

**Expert Group Meeting on
Transport for Sustainable Development:
Analysis of trends, issues and policy options**

United Nations Headquarters, New York
27-28 August 2009

Aide-Mémoire

Introduction and background: At several historic Summits and High-Level Meetings, including the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)*, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992, the *Special Session of the United National General Assembly*, held in New York in 1997, and the *World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)*, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, the international community has taken important decisions aimed at enhancing sustainable development worldwide. These decisions relate to all main dimensions of economic activities, including the transport sector and its contribution to sustainable development.

The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was established in 1992 to periodically review progress in the implementation of the commitments and goals articulated in *Agenda 21*, the *Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21*, the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI)*, and to develop further global consensus on sustainable development in the various sectors.

The review and policy debate of the Commission focuses each time on a thematic cluster of selected topics. At its up-coming 18th session to be held in New York in May 2010 the Commission will review the progress in implementation with regard to the thematic cluster including transport, chemicals, waste management, mining, and the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production. The review session will focus on the analysis of trends, issues and policy options. It will identify success stories, best practices, achievements as well as essential barriers and constraints faced in implementation. The review session will be followed by a policy debate in the following year (CSD-19, May 2011).

As a part of the secretariat's preparations for this *global review and policy debate on the topic of transport for sustainable development*, the Division for Sustainable Development is convening an *Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Transport for Sustainable Development* with a view to initiate an open dialogue and a global information exchange with international experts to share their specialist expertise on selected aspects of transport for sustainable development, including the various economic, social and environmental aspects.

The review is expected to include, inter alia, the following subject areas: 1) *globalization, transport and their inter-linkages*; 2) *land transport infrastructure and lack of access to transport services, in particular in developing countries*; 3) *transport and air quality, public health, safety and climate change concerns*; 4) *transport technologies, their development and*

their transfer to developing countries; and 5) integrated planning for sustainable transport development.

The review of emerging trends, issues and policy options will assess the status of transport in the context of volatile energy prices, unfolding impacts of the financial and economic crisis, and the growing urgency of enhancing a global transition towards low-carbon transport systems. The presentations and deliberations of the invited experts will inform the secretariat in its preparation of the background information materials for the CSD sessions.

Objectives and main topics of the Expert Group Meeting: The overall objective of the EGM is to enhance national and international information exchange and cooperation on transport for sustainable development. The meeting is expected to be attended by experts from countries with industrialized economies, developing economies and economies in transition. More specifically, the expert group meeting would concentrate on the following:

- constraints and lack of access to transport services in developing countries (in particular in rural areas and by the poor);
- achievements and constraints in the development of urban public transport;
- analysis of current and projected transport demand by mode (including road, rail, non-motorized, maritime and air transport) and options for modal shifts;
- challenges faced by groups of countries (e.g. SIDS, land-locked countries);
- air quality, public health and transport safety concerns;
- best practices, achievements, barriers and constraints in implementation of sustainable transport policies and programmes;
- transport technology developments and technology transfer (including vehicle maintenance policies, electric vehicle propulsion technologies, alternative fuels);
- integrated urban land use and transport planning, including public participation in transport sector decision making;
- existing and new public-private partnerships;
- financing of investments in transport infrastructure and services;
- existing and proposed new international agreements on transport and their implementation.

Organization and provisional programme: The Expert group meeting is organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and its Division for Sustainable Development (DSD). An outline of the provisional programmes is attached in Annex 1.

Participation: The Meeting is expected to be attended by senior researchers and transport and sustainable development experts from around the world. All experts are invited in their personal capacity. Senior staff of concerned UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes are also invited to take part in the meeting and contribute relevant background information materials. Representatives of major groups, including business and non-governmental organizations, civil society and other organizations are also welcome to attend.

Participation in the Symposium is by invitation only. Interested participants are invited to send expressions of interest to the organizer at the addresses provided here below. The number of international participants is expected to be around 30.

Submission of abstracts, papers and presentations: All invited speakers are requested to submit brief biographical notes and short abstracts of their invited papers and presentations for inclusion in the annotated provisional programme. Unless otherwise agreed, all invited presentations should not exceed 15-20 minutes presentation time. All invited speakers are requested to submit advance copies of their papers and presentations in electronic format to the secretariat for circulation among participants.

The proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting are intended to be published on the webpage of the UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development (DSD).

Venue: The Expert Group Meeting will be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Detailed information the location of the meeting room will be announced in due course.

Languages: The Expert group meeting will be conducted in English only.

Further information: Additional information on logistics, including visa arrangements, hotel accommodation options and final programme arrangements will be circulated by E-Mail to concerned participants.

Contact Persons

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