

**South Africa speaking note for Roundtable 3 on the thematic issue of Transport  
Meeting the Challenge of Transportation Needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Date: 13 May 2010**

**Venue: Room 1**

**Time: 15h00 to 18h00**

We welcome and support the statement made by Pakistan on behalf of the G-77 and China. Transport is key for developing countries in promoting economic growth, connectivity, as well as access to trade thereby promoting sustainable development and addressing poverty. It is the backbone of socio-economic activities by enabling the movement of people and goods.

Inadequate transport infrastructure and a lack of access to affordable transport services are often cited as perpetuating poverty and posing major obstacles to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

South Africa is host to some of the busiest ports and airports on the region which serve as enablers for economic growth. Maritime transport especially freight transport is not only of significance to South Africa but the Southern African region as a whole with an estimated 90 percent of all SADC trade passing through South African ports. Inadequate transport networks in the region continue to hamper connectivity, accessibility and trade thereby having a negative impact on economic growth and social development.

Transport costs in Africa are amongst the highest in the world and in relation to the average income of citizens unaffordable to many of them. For developing countries sustainable efficient transport systems are key to gain access to basic needs, social services, as well as jobs and education. Escalating energy costs often places tremendous pressure on households in accessing basic needs and this link results in the poor remaining trapped in a cycle of poverty.

The availability of technical and engineering skills and capacity required in providing service delivery in infrastructure transportation well as facilitation of private sector participation remains a challenge.

Inadequate policies, limited implementation of regional and sub-regional agreements are some of the obstacles to achieve sustainable transport system. The improvement of transport systems has been slow given the large capital costs of infrastructure development as well as the associated technologies.

The prevailing poor infrastructure conditions remains a serious in Africa, as accidents and the resulting loss of life and destruction of property has assumed intolerable proportion.

The transport sector has a critical role to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Innovative financing mechanisms are needed to support developing countries in the transfer, development, diffusion and deployment of alternative transport technologies solutions like the electric car that hold promise for emission reduction.

- There is a need for continued investment in the maintenance and financing of transport infrastructure in the region and developing countries.
- Private and public partnerships are important vehicles for stimulating investment in terms of infrastructure and as such they need to be fostered and enhanced.
- There is a need for increased and predictable financial resources within the existing multilateral financial mechanisms to benefit the developing countries. They must also prioritize and support to the transport sector – also as a way to address climate change and sustainable development
- Financing mechanisms need to review their policies and procedures to create greater opportunities for financing of transport related projects as a means of addressing sustainable development and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and laying the foundation for the transition to a low carbon economy.

Check against delivery