

SECURITY ADVISORY

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Road Travel Safety

1. Introduction:

Nearly 3,400 people die on the world's roads every day. About 1.25 million people die from road traffic crashes annually, amongst which around 186 300 children, and up to 50 million people sustain non-fatal injuries. Road traffic accidents are the 8th leading cause of death globally and the 1st leading cause of death for young people aged 15 – 29. Children, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and the elderly are among the most vulnerable of road users. For every traffic accident fatality, there are an estimated 20 non-fatal injuries.

The African region has the highest road traffic fatality rate. According to WHO statistics, Kenya ranks as the third country with the highest road fatalities in Africa, behind Tanzania and Rwanda. The Kenyan National Transport Safety Authority (NTSA) recorded 2,896 road fatalities from 1 January to 16 December 2015 –a 4.5% increase compared to the 2,771 people killed on the roads in 2014.

From 1 January to 24 December 2015, UNDSS recorded a total of 160 Road Traffic Accidents (RTAs) involving UN staff members and dependents –a modest 2.5% increase compared to 2014. However, the number of **RTAs resulting in injuries and fatalities** to UN staff members and dependents as well as third parties **increased by over 4% in 2015**. So far in 2015, 03 UN staff members and dependents died on the road, and 03 non-UN staff / third parties lost their lives.

Most accidents, whether involving the UN or countrywide, can be attributed to speeding, reckless and dangerous driving and overtaking, drink-driving, the non-use of safety belts, driver fatigue, the use of undesignated areas by pedestrians and non-compliance with traffic rules and regulations.

Don't become part of these statistics!!!!!!!

You can find below a number of tips and facts to mitigate the main risk factors inherent in road travel. Please keep them in mind when on road. Share this advisory with your dependants and/or driver and sensitize them to Road Safety.

You can also find additional information on Road Safety on the website of the World Health Organisation (WHO) website for the UN Road Safety Collaboration:

<http://www.who.int/roadsafety/en/>

Driving

Cautious and sensible driving can drastically reduce the likelihood of being involved in a serious traffic accident. Defects in road design, layout and maintenance must be taken into consideration when driving in Kenya. Understand that some drivers in Kenya, as elsewhere, can be erratic and dangerous: always try to anticipate their actions, especially with regard to **overtaking**. Always leave more than enough time to complete your journey during **daylight** hours in order to avoid rushing (and remember traffic congestion during the holiday periods, especially along the Mombasa road). **Drive defensively**, avoid overtaking unless you are absolutely sure the road ahead of you is clear, and **strictly observe traffic regulations**. Do not drive at night outside town/city limits. All official travel **MUST** be completed within daylight hours. Ensure that you stop and take a **break every two hours** when traveling long distances or switch drivers. Keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front, depending on your speed and the road conditions.

Speed

Faster driving speeds increase the likelihood of a crash occurring as well as the severity of the crash consequences. The probability of serious injury for belted front-seat occupants is three times as great at 48 km/h and four times as great at 64 km/h, compared with the risk at 32 km/h. For car occupants in a crash with an impact speed of 80 km/h, the likelihood of death is 20 times what it would have been at an impact speed of 32 km/h. Pedestrians have a 90% chance of surviving car crashes at 30 km/h or below, but less than a 50% chance of surviving impacts at 45 km/h or above. **Speed Kills**. Always ensure that you drive slowly and cautiously and remain within legal speed limits.

Seat Belts

Failure to use a seat-belt is a major risk factor for road traffic injuries and deaths among vehicle occupants. When a motor vehicle crash occurs, a car occupant without a seat-belt will continue to move forward at the same speed at which the vehicle was travelling before the collision and will be catapulted forward into the structure of the vehicle – most likely into the steering wheel column if driving, the dashboard if a front seat passenger, or the back of the front seats if a rear seat passenger. Alternatively, failure to use a seat-belt can cause drivers or passengers to be completely ejected from the vehicle, greatly increasing the risk of serious injury or death.

Wearing a seat-belt reduces the risk of a fatal injury by 40–50% for drivers and front seat occupants, and between 25–75% for rear seat occupants. Always wear a seat-belt, whether you are in the front or back seats.

Child Restraints

Child restraint systems protect infants and young children from injury during a crash. Infants and children need child restraint systems that can accommodate their size and weight, and that can adapt to different stages of their development. **Child restraints reduce the likelihood of a fatal crash by approximately 70% among infants and between 54% and 80% among young children.** Conventional wisdom suggests that, all other things being equal, the safest back seat

for a child is behind the driver's seat. This is because, instinctively, drivers try to protect themselves during an accident. If a child is immediately behind the driver, those instincts could also benefit the child. Always use additional child restraint systems for babies and young children.

Vehicles

Although driver error accounts for the vast majority of road traffic accidents, the roadworthiness of vehicles can be a contributory factor, especially in terms of the severity of a crash. Pay particular attention to the proper functioning of vehicle safety features such as **brakes, steering, airbags and seatbelts**. Always ensure that your vehicle is roadworthy, particularly its safety features.

Driving Whilst Intoxicated

Drinking and driving increases the risk of being involved in a crash, as well as the severity of resulting injuries. Driving starts to be impaired at very low levels of alcohol consumption. The effects of alcohol induced impairment are magnified when combined with fatigue. **Never drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any prohibited substances.**

Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is a growing threat to road safety. Mobile phone use is the primary concern. Drivers using a mobile phone are approximately four times more likely to be involved in a crash than those not using a phone. This risk is similar for both hand-held and hands-free devices. Text messaging appears to have an even more severe impact on the risk of a crash. **Never use a mobile phone whilst driving** (it is also an offence under Kenyan law!!!). If you must take an urgent call, pull onto the side of the road first.

Responsibilities of the passengers

The UN Road Safety Guidelines also sets our responsibilities of the passengers. These include requirements to wear seat belts at all times while in the vehicle and not occupy a seat that is not fitted with a properly functioning seat belt. It further lays out requirement to wear helmets while driving as well as being a passenger on motorbikes. There is also important requirement as passengers not to request, order or otherwise pressure the driver of the vehicle to violate his responsibilities as a driver. Passengers are also not allowed to smoke or consume alcohol beverages inside the vehicle.

Passengers must report any observed dangerous or unsafe driving by United Nations drivers to the appropriate United Nations official in charge of managing the vehicle fleet and the applicable United Nations security official (passengers have the right to refuse transportation in United Nations vehicles if they have a reasonable belief that the vehicle is not roadworthy or that the driver is not in a condition to operate the vehicle safely).

Cyclists/Motorcyclists

Cyclists and motorcyclists are amongst the most **vulnerable** road users. Most of the above advice applies equally to them. For obvious reasons, brain related injuries can be much more acute in cycle and motorcycle related crashes. Always wear helmets which are certified to international standards.

Driving in extreme weather conditions:

Allow additional time for vehicular travels during and in the immediate aftermath of heavy rains. Ensure your vehicle is in adequate working order –in particular tyres and brakes. Rains are likely to render roads slippery and create additional potholes –drive cautiously at all times and avoid long trips. Avoid crossing bridges if the water is high and flowing quickly. **NEVER cross flooded areas (including roadways):** turn around if possible when approaching a flooded portion of the road. The water may be deeper than it looks and the road may have collapsed underneath. Remember: 15cm of water can cause loss of control and possible stalling of cars; 30cm of water will cause most vehicles to float; 60cms of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including 4X4.

General

Always ensure that you use the **TRIP system** at <https://dss.un.org/dssweb/> to record travel and plan your travel well in advance. Always ensure that you have emergency contact numbers available when traveling. Inform a friend/colleague of your travel plans, and keep them updated of your travel progress and arrival.

Insurance

Particularly when travelling away from your duty station on non-duty travel, make sure that you have adequate insurance cover, for instance to cover **emergency transportation** back to your duty station or to a third country in the event of an accident.

Driving on the UNON Compound

The maximum speed at UNON is **35kms/hour**. Pedestrians have right of access across pedestrian crossings: vehicles **MUST** stop for them. Traffic rules are to be strictly observed. Always obey the instructions of uniformed SSS officers on traffic duty.

UNDSS wishes you a safe travel