



Shakespeare Business Centre
245a Coldharbour Lane
London SW9 8RR

info@roadpeace.org
www.roadpeace.org
Tel: 020 7733 1603

The Mandela's family tragedy, the tip of an African iceberg

Monday 14 June 2010

Nelson Mandela's great-granddaughter, Zenani Mandela, was killed in a car crash on Thursday night. The crash occurred on the motorway, when the car carrying her back from the World Cup concert in Soweto overturned. It is reported that the Johannesburg police believe the driver to have been drunk. This is not the first such tragedy for Nelson Mandela, who lost his first-born son, Madiba Thembekile, aged only 23, in a road crash in 1969. Our condolences go to this great man and his family.

While already far too common, a recent World Health Organisation projection suggests that death on the roads is set to increase globally, and particularly in Africa. WHO projections indicate between 2008 and 2030 annual deaths road deaths could decline by 36% in Europe and increase by 20% to 71% in other regions; meanwhile in Africa they are set to soar from 247,000 to 562,000 (128%), as the continent "catches-up" with motorisation.

To compound this tragedy, the losses that occur will take their greatest toll, namely current and future breadwinners - those on whom families and societies rely most heavily. Global WHO data suggest that in 2004 road traffic injuries were the leading cause of death among those aged 15-29 years old and the second ranked cause among 5-14 years olds. Madiba Thembekile would have fallen into the first of these groups, while Zenani, who had celebrated her 13th birthday earlier this week, will be counted in the second. We will remember them because of the heart-break they have brought to a man so universally admired; we should also remember them as symbols of the slow-motion catastrophe that is the accelerating death rate on our global roads.

References

RoadPeace *Information sheet "Global road deaths (2008)"*

http://www.roadpeace.org/why/global_road_deaths/

World Health Organisation, *Health statistics and health information systems*

http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/projections/en/index.html

Contacts: RoadPeace office **020 7733 1603** during office hours

Outside office hours:

Amy Aeron-Thomas: **07905 847917**

Brigitte Chaudhry: **020 8964 1800**

Notes to Editors: Founded on the road danger reduction principle which seeks to achieve a more sustainable, civilised and healthy environment, RoadPeace believes the duty of care lies with motor vehicle owners and drivers and more needs to be done to reduce the danger they pose, especially to children, older people, pedestrians and cyclists.