Vice Minister’s Remarks at Global Sustainable Transport Conference
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Excellencies,
Distinguished heads of states and delegations,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to address Global Sustainable Transport Conference on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea and as a member of the global community.

Humanity transformed its economies for the past century and it improved our lives dramatically. Unfortunately, we have been facing the threats of environmental degradation and climate change because of that growth. We also have emerging threats including worsening social inequality, terrorism and extreme weather events. These are the issues we must address to ensure sustainable development of the mankind.
Excellencies,

Transport connects people and connects cities. It is a vital link that provides an equal access to educational, employment, and healthcare opportunities. Unfortunately, transport is also the main cause of climate change accounting for 25% of global emissions.

Given its impact, a transport system that is green and inclusive will be essential to reducing gaps in our society and delivering sustainable development.

Excellencies,

In order to build such a transport system, there are three things we should remember.

First, we need to shift away from the thinking that building more transport infrastructure would mean more damage to the environment.

By improving access to public transport, we can cut down congestion and enhance mobility while reducing the transport’s impact on the environment.

To this end, Korea introduced a national transport card system, mobile platform for bus travel reservation, and inter-modal transfer centers to promote public transport use.
Also, central bus-only lanes, provincial express railways were open to enhance the punctuality of the services. All of these changes will boost public transport use in Korea.

Second, technologies should be at the center of our efforts to build sustainable transport.

Intelligent Transport System, Internet of Things and other technological innovations will make Korea’s transport system smarter, easier to automate, and thereby more equal and efficient.

Some of these technologies are being applied to the Korean expressways. Korea successfully introduced the electronic toll collection system to its entire expressway network. Drivers can also access to the real-time traffic information through their smartphones or navigations inside their cars. Efforts are also underway to build Smart Highway to prepare for the arrival of fully autonomous driving.

Electric vehicles and renewable energies will help us reach the ‘zero-emission target’ while not compromising mobility.

Third, sustainable transport is a goal that both the developed and developing countries should strive for.
Building a green and inclusive transport system may not be the priority for many developing countries given a more pressing need for economic growth.

To raise the awareness and interest among the developing countries, support from the developed countries is critical. It can be technological support, sharing of experiences, or funding such as “Korea Green Growth Trust Fund”, which Korea is raising in partnership with World Bank.

Excellencies,

Sustainable transport is something that can be achieved when all the stakeholders work toward the same goal and no country is left behind.

The Republic of Korea is contributing to sustainable transport by sharing our experiences and know-how. Korea will continue such efforts until we realize our common vision of sustainable development.

Thank you.