

FIATA

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UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Division for Sustainable Development
Department of Economic and Social Affairs
United Nations Secretariat Building
405 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017, USA

Distinguished and Honourable Delegates,

Subject: Logistics Connectivity: the prerequisite to achieve Sustainable Development.

On behalf of FIATA, may I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for UN's support of sustainable transport with a view to ensure the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The reforms and declarations you are currently discussing in the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) has the potential to positively influence international trade and consequently the freight forwarding and logistics industry, which FIATA represents. With such an impact forthcoming, FIATA would like to share with you our stance on a more sustainable logistics industry for post-2015 development agenda. The incorporation into the post-2015 Agenda of major trade facilitators, such as logistics connectivity and trade facilitation, may be regarded as a challenging task for the HLPF, but it will be critical towards the fulfillment of the proposed SDGs.

The SDGs are now coming into their final stage of solidification before the September Summit. Having extensively reviewed the proposed Goals and Target Document put forth by the Open Working on Sustainable Development (OWG), we immediately recognise that logistics needs to play a bigger role in order to secure sustainable development.

FIATA is aware that the 7th Session of the OWG meeting recommended that there should not be a dedicated SDG on transport and that the cross-sectorial nature of transport is best served by integrating transport in a range of SDGs. This is however a view which FIATA members cannot completely share, if logistics connectivity is not fully integrated in the goals. Although the concept has not been ignored in the OWG's document, there still remain multiple areas within the proposed goals and targets where the benefits of incorporating a concept such as logistics connectivity could increase the likelihood of achieving the SDG through better trade. These areas are extensively highlighted in FIATA's published position paper to the OWG in October last year.¹

The UN HLPF will be highly focused on Post-2015, reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the SDGs after they have been ratified, however, these early discussions are important to position the SDGs in a way to ensure their success and subsequent measurement. Therefore it is important to engage early, prior to the ratification of the SDGs and incorporate concepts of logistics connectivity into SDG's development. This is not only commendable with a view to achieving good, balanced and affordable SDG's, but it will pave the way of implementation and measurement. Early investments in logistics connectivity will have immense returns during in the Post 2015 era ensuring more efficient progress reports. FIATA advises the UN HLPF to take early action to ensure that logistics is embedded into the SDG process, as this will save time and resources in the long run.

¹ http://fiata.com/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Position_Papers/Position_Paper_-_More_Logistics_Connectivity_in_OWGs_Goals_and_Targets.pdf

Logistics connectivity can work as a driving force with regard to economic growth, whilst working towards the achievement of environmental targets by reducing emissions. In this light FIATA believes that the high level political guidance of the United Nations in the High Level Political Forum setting can powerfully reflect the concept of logistics connectivity in Member States' policies, in particular if this is appropriately considered at the light of the double incentive it can provide in driving emissions down by reducing congestion and in boosting prosperity through better trade. Today, the most modern and dynamic industries are transnational, since they are the result of an integrated system of global trade and production. Therefore, there is a need to ensure logistics connectivity, especially to developing countries, which will depend highly on the level of connectivity they have developed in their logistics networks, and this in particular for their SME's which are more dependent on market access.

In order to assure options for traders and a sustainable future for citizens, FIATA emphasises more focus on enhancing logistics connectivity in conjunction with greater trade facilitation by interconnecting all modes of transport to offer seamless travel, better lead times, less congestion, more job opportunities and great movement of goods and stimulus economic package.

We anticipate governments will focus on key policy instruments including taxation, financial incentives, regulation, liberalisation in order to implement the SDGs. Many of these policies will have freight move in the most promising way for easing environmental and congestion problems, as well as freeing up budgets to invest in infrastructure. If the requirement to invest in logistics connectivity is not clearly perceived at inception, it is possible that inefficiencies prevail with trade suffering and prosperity finally remaining a dream.

As the rise of environmental challenges in the coming years, in particular climate change, may place pressure on governments to curtail logistics activity, there will be a need to highlight the immense benefits of investing in sustainable logistics growth, which will bring forth the right combination of economic and environmental benefits. Developing consistent global policy on sustainable logistics connectivity can impress the required acceleration to achieve interconnected production and consumption, but failing to do so may increase the expenditure by introducing a cost for inaction which may defeat all efforts toward development.

FIATA has unanimously embraced the concept of logistics connectivity and thus created a high powered group under the Advisory Body of International Affairs (ABIA), whose members focus in particular on the topic of sustainable transport. Through FIATA's democratic and well established policy making structure ABIA members are ready to contribute to this process and provide their support. This is a unique body of decision makers from an impressive group of countries within the Private Sector.

We thank you in advance for your consideration and remain at your fullest disposal to discuss this topic in greater detail if appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Parisi', written in a cursive style.

Francesco S. Parisi
FIATA President

About FIATA

FIATA, the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, was founded in Vienna, Austria on May 31st 1926. It is a non-governmental organisation that today represents an industry covering approximately 40,000 forwarding and logistics firms, employing around 10 million people in some 160 countries. FIATA has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations (inter alia ECE, ESCAP, ESCWA, etc.), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) as well as many other UN related bodies, e.g. the World Bank. It is recognised as representing the freight forwarding industry by many other governmental organisations, governmental authorities, private international organisations in the field of transport and logistics, such as the European Commission (through CLECAT), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Union of Railways (UIC), the International Road Transport Union (IRU), the World Customs Organisation (WCO), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), etc.

For further information, please go to: www.fiata.com