



**INTERNATIONAL  
FEDERATION OF  
PEDESTRIANS**

United Nations Commission on Social Development  
44<sup>th</sup> Session

Statement by  
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Board Member  
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February 2006  
UN Headquarters, New York

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to deliver a statement on behalf of the International Federation of Pedestrians. IFP represents the interests of the pedestrian at the international level. Since 1987 IFP has moved increasingly to a concern with pedestrians in developing countries, where the levels of motorization have been rising sharply, accompanied by an alarming increase in the number of pedestrian deaths and injuries.

Mobility is freedom. If your mobility is impaired—for instance, by lack of a safe sidewalk—you lack the full freedom to get where you need to go, to work, to play, to better yourself, to pursue your dreams. Mobility is a central, vital ingredient of economic and social advancement. Individuals at all levels of society who possess safe mobility are able to pursue their own best interests. Their activities create micro-economies which interweave across the community to build the gnarly mass which constitutes the macro-economy.

Safe and efficient transportation in all its forms is a vital, central ingredient of a society which can prosper, enjoy prestige, and attract outsiders.

Of all the modes of transportation, of all the vehicles we use for personal mobility, walking—using the human body to move—is the most basic. If we don't have anything else, most of us at least have our legs. We walk to and between other modes: the car, the bicycle, the bus, the horse, the train, the plane. Each of these modes occupies a specialty niche in the transportation spectrum, but walking is the default mode. Walking is the essential base form. Special licenses are required for higher-tech modes of transport because they are more invasive of the public street than mere walking is: they require more expensive infrastructure, they pollute the public air, and they can threaten other users of the public street. Driving, for example, is a licensed privilege, not a right. Machines cannot replace walking as the primary mode. When the car breaks down, you walk to the service station.

Walking is basic. Most of the world's people don't have a choice about it. Yet walking is very dangerous. Even before the automobile, pedestrians sometimes got run over by horse-drawn carriages. Vehicles which have more speed and mass than pedestrians threaten walkers. Yet, pedestrians are not trespassers on the public street. They are traffic which is not polluting the air or making thunderous noise; they are traffic which doesn't threaten other road-users; and they are traffic which doesn't require expensive roadways. They are traffic whose activities, if unimpaired by dangerous streets, supply the threads with which the gnarly mat of the economy is woven.

Designing safe pedestrian infrastructure into the public street is not an option. Freedom of movement is an essential right which cultivates both the individual and the larger society.

I thank you.