
The Honorable Minister of Works and Transport, Eng. John Byabagambi
The Honourable Minister of State for Transport;
The Honourable Minister of State for Works;
The UN Resident Coordinator Acting in the Interim & your team;
The Executive Director, UNRA
Executive Director, URF
The Executive Director, KCCA
The Director of Transport, MoWT
The Engineer in Chief, MoWT
Members of the Transport Licensing Board & National Road Safety Council
All key stakeholders in Road Safety
Members of the Press
Ladies and Gentlemen

Honorable Minister, I pray we dedicate a moment of silence in honor of the Late Hon. Susan Namaganda who perished in a Road Traffic Accident on Friday, and many others that have likewise met a similar fate on our roads. May their souls RIP!

Before I proceed Honourable Minister, allow me to introduce the rest of the members of the National Road Safety Council:

1. Ms. Barbra Mwanje  Vice Chairperson
2. Mr. Patrick Sanya  Member
3. Ms. Sarah Kibwika  Member
Honorable Minister, this year’s Road Safety Week is the first of its kind in the last three years, having been unable to hold such of this magnitude, due to logistical problems. I wish to indulge your acceptance Honorable Minister to thank your ministry, UN Country Office, VIVO Energy, Uganda Road Fund, Safeway, Right Way, Ciscot, City Tyres, SGS and many others, herein not mentioned here, for their contributions both in kind and otherwise towards this activity and others that will follow in the cause of the week.

The global road safety crisis is becoming an increasingly worrying phenomenon. In 2004, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that “road traffic injuries are a growing public health issue” and that, there is also a trend for lower income countries to carry a disproportionate burden of suffering. Previously in 1999, WHO publication had reported that the leading injury-related cause of death among people aged 15-44 years, is traffic injuries. Uganda falls in this bracket. Worldwide annually, there are 1.2 million people passing on in the road carnage. Today, 50 million people are disabled, 96 of every 100 child road deaths are in low income countries. At the World Bank’s meeting in Burkina Faso in 2007, it was also stated that road crashes have claimed more lives of young-adult people aged between (15-44 years) in Sub Saharan Africa than “malaria”. This age group is what is mostly engaged in campaigns, confusion, chaos, car/crush injuries, and Christmas festivities in Uganda today and are therefore apt to get involved in road crashes.

Analysis of accident statistics reports in Uganda, Hon. Minister, indicate that the major causes of road accidents are: human error which accounts for about 80% of the road traffic crashes (This includes reckless driving, over speeding, inconsiderate use of the road, careless or ignorant pedestrians, incompetent drivers
and driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, talking on phone), **defective vehicle condition which accounts for about 10%**, (include defective brakes, steering, suspension, worn out tyres, defective lights, indicators and engine among others.), **environment factors which account for about 5%** (include weather conditions and activities along the road such as road repairs, grazing of cattle alongside the road and road side markets like the one at Kasubi.) and, **road condition which also accounts for about 5%**, (include bad road surface, pot holes and poor road designs and inadequate road furniture. Road geometrical characteristics also influence accident occurrence at points like sharp corners, steep hills and intersections also called Black spots in traffic lingua). Lack of road furniture on some of our roads can be death trap for new comers on some roads hitherto unknown to the user.

According to the recently published WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety, 2015 Uganda has the 20\(^{th}\) Highest road fatality rates per 100,000 population at 27.4. This is reflected in the recent 2014 Annual Crime and Traffic Report which indicates that accident deaths have reduced from 3,343 in 2011 to 2,845 in 2014. Although this is a great improvement compared to a few years when we were ranked second in African, there is still a lot of work to be done to lower fatalities on our roads. Forty (40) percent of these deaths are pedestrians, 30\% **boda boda** riders and their passengers, 8\% cyclists, 8\% motorists while the rest contribute 14\% to this sad but preventable situation. In urban places like Kampala City, both huge human traffic and vehicles make an intersection that results into a pandemonium on our roads. This is because of the inadequate Public Transport in these areas. I pray, Honorable Minister, that efforts to support KCCA on the project it has embarked on recently of the railway transport from Namanve to Kampala which has the capacity to get 1000 people or the equivalent of 71 **kamunyes** off the road thus reducing on both human and other traffic jams among others; a recipe for traffic accidents, be enhanced.

Over UGX 2.2 Trillion is estimated to have been lost due to road crashes in Uganda during the year 2014 alone and this includes the cost of vehicles, medical bills and loss of income and property. This phenomenon poses a significant strain on the already stretched health facilities and poor families who may experience the loss of income from a breadwinner in addition to the burden of caring for those
injured. Forecasts predict that in the coming decade, road crashes will become the third highest cause of premature deaths.

As we as a country commemorate the Road Safety week, from 14-20 December, 2015, the MoWT, National Road Safety Council and other key stakeholders chose the theme: “Share the Road, Save lives” for this year. Very few Ugandans, especially motorists, boda boda riders will share the road even at points of Pedestrian (zebra) Crossing. Very few Ugandans endeavor to ensure safety for themselves while on the road let alone safety for other road users.

Remember, road safety begins at home before exit and ends at entry at home after one’s errand whether for the pedestrian, boda boda rider or motorist. For that matter, therefore, Hon. Minister, I wish to implore all Ugandans to:

- Ensure that they put on helmets if they have to ride or travel on a boda boda, including cycling if they have too.
- Ensure that the head lamp on their motor bike of bicycle is always on all the time while on the road whether day or night time for quick visibility by other road users.
- Make sure that their vehicle is in good mechanical condition (check tyres, lights, indicators, adjust driving mirrors, try brakes, etc) before setting off, put on your safety belt,
- Plan time for their journeys especially during this Christmas and campaign festive season; don’t rush just because you set off late; remember, the day is 24 hours for everybody so plan your journey within that time.
- Not overload beyond the stipulated capacity of your vehicle
- If you have to walk, walk on sideways on the right hand side of the road. Look left; look right before crossing the road and where available, use the Pedestrian Crossing commonly known as Zebra Crossing. Don’t cross while talking on phone or while listening to music as is commonly the practice in Uganda especially with the youths.
• Do not drink and drive or drive and drink. You need to be as sober as a judge as the old English adage goes.

• Report any reckless and inconsiderate use of the road to Police.

As Christmas draws nigh and campaigns commence and are expected to go on till the d-day in February, 2016, confusion, chaos, car accidents, causalities are apt to dominate this period. And since nobody uses the bush when going for campaigns, Christmas or malwa spree, the National Road Safety Council is appealing to you to Share the Road and Save Lives. Wishing you a successful Road Safety Week, campaign period and Christmas devoid of confusion, chaos, crush injuries on our roads. Arrive alive.

Finally, Honorable, we as Members of the National Road Safety Council pledge to perform our duties as prescribed by law to the best of our abilities.

For God and My Country