

PERMANENT MISSION OF



PARAGUAY

TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Check against delivery

*Statement of
Ambassador José Antonio Dos Santos
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Paraguay*

*on behalf of the
Group of Landlocked Developing Countries*

18th Sesion Commision Of Sustainable Development

New York, 3 May 2010

Mr. President

I have the honor to take the floor on behalf of the Landlocked Developing Countries. We congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election. We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by Yemen on behalf of the G 77.

This Commission session is being held at a very important moment when preparations for the September Summit on the review of the progress of the Millennium Development Goals are fully underway. This session thus provides us with a unique opportunity to give further political impetus to the imperative to achieve all of the commitments made at the World Summit by year 2015.

Among the very important issues under review this year by the Commission, allow me to focus on transport as this is a vital issue for landlocked developing countries. The role of efficient and effective transportation as a major driving force behind international trade, regional integration and a balanced and inclusive national economic and social development is well recognized. Transport is indeed a key sector providing physical access to markets, employment, education and basic services that are critical to poverty alleviation.

For landlocked developing countries, geographical difficulties, lacks of direct access to the sea and remoteness from major international markets are compounded by inadequate transport infrastructure, inefficient logistics systems and cumbersome transit procedures which raise the cost of trade

transactions thus critically reducing the competitiveness of our exports. This has direct negative impacts on the economic performance of landlocked developing countries and their ability to meet the internationally agreed goals.

The costs of transport in landlocked developing countries are among the highest of the planet, with roads remaining the most dominant mode of transportation, against barely exploited inland navigation routes and poor rail connections.

Without a doubt, the main disadvantage faced by our countries is inadequate infrastructure development and lack of investment to improve transit routes in order to facilitate access to major seaports, and therefore to the international trade circuit.

Precisely keeping in mind such challenges, the Almaty Programme of Action, adopted by the General Assembly in 2003, represents a unique, solid global framework to encourage the establishment of efficient transit transport systems in all regions, on the basis of mutually beneficial cooperation with transit developing countries and with the support of our development partners. Since its adoption, the Program has laid the ground for genuine bilateral, regional and international partnerships to meet the special needs of landlocked developing countries and ensure their fuller integration in the world economy.

As a result of the recent global financial and economic crisis, investment flows to infrastructure development have declined. There is therefore an

urgent need for increased, long-term predictable financial resources dedicated to the development and improvement of transport infrastructure in landlocked regions.

Mr. President,

At the same time, continued attention must be focused on the need to ensure the sustainability of patterns of transportation development by promoting integrated transport policies and plans that mitigate any adverse externalities to health and the environment. Public-private partnerships must be developed and strengthened at the national and sub-regional level towards the goal of safe, affordable and efficient transport systems that are supportive of sustainable development.

Mr. President

The main challenge of the developing countries and specifically the landlocked developing countries is to reach a balance between development and good governance of economic and environmental resources to achieve sustainable growth with long-term projection.

For the most vulnerable countries, transfer of technology and the creation of financing mechanisms to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are a necessity. Climate change may affect transport systems and this would cause many disadvantages for our countries, mainly the further increase of the costs of transport.

Mr. President

The multiple crises have exacerbated the vulnerability of our countries. More than ever we need a firm and resolute commitment by our partners to support us on the path towards sustained and sustainable economic growth, toward the fulfillment of the MDGs, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.

Thank you