



Republic of Zambia

**STATEMENT BY
HONOURABLE BRIAN MUSHIMBA, M.P.
MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND
COMMUNICATION,
CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF LLDCS**

**At the
Global Sustainable Transport Conference Plenary**

Saturday 26th November, 2016

Ashgabat, Turkmenistan

Excellency, President of the Conference

Excellency, Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly,

Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of The United Nations,

Excellences Heads of State and Governments,

Distinguished Representatives,

Ladies and gentlemen;

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries.

I wish to congratulate the Secretary General for convening the Global Conference on Sustainable Transport for the first time ever since the Rio + 20 Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. I also wish to congratulate the Government of Turkmenistan, which is also Landlocked, for hosting this important conference and for their warm hospitality to me and my delegation.

Mr. President,

Landlocked Developing countries face special development challenges associated with lack of direct territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets, which invariably are sea linked. High transport costs including tariffs and delays in movement of goods across borders of transit countries further contribute to global trade exclusion for this group.

To overcome these challenges, and to ensure the LLDCs are not left behind, the global community collectively adopted and committed to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action which provides a comprehensive plan of action for the decade and anchors on the overarching goal of trade

competitiveness to be realised through 6 priority areas including transport and infrastructural development.

The Vienna Program of Action is integral to the global development processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Excellencies,

Enhanced transport, mobility and connectivity underpin vital investments necessary for overcoming geographical constraints of land-lockedness. The Vienna Programme of Action prioritises and identifies transport and transit infrastructure both as a means of facilitating regional integration and as an enabler of sustainable development for the LLDCs. We further recognise the transformative potential of transport for structural economic change in the LLDCs.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development further underscores the importance of sustainable transport and particularly notes the absolute need for sustainable transport for the LLDCs.

Mr President,

In line with this year's report by the United Nations Secretary General, Landlocked developing countries and transit countries, in cooperation with their development partners, are making efforts to expand and upgrade all modes of transport and border crossing infrastructure. Recently, the United Nations held the 5th high level meeting of Ministers of Transport from landlocked developing countries and transit countries in Santa Cruz Bolivia, and the meeting stressed and reaffirmed the importance of sustainable transport for development including the need to establish, support and use

effective transit and transport systems to reduce the high costs that impact on trade and access to markets for LLDCs.

Many other initiatives are already taking place in our countries towards reaching the objectives of the Vienna Programme, including on transport and transit infrastructure development, regional connectivity and facilitating of trade. Yet, transport infrastructure is typically inadequate to support greater integration of our countries into regional and global trading networks and is characterised by many missing links.

Excellencies,

The need therefore to fully align transport systems with logistics and economic development opportunities of the people in Land Locked Developing Countries is unquestionable. However, challenges of financing and relative lack of technology will continue to hamper implementation of these clearly identified priorities. I therefore call for enhanced Partnerships to support integration of sustainable transport into regional and national development plans, including through the establishment, expansion and improvement of national sustainable transport systems for the movement of our people and the goods.

For LLDCs, close cooperation and partnership with our transit neighbours on transport is critical for enhancing connectivity. Development of transit and transport corridors and closer cooperation on improving the soft infrastructure, harmonization of transit regulations and procedures and trade facilitation measures have been effective in reducing the high transport costs and delays.

Mr President,

The establishment of new sustainable transport infrastructure and networks should take into account resilience to climate change impacts and other natural and economic shocks in line with the Paris Agreement. With the 2030 Agenda in place, particular attention Mr President, should be accorded to efficient and clean technology and innovation for the transport sector with policy mechanisms to support LLDCs.

Mr President,

On behalf of the LLDC Group, I call on our development partners, the organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, international financing institutions and development banks and the private sector to enhance financial and technical assistance to landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries for the sustainable and inclusive development of transport.

We are advocating for dedicated funding and special facilities for infrastructure development and maintenance for the LLDCs that includes transport, which we believe are critical in supporting our national efforts. Technical assistance and capacity building support to LLDCs with regard to establishing comprehensive monitoring and evaluation methodologies for sustainable transport in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Vienna Program of Action are necessary.

On behalf of the landlocked developing countries I welcome the launch of the Global Infrastructure Forum, led by the multilateral development banks, on 16 April 2016 in Washington, DC and stress that the Forum should address our

infrastructure needs in a focused manner. We also welcome the Global Infrastructure Facility established by multilateral development banks and call for giving special priority to LLDCs in accessing funds from such facility.

Mr President,

I wish to conclude by calling on the international community to therefore heed our call to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries. The emphasis should be placed on sustainable transport systems and infrastructure, including transit and border crossing infrastructure, efficient transport and transit operations and procedures, ensuring unhindered access to and from the sea and sufficient financing for sustainable transport in order to link us to international markets. It is our sincere hope that with strong partnerships and enhanced international support, efficient transit transport systems can be achieved and the LLDCs could be turned into both land-linked and globally connected in terms of trade.

I thank you for your attention.