

20mph and 30km/h limits mandated by Global Ministers

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http://www.20splenty.org/global_ministers_mandate_20mph

Global Road Safety Experts and Ministers from 130 countries adopted the “Stockholm Declaration” at a road safety conference¹ on 20th February. It requires 30km/h (20mph) limits where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix - for safety, air quality and climate action.

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For the week leading up to 20th February Road Safety Experts, NGOs and Ministers gathered for the 3rd Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Stockholm hosted by the Swedish Government in collaboration with the World Health Organization. Its outcome links worldwide road safety collaboration to sustainability challenges in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Throughout the conference reducing the speed of vehicles in the presence of people walking and cycling was referenced as a key intervention for reducing crashes. In particular, speed in urban and village areas was recognised as a key factor in collisions not being avoided, and casualty severity not being mitigated.

The conference outcome was the “**Stockholm Declaration**” – a list of promised action steps – which had been through extensive consultation with WHO Member States via permanent representatives in Geneva and a transparent and inclusive public consultation open globally. The action is ambitious in linking road safety to Sustainable Development. The text follows recommendations of the Academic Expert Group with independent and scientific assessments of progress made during the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 and directions for the future. Of the 18 resolutions which were “declared”, resolution 11 was on Speed Management and specifically mandated the global and universal use of 30km/h or 20mph limits.

The declaration mandates 20mph and 30km/h as a key action for global best practice:

“We, Ministers and Heads of Delegations as well as representatives of international, regional and sub-regional governmental and nongovernmental organizations and the private sector gathered in Stockholm, Sweden, on 19 and 20 February 2020 for the Third Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety;..... we hereby resolve to;.....

*11. Focus on speed management, including the strengthening of law enforcement to prevent speeding and **mandate a maximum road travel speed of 30 km/h in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix** in a frequent and planned manner, except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe, noting that efforts to reduce speed in general will have a beneficial impact on air quality and climate change as well as being vital to reduce road traffic deaths and injuries;”*

Rod King MBE, Founder and Director of 20's Plenty for Us who was in Stockholm speaking at a WHO event said:

“This really gives the lie to the idea that the UK's 30mph (or 50km/h in other countries) default speed limit in towns or villages is either safe or sustainable. Our current 30mph limits are killing and maiming people and fail to meet our 21st century mobility needs.

The declaration sets a clear and unambiguous message that adoption of 20mph or 30km/h limits as a default is necessary on urban and village streets where people live, work, play and shop. Local and national governments must now expedite the setting of urban and village speed limits to 20mph or 30km/h wherever motorised vehicles mix with cyclists and pedestrians with exceptions only where it can be proven that higher speeds are safe. Wales is already doing this. We expect Under-Secretary of State for Transport Baroness Vere of Norbiton who represented the UK, to quickly adopt this recommendation so that the UK is in the forefront of such proven global best practice.”

¹ <https://www.roadsafetysweden.com/about-the-conference/stockholm-declaration/>

20's Plenty for Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in built up areas without physical calming.

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