



## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **Traffic Accidents in Timor-Leste – An Urgent Need for a National and Multisectoral Response**

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HABADA, as a Non-Governmental Organization working on human security issues in Timor-Leste, expresses our deep concern over the increasing number of road traffic accidents in the country, which continue to result in loss of life, serious injuries, and substantial material damage. According to the latest data released by the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL), 90% of road traffic accidents are caused by human factors, 5% by vehicle-related issues, and 5% by poor road conditions.

### **Human Factors: The Main Cause and an Urgent Priority**

Human factors account for the majority of road accidents, stemming from risky behaviors such as driving under the influence of alcohol, speeding, using mobile phones while driving, reckless overtaking, failure to follow traffic regulations, and neglecting to wear helmets or seat belts. HABADA believes that these causes are preventable and calls on the relevant state authorities to take immediate and coordinated action to enforce and strengthen existing traffic laws.

### **Vehicle and Infrastructure Issues: Structural Factors with Direct Impact**

The condition of vehicles and road infrastructure also plays a significant role in road safety risks. The absence of regular technical inspections, the circulation of vehicles in poor mechanical condition, and deteriorating road infrastructure—including potholes, lack of proper signage, and insufficient lighting—greatly increase dangers for both drivers and pedestrians. There is an urgent need for substantial public investment in the rehabilitation and maintenance of roads.

### **HABADA's Strategic Recommendations**

Based on field monitoring and analysis of official data, HABADA puts forward the following key recommendations:

- Strengthen civic education and road safety campaigns, particularly targeting young people, schools, universities, and professional drivers;
- Review and effectively enforce national traffic laws and regulations to ensure that repeat offenders are held accountable;
- Implement mandatory technical inspections for all vehicles, with special attention to public transport and motorcycles;
- Prioritize investment in improving road infrastructure, particularly for key urban and national roads;
- Establish a national database on road traffic accidents to support evidence-based policymaking;
- Create support mechanisms for victims and families affected by traffic accidents, including psychological and social assistance.

### **Collective Responsibility to Save Lives**

HABADA emphasizes that the prevention of road traffic accidents must be treated as a national priority and a shared responsibility of all sectors of society—government institutions, citizens, the private sector, civil society organizations, and international partners. Road safety must become an urgent priority and a long-term commitment that involves education, law enforcement, and infrastructure development.

Finally, HABADA reaffirms its readiness to work collaboratively with all relevant stakeholders to reduce the number of road accident victims and ensure a safe environment for everyone in Timor-Leste.

For further information, please contact:

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