

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR CRISTIAN BARROS
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PLENARY OF THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CONFERENCE
ASHGABAT, 27 NOVEMBER 2016

Mr. President,

Chile welcomes the convening of this Global Sustainable Transport Conference by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and thanks the Government and people of Turkmenistan for generously hosting this meeting.

Chile attaches special importance to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is committed to its implementation.

In Chile, the National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was established at the beginning of this year to advise the President of the Republic and coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda with government bodies, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector and civil society.

This experience will be shared by Chile at the regional level, at the meetings to be organized on the subject by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and at the global level, since Chile will be presenting a voluntary national review at the High-level Political Forum of the Economic and Social Council in July 2017.

Mr. President,

Although sustainable transport is not a separate Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), it is comprised in several Sustainable Development Goals and targets, especially those related to zero hunger, health and well-being, affordable and non-polluting energy, industry, innovation and infrastructure and, of course, sustainable cities and communities.

Indeed, as the United Nations Secretary-General noted in 2012 when submitting his Five-Year Action Agenda, sustainable transport is one of the pillars of sustainable development.

In this context, we welcome the Secretary-General's 2014 initiative in this area to establish the High-level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport, co-chaired by the Mayor of Santiago de Chile, Ms. Carolina Tohá, and the CEO of Volvo, Mr. Martin Lundstedt.

Before concluding its work last October, the Advisory Group delivered its final report, which contains a state-of-the-art evaluation, as well as conclusions and recommendations to be approved and discussed at parallel panels organized today and tomorrow. This document contains an urgent call for action, because the traditional approach of business as usual is not sustainable for transport.

Mr. President,

A paradigm shift is needed to move towards transport that is sustainable: this means transport that is safe, affordable, accessible, efficient and resilient and that minimizes carbon emissions and other emissions with an environmental impact.

Chile is trying to make progress in this regard and to meet the needs of the population, while respecting the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

One aspect involves public policies and investment in infrastructure.

For example, there has been an increase in subsidies for transport in sparsely populated rural areas, so as to improve connections and make transport a means of inclusiveness. And in the capital, Santiago, two new Metro lines are being built to supplement the other four existing lines. When work is completed, the Metro will have 140 kilometers of tracks, 136 stations and capacity to transport 2.7 million passengers a day, all of which will directly benefit the quality of life of the over 5 million people living in metropolitan Santiago.

Chile has substantially increased its investment in infrastructure by means of public-private partnerships and a progressive concession policy, which has made it possible to improve safety and to improve the country's links with international markets.

It should not be forgotten that the 2030 Agenda repeatedly supports participation by the private sector and by public-private partnerships, as noted, inter alia, in SDG 17.17 and in paragraph 76 of the Agenda.

Another aspect involves international agreements:

One example occurred last 21 November, when Chile transmitted to the Director-General of the World Trade Organization its instrument of acceptance of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) designed to streamline the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. In other words, to expedite administrative formalities for property and/or goods moving across frontiers.

We appeal to those countries which have not yet done so to become parties to this important instrument.

Mr. President,

These and other examples are what Chile has come to share at Ashgabat, in response to the appeal made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for a discussion on sustainable transport from a global perspective.

Chile is interested in seeing what unites us, in sharing best practices and in cooperating to find ways of implementing the 2030 Agenda and particularly of meeting the sustainable transport goals.

Thank you.