

News

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ers. But the study had limitations. The human figures were increased to include an estimate of minor crashes that weren't reported to police. All autonomous car crashes in California, however, must be reported. The study also didn't include potential crashes that were avoided when human backup drivers took control.

U.S. traffic deaths have declined steadily for most of the past decade, from 43,510 in 2005 to 32,675 in 2014. But estimates show they spiked 9 percent in the first nine months of last year due mainly to increased miles traveled, texting and other distractions.

If autonomous cars are the answer to sharply reducing those figures,

“Autonomous braking alone would prevent 700,000 rear crashes per year if installed on all cars

they'll first have to gain the public's trust. A January poll by AAA found that three-quarters of U.S. drivers are "afraid" to ride in an autonomous car. A University of Michigan poll found similar results in Japan, China, India and elsewhere.

Unlike Google, which wants to test cars without human drivers, automakers and parts companies are rolling out autonomous features as they are ready.

The AAA poll found that drivers are somewhat comfortable with the individual features of autonomous driving such as automatic emergency braking. Separate studies have shown those features can cut crashes. The

Insurance Institute for Highway Safety says autonomous braking alone would prevent 700,000 rear crashes per year if installed on all cars.

On Thursday, transportation officials and automakers said they agreed to make automatic braking standard in nearly all cars within the next six years.

General Motors has plans to soon test autonomous cars by carrying employees around a technical center near Detroit. Still, John Capp, director of global safety and vehicle programs, sees humans behind the wheel for the foreseeable future.

"We can't afford to tarnish safety by doing experimentation on the roads," he says.

The burden of proof will be on companies to show that the technology is safe, Adam Jonas, a Morgan Stanley auto analyst, told investors recently.

But even with that evidence, some governments may still be reluctant. "No mayor wants to be the first elected official blamed for the death of a citizen by a robot," Jonas wrote.

Yet cities, seeing potential job growth and safety benefits, already are competing for wider use of the cars, he wrote.

In Austin, Mayor Steve Adler says Google cars in his city haven't caused any crashes, and he believes they bring safety benefits. "We don't get perfection with regular drivers either," he says.

Adler sees allowing the cars in small, controlled areas that expand as the cars prove themselves safe.

Colby Huff, a radio host from Springfield, Illinois, wouldn't ride in one. While others would welcome the car handling a daily commute, Huff doesn't think programmers are infallible.

"There's just too much that can go wrong in something that weighs a ton or so," he says.

"It's not worth my family's safety to trust a machine."

From Syria to Sudan: Refugee Athletes Train for Olympic Team

A group of 43 displaced men and women are being considered for "Refugee Olympic Athletes" team

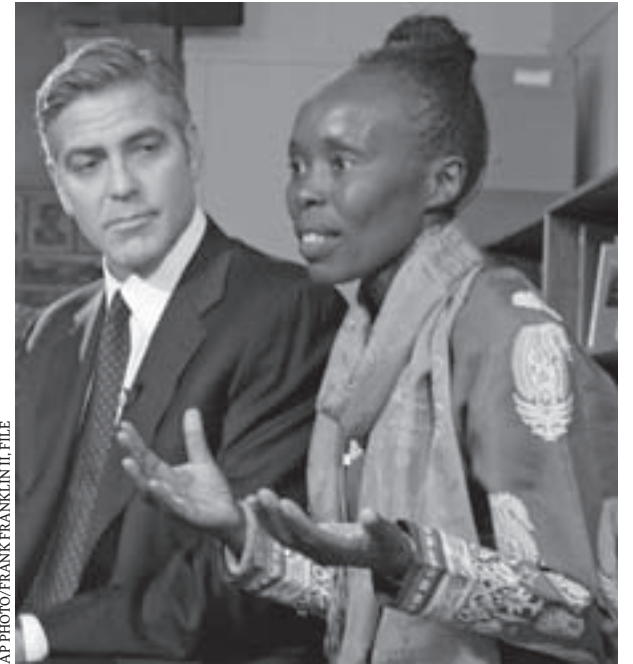
Stephen Wilson
AP Sports Writer

LONDON (AP) — They've fled war and violence in the Middle East and Africa. They've crossed treacherous seas in small dinghies and lived in dusty refugee camps.

They include a teenage swimmer from Syria, long-distance runners from South Sudan and judo and taekwondo competitors from Congo, Iran and Iraq.

They are striving to achieve a common goal: To compete in the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. Not for their home countries, but as part of the first ever team of refugee athletes.

A group of 43 displaced men and women, who range in age from 17 to 30 and have escaped conflicts in their homelands, are being considered for selection



AP PHOTO/FRANK FRANKLIN III FILE

This is a Friday, Dec. 15, 2006 file photo of Actor George Clooney as he listens to Kenyan runner Tegla Loroupe, right, of Kenya as she respond to questions on Darfur during a news interview at the United Nations headquarters. Loroupe, the former Kenyan world record-holder in the women's marathon, is training 23 runners at her camp near Nairobi who are candidates for a team of refugee athletes to compete at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

the Maracana Stadium on Aug. 5 behind the white flag with the five

played if any of the athletes wins a gold medal.

The plan was first announced by the IOC at the United Nations last October amid the still-continuing influx of migrants and refugees, many from Syria, into Europe. The IOC set up a \$2 million fund for refugees and asked national Olympic committees to identify any displaced athletes in their countries who might be able to reach Olympic standard.

Pere Miro, the IOC's deputy director general for relations with the Olympic movement, has been the point man in creating the team. Of the

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“We want to send a message of hope to all the refugees of the world

to the team called "Refugee Olympic Athletes."

Prompted by the plight of millions of migrants and refugees across the world, the International Olympic Committee is creating a small team of refugees who will compete in Rio under the Olympic flag.

In what will surely be one of the emotional highlights of the opening ceremony, the team will march together into

Olympic rings. They will walk in just ahead of the team from Brazil, the host nation that marches last among the 206 national Olympic committees in the athletes' parade.

The refugee athletes will live in the Olympic Village with the other teams. The IOC will supply them with team uniforms, coaches and technical officials. The Olympic anthem will be

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