foreword

To mark the First UN Global Road Safety Week, RoadPeace, the UK's national charity for road traffic victims, has reprinted '*Murder Most Foul; a study of the road death problem*'.

Representing the interests of those who suffer bereavement and injury resulting from road crashes, RoadPeace works at ensuring that these crashes are not dismissed as 'accidents' but are thoroughly investigated, followed by measures to stop their recurrence and a legal response appropriate to the loss of life and quality of life.

RoadPeace also acts at international level as a member of the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR, which has UN consultative status), contributing to debates and projects of UN and WHO Road Safety Working and Stakeholder Groups, set up following UN resolution 58/289 of April 2004. Other international work includes working directly with Road Safety organisations in developing countries who want to help their victims, assisting them with information from the perspective of road crash victims based on years of experience.

Sixty years from the publication of *Murder Most Foul* and the deaths of over 300,000 people on UK's roads, the situation for cyclists, pedestrians and road crash victims remains largely unchanged, so that the pamphlet and its messages are still highly relevant today – both in terms of the burden of road traffic injury, disproportionately borne by vulnerable road users, and the opposition of the motoring lobby to more effective life saving measures, such as nowadays safety cameras, speed limiters and black boxes, to name but some.

Road crashes have become a global disaster, with over 1.3 million lives claimed in 2005, the vast majority in low and middle income countries where motorisation is low. By 2030, road deaths are predicted to increase to over 2.1 million and more than double in low income countries. Most of those killed will be pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and passengers. The most common victims will be young adult males, whose loss will cause not just emotional trauma to their families, but financial devastation as well.

The true impact on health of all motor vehicle transport is far greater than the huge death and injury toll alone, and ought to be considered in the same way as all tobacco related disease is currently considered by WHO. This would therefore include premature deaths from vehicle emissions, diabetes and coronary heart disease from obesity, associated with car dependent lifestyles, and depression and pain brought on by sudden bereavement and serious injury.

The first UN Global Road Safety Week focuses on young road users (under 25s), who are over-represented in road crashes. This theme should not be seen as an opportunity to focus on the education and behaviour of the young—the *do as I say, not as I do approach* that remains popular with so many road safety advocates, but as a demand to governments to provide safer road systems for users of all ages and especially the vulnerable.

We would like to thank all those campaigning to reduce road danger, notably the bereaved and injured who are working tirelessly to prevent further needless tragedies to others. Special thanks are owed to KeyMed, the company which has done so much to make roads safer in the UK and low income countries, and has funded this reprint.

Road crashes are not inevitable. We believe that much of the predicted global road death and disability toll, as well as environmental destruction associated with motor vehicle use, could be prevented if the road danger reduction approach, the main message of '*Murder Most Foul*', was better known and accepted.

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