

## **Conference: Powered Two Wheeler Safety Conference**

February 18-19, 2016

The Institute of Road Traffic Education (IRTE) in India has brought together policymakers from 17 Asian countries to work to reduce motorcycle-related death and injury, at a conference co-funded by the Indian and US governments, and the FIA Foundation.

The first 'Conference on the Safety of Powered Two Wheelers with Special Focus on South East Asia' sought to address the critical problem of motorcycle safety affecting a population of 1.9 billion people living in South East Asian countries. Motorcycle-related crashes result in an estimated 160,000 deaths and an estimated 2.4 million serious injuries annually. A key outcome of the conference was the establishment of a network of universities to coordinate research and identify innovative actions.

The conference, held on 18 and 19 February 2016, was supported by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways Government of India; the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the FIA Foundation at IRTE. The event was inaugurated by Mr. Abhay Damle, IRS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India. The Conference was attended by representatives from both the public and private sector from 17 countries.

Interventions and strategies for implementing motorcycle safety were discussed, including a focus on improving road user behaviour, including through legislation, enforcement and awareness raising; encouraging adoption of helmet standards and tackling counterfeit products; and designing and managing infrastructure to accommodate the particular safety issues relating to powered two wheelers.

The conference provided an opportunity for case studies to be presented from South East Asian countries including Nepal, Bhutan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines. The conference enabled in-depth discussions on the particular issues faced by South East Asian countries and exposed the need to address these through formal actions. In addition, it facilitated the creation of a grouping of universities from South East Asian countries and the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom, with the objective of identifying innovative actions for capacity building in the area of road safety.

The conference heard a welcome message from the UN Special Envoy Mr. Jean Todt. Special addresses at the Conference included those from Mr. G.K. Pillai, Former Union Home Secretary; Dr. Jeffrey Michael, Associate Administrator, NHTSA; Ms. Luciana Iorio, Chairperson, WP1, UNECE; Mr. Madam Bandhu Regmi and Ms. Thanattaporn Rasamit from UNESCAP; Mr. Fikru Tesfaye Tullu, Team Leader, Non-Communicable Diseases, World Health Organization; Mr. Rajeev Lochan, Director, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways; Mr. Edwin Bastiaensen, International Motorcycle Manufacturers Association (IMMA), Geneva; Greig Craft, President of AIP Foundation; and Dr. Rohit Baluja, President, Institute of Road Traffic Education amongst others.