



## **Beijing Statement of the Second United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference**

1. Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives, met in person and virtually from 14 to 16 October 2021 at the Second United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference, which was held in Beijing, China, with participation of other relevant stakeholders. The United Nations Secretary-General convened the Conference in response to General Assembly resolution 72/212, and as a follow-up to the first Global Sustainable Transport Conference, held on 26 and 27 November 2016 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan.

### ***Importance of sustainable transport***

2. At the United Nations, the key role of transport in the context of sustainable development was recognized at the 1992 Earth Summit in its outcome document - Agenda 21 - and was once again emphasized at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in its outcome document - the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). Further, world leaders at the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development unanimously agreed that transport and mobility are central to sustainable development. This was also reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While there is no single SDG dedicated to transport (albeit with directly related targets 3.6, 9.1 and 11.2), it is recognized as an enabler and necessary condition for achieving many SDGs.
3. The importance of sustainable transport is also recognized through other United Nations outcomes, including the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), the SAMOA Pathway for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the New Urban Agenda, which all address specific elements of sustainable transport. In addition, there are several General Assembly resolutions on sustainable transport, including on transport and transit corridors and road safety.
4. Sustainable transport – with its objectives of universal access, enhanced safety, improved resilience, greater efficiency, and reduced environmental impact – is vital for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Paris Climate Change Agreement.
5. Transport enables the movement of people and goods, supporting livelihoods and jobs and thus contributing to poverty eradication, food security and inequality reduction. By improving access to quality services, such as health, education, and finance, it empowers women and other vulnerable groups, and enables inclusive economic growth.
6. Transport enables connectivity at all levels among all countries, whether on land, at sea or in the air. It allows for community interaction, integrates markets and economies, enhances rural-urban interlinkages, facilitates trade, underpins supply chains and can boost resilience and

contribute to the attainment of the SDGs.

7. At the same time, sustainable transport and adequate transport services are still lacking in many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, including countries in special situations and remote rural areas, constraining connectivity to regional and global transport networks. Even where transport infrastructure and systems are present, they may not provide safe, affordable, and convenient access for all, particularly for groups in vulnerable situations, such as the poor, women, children and youth, older persons, and persons with disabilities. Existing transport networks can also face other challenges, such as congestion, poor maintenance, and lack of resilience to disasters, extreme weather events and climate change.
8. In many cases, transport can also generate negative impacts along several different dimensions of sustainable development. About a quarter of energy-related global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are generated by transport and these emissions are projected to grow substantially in the years to come, further exacerbating climate change, unless properly addressed. Deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents continue to rise; air and noise pollution continue to directly impact health and well-being; and the ‘end-of-life’ recycling of automobiles and ships poses complex challenges.
9. Attaining sustainable transport would mean fully delivering on the benefits while avoiding or alleviating the associated costs of mobility. But the world is falling short in making progress towards this objective. At the same time, the world is also presently not on track for eradicating poverty, reducing emissions, and achieving other substantial portions of the 2030 Agenda as well as the Paris agreement, including the objective of limiting global average temperature rise. Accelerating the transformation towards sustainable transport will be central towards creating a community of shared future for humankind. It will also be crucial for achieving the world’s common objectives for people, planet, and prosperity.
10. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the central role of sustainable transport in the modern world. Initial impacts severely disrupted transport services and networks at all levels, highlighting also the vulnerabilities of workers in these sectors. While transport activity has begun to recover, the pandemic itself may be prompting longer-term changes in both demand and supply for transport services, indicating a need for the sector to change and adapt accordingly. In parallel, the worsening crisis of climate change is also triggering intentional changes towards carbon neutrality and resilience. Recovery from the pandemic will be a chance for all actors to rethink passenger and freight transport and implement integrated solutions which can support the achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, ensuring that humanity lives in harmony with nature, within an emerging context of continuing globalization, urbanization, digitalization, and demographic change.

### ***Way forward for achieving a sustainable transport transformation***

11. Measures to achieve sustainable transport must take into account its interlinkages with the goals and targets across the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, and work to realize synergies while mitigating trade-offs. This calls for an integrated, interdisciplinary, and cross-sectoral approach that is firmly grounded in science and evidence, as well as enhanced cooperation, coordination and policy coherence at all levels including among different ministries as well as international organizations and institutions.
12. Such integrated approaches must be reflected in national and local sustainable development

plans and strategies; based on risk and environmental impact assessments; take into account related sectors, such as information technology and energy; and involve all relevant stakeholders, including national and local authorities, local communities, indigenous peoples, vulnerable groups, academic and scientific communities, the private sector and civil society, in order to ensure ownership and successful implementation.

13. Bilateral, multilateral, and multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives remain essential to support the sustainable transport transformation in all countries, including countries in special situations, and should be enhanced. Public-private partnerships can attract investments and technologies to under-served areas.
14. Motivating consumers towards adopting more sustainable mobility patterns and choices will be crucial going forward. Changing consumer preferences can also further incentivize private and public sector actions towards sustainable transport.
15. National actions must be supported by the international community through the necessary means of implementation in line with the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the UNFCCC mechanisms, and other relevant agreements, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Vienna Programme of Action (VPOA).
16. New and emerging technologies, when properly applied, are key to solving many of the challenges to sustainable transport. The deployment of existing solutions, such as zero-carbon vehicles, automated safety, and intelligent transport systems, must be accelerated, accompanied by the creation of the necessary fuel, power, and digital infrastructures.
17. In parallel, research and development must be accelerated to identify new solutions and improve existing ones, in particular to decarbonize transportation, achieve a circular economy and improve access.
18. International cooperation, capacity-building and knowledge exchange among countries should be encouraged with a view to advancing sustainable transport technology and innovation and learning from good practices. Action is also needed to promote the implementation of international transport-related conventions, regulations, and agreements.
19. Additional actions are required from all stakeholders working together to urgently accelerate the transformation towards sustainable transport:
  - (a) Enhance efforts to promote a people-centered approach, and to ensure that no one is left behind by taking into account the particular challenges and needs of groups in vulnerable situations, such as the poor, women, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and people living in informal settlements.
  - (b) Expand access of remote rural communities through the development and implementation of sustainable transport systems and infrastructure, helping them connect to services, jobs, and markets to achieve prosperity and sustainable development.
  - (c) Address the needs of countries in special situations by expanding sustainable transport systems and infrastructure and improving their links with international markets, trade and tourism, including by ensuring the efficient movement of people and goods along transport and transit corridors.
  - (d) Strengthen regional and interregional connectivity and joint action with regard to “hard” transport aspects, like regional and trans-border infrastructure, and “soft” transport

elements, such as streamlined customs and border-crossing regulatory frameworks, including through global initiatives, regional and interregional strategies and plans.

- (e) Prioritize inclusive, reliable, safe, accessible, and affordable public transport, non-motorized transport (walking and cycling) and multi-modal transport options in urban areas as essential components of sustainable transport solutions, including through integrated urban transport planning and investments and by offering adequate public space and infrastructure, and incorporating safe bike lanes and sidewalks.
- (f) Significantly increase road safety globally, including, for example, by using safety performance standards; mandatory protective gear for two-wheelers; safe infrastructure for non-motorized transport; the establishment and improvement of transport emergency response systems; and raising awareness through publicity and education campaigns.
- (g) Accelerate the mobilization of the transport sector toward climate action, including through increased international cooperation, policies, regulations, standards and incentives, sustainable planning, increased commitments, and efforts to decarbonize passenger and freight transport across all transport modes (road, rail, waterborne and aviation) while paying special attention to the needs of countries in special situations and vulnerable groups.
- (h) Strengthen resilience of transport systems, including as part of climate change adaptation, and through the inclusion of climate and extreme weather event projections in the assessment, planning, engineering, and design process, especially in areas of high vulnerability.
- (i) Ensure the sustainable rebuilding and smooth flow of international supply chains and facilitate cross-border movement of people and goods, including medical supplies, for the benefit of global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and global economic recovery.
- (j) Support the transport sector in improving its epidemic prevention and response capabilities and ensure the safety and health of transport workers, including seafarers.
- (k) Increase the coverage, timeliness, and quality of data, and establish a harmonized data collection, management and sharing system related to sustainable transport to allow for better monitoring and reporting on transport-related goals.

### ***Follow up and implementation***

20. In following up, stakeholders in the sustainable transport community may consider to:

- (a) Use lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to rethink passenger and freight transport and come up with solutions which can withstand possible future crises and support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement as well as global economic recovery.
- (b) Integrate sustainable transport objectives into national development plans, COVID-19 stimulus and recovery packages as well as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), in a mutually supportive and synergistic manner.
- (c) Invite the United Nations General Assembly to convene a third Conference on Sustainable Transport to review progress and guide the global sustainable transport transformation, which would feed into the global review of the 2030 Agenda at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF), the UNFCCC COP meetings

and other international fora.

- (d)* Strengthen coordination and collaboration across the United Nations system on sustainable transport.
  - (e)* Invite the United Nations General Assembly to declare a United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport (2022-2032) to increase global awareness and action on sustainable transport in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.
  - (f)* Continue to capture voluntary sustainable transport commitments by different stakeholders, made at this Conference or in other fora, in the online database maintained by the United Nations Department on Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to continuously monitor global engagement.
21. Participants expressed appreciation to the People's Republic of China for hosting the Conference and welcomed the establishment of the Global Innovation and Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Transport in China, which is committed to knowledge-sharing and capacity-building in developing countries on sustainable transport.