

**STATEMENT BY THE HON. MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT,
KWAKU OFORI ASIAMAH AT THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS
GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT CONFERENCE 14TH -16TH
OCTOBER 2021, BEIJING, CHINA**

Excellencies,-

I bring you warm greetings from the President of the Republic of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, who has asked me to deliver this statement on his behalf.

It was in Turkmenistan, some five years ago, that we gathered for the maiden edition of this Conference, to deliberate on issues germane to advancing the cause of sustainable mobility development in the fight against climate change. At that conference, we reaffirmed our commitment to work together to ensure the availability of safe, universally accessible, reliable, secure, affordable, fuel efficient, environmentally friendly and climate resilient transport systems.

Fast-forward to 2021, at a time when we are confronted with the scourge of COVID-19, it is not out of place for the world to meet again, albeit virtually, to help ensure that we do not lose sight of our goal of combating climate change.

I have always held the view that suitable national, regional and global policies, backed by the necessary resources can stimulate or facilitate climate actions in our respective countries. It is crucial, therefore, that we realign the focus of our respective Governments to guarantee transparent, efficient and sustainable developments.

Excellencies,

Addressing climate change, in my view, is one of greatest challenges of our time, because our development is underpinned largely by the use of fossil fuels. Ghana, like most parts of Africa, is experiencing rapid

motorization and urbanisation, coupled with uncontrolled urban expansions. The results have been widespread environmental degradation, traffic congestion, fatalities and injuries on our roads, inadequate infrastructure and lack of basic services among others. In some areas, the environmental footprints are quite alarming, and can threaten the resources required to sustain socio-economic growth and development.

Moving away from car-centred development to transit oriented development, that minimises the environmental footprint, is our surest bet to reduce negative impact of modern-day development.

In Ghana, we are guided by the fact that promoting inter-modal-integration and accessibility are some of the most urgent and critical measures that can guarantee inclusive development. We are, therefore, giving priority to building the much-needed infrastructure for rails, road, ports and airport. We are also championing the introduction of an enhanced public transport system, which is environmentally friendly. At the moment, we are developing the policy incorporating implementation framework for the deployment and upscale of electric mobility in Ghana. We have an opportunity to implement fundamental changes to the way we commute.

In the railway sector, we are aggressively pursuing massive rail development Agenda with the view to link our major cities by rail. In the aviation sector, a number of infrastructure facelift programmes are also being undertaken to improve connectivity. The integration of these transport modes will provide the best economic return for our cities, making them safer and more accessible.

We recognise also that improved integration of land-use and transportation planning can reduce the need for road expansion, and maintain the quality of our urban areas. We need to adopt strategies that discourage the need to travel, and rather encourages walking and cycling to promote healthier lifestyle.

Excellencies,

Collectively, we can gain a lot by pulling resources and harnessing experiences to finance the development agenda towards a results-oriented, climate resilient, and sustainable development. Governments must demonstrate the will and commitment to international and global demands for climate resilient development. We need to provide the necessary resources and capabilities not only in our respective countries, but also to other countries that require them. We must push for an integrated climate agenda to achieve greater and sustainable impact.

In conclusion, I urge all of us to take a critical look at the future, and define a vision that builds on the current challenges, and enhances future prospects for sustainable development. The Government of Ghana remains committed to this end, and will count on the support of friends of Ghana to help create a liveable and healthier environment for her citizenry.

I thank you for the attention