

Leipzig, 23 May 2019

2019 Summit Ministerial Declaration on Transport Connectivity for Regional Integration

Transport connectivity is a major contributor to economic development, and social inclusion, increasing the potential for growth and prosperity by connecting people to opportunities and businesses to markets.

As suggested in the 2015 United Nations Resolution “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” - which defines the goals and objectives to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions; economic, social and environmental - better transport connectivity enhances mobility and ultimately serves as a catalyst for integration between local communities, cities, regions and countries, contributing to the promotion of peace and stability.

Improved connectivity for seamless transport leads to better access to employment, education, health and other public services, as well as leisure activities, thereby raising productivity and promoting economic and social development. Connectivity is vital to reducing trade costs, boosting economic growth and promoting regional integration.

Political leadership and good governance are keys to enhancing co-ordination of transport policy and activity across all modes of transport and borders to capture and share benefits, especially as economic systems become increasingly integrated and interdependent functionally and spatially.

However, there remain significant discrepancies in levels of progress towards sustainable development between and within regions. Improved connectivity in transport can help close these gaps. Concerted action is necessary to improve transport connectivity in all of its dimensions: physical, modal, digital, operational, institutional, and individual.

We, the Ministers responsible for transport in the member countries of the International Transport Forum, have assembled under the Presidency of the Republic of Korea to pursue mutual understanding of, and orient our response to, these challenges.

Improving connectivity of transport infrastructure and operations

We:

underline that safe, secure, economically-efficient, and well-connected transport plays an important role in facilitating individual mobility and trade flows, both of which are essential for the sustainable development of regions;

seek opportunities to optimise interfaces with the strategic infrastructure of other sectors, including energy and telecommunications, and take advantage of rapidly-developing technologies;

promote investment in connected, resilient transport infrastructure, gateways and corridors that integrate trade routes, enable regional integration, enhance opportunities for business, innovation and technology diffusion, and encourage economic growth; **and in doing so,**

facilitate access to international institutional financing and market-driven investment;

conduct feasibility studies and evaluations of transport investment projects in order to better understand the full dimension of and measure more completely their impacts;

promote an intermodal, system approach to transport planning that considers optimisation of all modes and resources, as well as efficient and effective use of new forms of mobility and innovative technologies, while improving and maximising safety and security across all modes of transport;

encourage increased access to landlocked and geographically remote regions, including rural zones, enabling better access to businesses, education, health care, jobs, services, and other amenities for all inhabitants.

Enhancing development of sustainable transport

We:

recognise that transport decision makers are faced with the complex challenge of meeting societies' increasing demand for safe mobility, while minimising the negative externalities of transport activity and providing safe and accessible transport services for all;

acknowledge that progress has been made towards meeting these imperatives, but that challenges persist, to which better transport connectivity can respond;

foster a healthy and less congested transport system by promoting, where appropriate, well-connected public transport infrastructure and services that are complemented by cycling and walking and new forms of shared mobility - all together integrated in sustainable mobility management strategies that offer a wide variety of modal choice;

encourage, when appropriate, the collection and voluntary exchange of aggregate travel and traffic data to better inform the development of policies that will foster greater transport connectivity and more sustainable mobility;

understand that transport planning should consider the needs of, and optimise access to opportunity for, all travellers – in particular low-income and indigenous populations, older people, and individuals with temporary or more permanent reduced mobility.

Improving governance to enhance connectivity

We:

recognise that safe transport networks can be enhanced by strong, transparent, and integrated policy frameworks that promote seamless connectivity in infrastructure and operations across modes and borders and;

acknowledge that better transport connectivity should be provided in partnership with regional, local and economic planning structures, to foster economic growth in urban, rural and isolated areas;

foster implementation of cutting-edge technologies that improve security, safety, quality, data and interoperability of the transport of goods and people, while addressing differences between global and regional frameworks, including their diverse priorities and interests;

encourage transport facilitation at borders, including through implementation of the latest information and communication technologies to remove bottlenecks and through simplification of administrative burdens related to customs and other border-crossing procedures, thereby improving efficiency and performance;

promote co-operation among transport authorities at the national, regional and local levels, as well as with other authorities in related sectors;

encourage all stakeholders – government, business, non-governmental organisations, labour, academia, and individual travellers – to work together towards more seamless transport within and across regions, national borders, and urban and rural areas.