



## **Concept Note**

for the Side Event under the theme  
“Strengthening the links between all modes of transport for sustainable  
development during and after the COVID-19 pandemic”

Friday 15 October 2021, 08:00-09:30

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many Governments around the world had to close their borders to non-citizens and non-residents in order to limit the spread of the virus while implementing lockdowns, strict social distancing and contact tracing measures.

The lessons learned from the immediate and short-term measures taken by Governments show that the transport sector was not prepared to operate in the conditions resulting from the pandemic. These measures had as a result that logistical chains got disrupted across the entire globe which had a significant impact on the delivery of essential goods, such as foods, pharmaceuticals, medical supplies and fuels, especially for LLDCs and other economically vulnerable countries which often rely heavily on imports to cover their basic needs.

In this regard, there is an objective need to coordinate joint efforts aimed at ensuring the sustainable and efficient functioning of transport, international transit corridors in unforeseen circumstances or emergencies of a regional, continental or global nature.

The 75<sup>th</sup> session of UN General Assembly adopted the resolution 75/313 “Strengthening the links between all modes of transport to ensure stable and reliable international transport for sustainable development during and after the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”. Through that document, it underlines the importance of international cooperation between relevant modes of transport and transport-related industries to mitigate the effects of the pandemic. It would emphasize the need to promote the development of a sustainable transport sector; emphasize the importance of reliable and sustainable channels for mutual exchange of information about the impact on transport operations and the movement of people in situations such as the pandemic; and call for the promotion of the resilience of passenger transport to any outbreaks and other public health threats to contain the spread of infectious diseases in all modes of transport and in transport infrastructure facilities.

Efficient transport infrastructure and initiatives are increasingly important for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Transport plays a key role in the delivery of medical supplies, food and other essentials to countries and regions affected by

COVID-19. Moreover, the text of Resolution focuses on the need to promote digitalization of global supply chains, including blockchain technology as the shortest and fastest path to simplification of border-crossing procedures, reducing corruption and long delays at borders. Creation of such multimodal digital corridors are especially important for landlocked developing countries and least developed countries.

The Side Event will be organized in the margins of Thematic Session 5 “Policies for sustainable transport”.

The specific objectives of the Side Event include to:

- Present new UN GA Resolution 75/313 “Strengthening the links between all modes of transport to ensure stable and reliable international transport for sustainable development during and after the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, its aims, purposes and implementation mechanisms,
- Highlight the necessity for close collaboration between governments, international organizations and businesses to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic,
- Share experience in the area of guidance and recommendations developed by international organizations (UN Regional commissions, UNCTAD, WCO, ICAO, IMO, IATA, OSJD, UIC, IRU, FIATA, etc.) in order to find ways to respond to this crisis that are adapted to the railway sector, as well as to provide them with concrete measures and guidelines.,
- Identify/Review areas where paperless technologies support the sustainable transport and logistics supply chains around the World;
- Provide platform to discuss the way forward for UN GA Resolution 75/313 effective implementation;
- Identify technical assistance and capacity building areas.

The Side Event will feature panel presentations by panelists representing different stakeholders including representatives from governments, UN DESA, UN regional commissions, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, private sector and civil society. The panel presentations will be followed by an interactive dialogue with members of the audience.