

## **Keynote Statement:**

### **H.E. Mr. Li Xiaopeng, Minister of Transport, PRC**

Thank you, Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Liu Zhenmin!

Honorable ministers, ladies and gentlemen, friends,

Greetings to everyone! First of all, on behalf of the Ministry of Transport of the People's Republic of China, I would like to extend a warm welcome and sincere appreciation to all the dignitaries taking part online in this Minister's Forum and the delegates participating in-person!

Like-minded people can't be separated by distance. The pandemic has prevented us from getting together in person, but it cannot stop the pace of the sustainable development of global transportation and cannot stop our determination and action to work together and achieve win-win cooperation. I am very pleased to meet virtually with the ministers across time and space to exchange views on the "Sustainable transport, poverty eradication and economic recovery" in a joint effort to implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Poverty eradication is a common challenge faced by mankind and it is set as the primary goal in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. China attaches great importance to poverty reduction by adhering to the philosophy of people-centered development and takes poverty eradication, the improvement of people's livelihood, and the gradual realization of common prosperity as an important mission. Thanks to the joint efforts of the entire population, in 2020, 98.99 million impoverished rural population under the current standards have been completely lifted out of poverty, achieving 10 years ahead of schedule, the first SDG goal, thus giving a strong impetus to the world's poverty reduction and the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There is a Chinese saying that goes like this, "If you want to get rich, you must first build roads." The construction of reliable and affordable transportation infrastructure plays a fundamental and leading role in poverty alleviation effort. The Chinese government, by adhering to the people-centered approach, has started doing a good job of constructing, managing, maintaining and operating

the roads in the rural areas. On this basis, we have actively promoted the building of interconnectivity in the poor regions and the building-up of safe and easy transportation network that connects villages and townships with bus services. This move has greatly improved the service level of urban and rural passenger and freight transportation and provided strong support to poor regions in winning the battle against poverty as scheduled. At present, all qualified townships in China have tarmac or cement roads and access to bus services. All rural townships have post offices, and there is direct postal service to all administrative villages. The villages and townships have become more closely linked and farmers' "difficulties in travel" have been effectively addressed. A fundamental change has taken place in the once backward transportation in poor regions and this has laid a solid foundation to facilitate the revitalization of the rural areas.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends,

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought huge challenges to global poverty reduction effort. According to a UN report, the pandemic has eliminated decades of development achievements, and about 150-175 million people fell into extreme poverty. While undergoing the test of the pandemic, the global transportation industry has played a key coordinating role in securing the delivery of the anti-pandemic supplies, stabilizing the global industrial ecosystem and supply chain against the pandemic and provided an important guarantee to promote the world economic recovery.

Faced with the unexpected challenge of the pandemic, the Ministry of Transport in China has made an active response to the test. First, we adhere to the principle of "People First and Life First" and take measures to cut off the channels for the spread of the virus, ensure that there will no be interruptions in transportation network, green channels for emergency transportation and supplies for production and daily life for the general population. These measures have provided strong support to the pandemic prevention and resumption of work and production and consolidated the result of poverty alleviation.

Second, we have promoted the high-quality joint development of the "Belt and Road". The freight volume of China-Europe freight trains increased against the declining trend and the Silk Road on the sea in the air are in operation day and night as part of an all-out effort to ensure "smooth export and import and goods". This has effectively secured the safety and stability of the industrial

ecosystem and the supply chain. Third, by upholding the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, we have provided vaccines to over 100 countries and international organizations and ensured a smooth channel for anti-pandemic supplies to over 200 countries and regions. Through platforms such as International Maritime Organization, ICAO, and Universal Postal Union, we have shared China's pandemic prevention and control practices and experience with other countries and made a positive contribution to global cooperation against the pandemic.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends,

In today's world with major changes unseen in a century, compounded by a once-in-a-century pandemic, the future and destiny of countries have never been so closely intertwined. Transportation is playing an increasingly important role in poverty eradication and economic recovery.

As a responsible major country, China will earnestly implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, implement the new development concepts of innovation, coordination, greenness, openness, and sharing, and build a new development pattern in which domestic cycles are the mainstay complimented and reinforced by international cycles. China will join hands with all countries to build a community with a shared future for mankind, and work together to promote global poverty eradication and economic recovery and achieve the UN 2030 SDGs. In this connection, I would like propose the following three points:

First, strengthen the construction, management, maintenance and operation of transportation infrastructure in poor regions, promote the extension of basic public transportation services to remote areas and coverage of impoverished population and improve the equity of transportation and public service so that the poor region will get prosperous, rich and beautiful with the road constructions.

Second, advance global transport cooperation, write a new chapter featuring connectivity of infrastructure, free flow of trade and investment and interactions between civilizations; Strengthen the "hard connectivity" of transportation infrastructure and "soft connectivity" of rules and regulations

and work together to build a high-quality “Belt and Road”, provide good service and be a pioneer in laying a solid foundation for global economic recovery.

Third, against the backdrop of routine pandemic prevention and control, we need to explore together the establishment of “express channels” for personnel exchange and “green channels” for cargo transportation to ensure healthy, safe and orderly exchange of personnel and maintain the safe and smooth operation of the global industrial ecosystem and supply chain and work together to promote world economy for its early reinvigoration and return to prosperity.

I believe that with the joint efforts of everyone, this forum will be a full success!