

CSD19 IPM
Statement by Australia during the thematic discussion on Transport
(1 March 2011)

Thank you Mr Chairman

As has been highlighted this morning, sustainable transport plays a central role in meeting the needs of today's society, as well as those of future generations, and Australia welcomes the discussion of the issues and options in this important area.

Transport plays a crucial role in Australia's economy, given our geographical size, the distance between population centres, resources and ports, and the fact that we are an island continent.

It is clear there is a range of policy options that can be used to enhance the sustainability of transport activities. In considering these options, safety, security, efficiency, cost effectiveness and the environment are all important considerations. Australia notes the framework used in the Secretary General's report for categorizing policy options. Importantly, this framework provides useful direction while allowing countries flexibility to select approaches that are appropriate to their national circumstances.

There is a range of approaches being taken in Australia towards the goals of *avoiding* unnecessary transport and *shifting* towards those that are more sustainable and less carbon intensive.

As in many other countries, responsibility for urban infrastructure and planning in Australia lies largely with state and local governments. However, the Australian Government is taking a greater role in urban infrastructure planning and future funding in these areas will be based on assessment of city planning against criteria including on environmental and social issues.

The Australian Government has also initiated development of a national urban policy, aimed at ensuring the longer term productivity, sustainability and liveability of our major cities. This will include a focus on improving transport options and, where feasible, reducing our dependence on private vehicles.

Investments in public transport can support sustainable development goals by helping address urban passenger vehicle emissions and lowering the costs – including social and economic costs – of traffic congestion. The Australian Government has invested significantly in urban passenger rail, including funding for metropolitan rail projects in our capital cities, towards these ends.

Raising efficiency standards and building consumer awareness of the impacts of transport choices are two further contributions to the goal of *improving* the efficiency and sustainability of transport systems. As an example, a web-based *Green Vehicle Guide* (GVG) provides information on the safety, fuel economy and emissions of vehicles entering the Australian market. Mandatory fuel consumption and emissions labeling also applies to all new vehicles, and mandatory CO₂ emissions standards will apply to new light vehicles from 2015.

Many delegations have highlighted the importance of addressing greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector. Australia shares these views. The Australian Government considers introduction of a carbon price through a market-based mechanism with broad sectoral coverage (including transport) to be the best policy approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the economy.

Mr Chairman, as has already been highlighted this morning, no single policy approach can achieve a step change in the sustainability of the transport sector. A suite of policies across the categories in the Secretary General's report, and appropriate to countries' circumstances will be important in bringing about the desired economic, social and environmental improvements.

Thank you Mr Chairman