



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN ROAD SAFETY CHARTER

The six times Formula One World Champion Michael Schumacher is supporting the launch of Europe's Road Safety Charter today (April 6) on the eve of the first global day of action on road safety - World Health Day 2004.

Michael Schumacher is joining forces with the FIA Foundation and transport ministers from across the European Union at a signing ceremony in Dublin for the new European Road Safety Charter, organised as part of the Irish Presidency of the European Union.

FIA President Max Mosley and Michael Schumacher are key note speakers at the launch of the Charter, which calls on governments, companies and organisations across the European Union (EU) to make a firm and measurable commitment to improve road safety. The EU has a target of reducing road deaths by 50% by 2010.

Road traffic deaths and injuries have fallen in all EU member states over recent years, but the entry of 10 new countries threatens to halt the downward trend:

- In the EU 15 countries road fatalities have fallen by 50% over the past 30 years, from 80,000 in 1972 to 40,000 in 2002;
- France recorded a 20% reduction in road deaths in 2003, following a major political initiative by President Jacques Chirac and the French Government to improve road safety;
- After a steep increase in road deaths in Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990's, enlargement countries have also seen a steady decline in road fatalities. Last year, however, of the countries joining the EU this year, Hungary saw a 15% increase in road fatalities in 2002, with increases of 7% in the Czech Republic, 5% in Poland and 12% in Estonia (provisional figures).

FIA Foundation projects and activities are at the core of the European Union's road safety strategy. These include the car crash test programme Euro NCAP, credited by the European Commission with preventing thousands of deaths, and the European Road Assessment Programme which rates roads for their safety design. The FIA Foundation will also sign the European Road Safety Charter at the ceremony in Dublin Castle.

Max Mosley, President of the FIA, said:

"The European Road Safety Charter is a welcome initiative, but it takes more than signing a piece of paper to show that you are serious about road safety. Everyone, from the European Commission and national governments to individual drivers must prove with actions that they want to reduce the toll of deaths on our roads."

"At European level we do need more focus on road safety, with a dedicated road safety Commissioner concentrating on road safety every hour of every day. In France road deaths have fallen by 20% in one year because President Chirac decided to take road safety

seriously. Most road deaths are preventable. Thousands of people are being killed unnecessarily and we must have the political will to stop it.”

Michael Schumacher said:

“Road safety is a vital concern for everyone. As a professional racing driver I demand and expect the highest possible safety standards in my racing car and on the track. We should all expect the same attention to safety in our cars and on the roads. Initiatives like the European Road Safety Charter and World Health Day are important because they can raise the profile of road safety and help to improve safety standards.”

“As a racing driver I am extremely concerned about safety - not only on the race track, but also on the road. I would not dream of starting a race without my seat belt securely fastened, or of starting my car without checking first that everybody travelling with me was safe. It only takes a few conscious steps; a few seconds thought and action, to ensure the highest possible safety in a car.”

European Road Safety Charter Signing Ceremony
Tuesday 6th April 2004

- 11.00am Signing Ceremony for European Road Safety Charter with EU Transport ministers, Michael Schumacher and Max Mosley
- 12.15pm Photocall in Upper Courtyard, Dublin Castle
- 12.30pm Press Conference, St Georges Hall, Dublin Castle

For accreditation for the Charter event contact:

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