

Ministerial Declaration of Landlocked Developing Countries
Adopted at the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries
Santa Cruz - Bolivia, 14 October 2016

We, the Ministers and high representatives responsible for transport of the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), have met in Santa Cruz, Bolivia on 13 and 14 October 2016,

Recognizing that landlocked developing countries face special development challenges that are associated with their lack of direct territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets,

Recognizing that high transport and trade transaction costs remain a major stumbling block in the pursuit of landlocked developing countries to achieve their trade and development potentials,

Emphasizing that despite progress, the development of new and maintenance of existing transport infrastructure related to rail transport, road transport, dry ports, inland waterways, pipelines and air transport in landlocked developing countries is still inadequate, posing a major obstacle to the ability of landlocked developing countries to realize their sustainable development objectives,

Underlining the important role of environmentally sound, safe, efficient, reliable and affordable resilient transport infrastructure and transit corridors for the efficient movement of goods and people in supporting sustainable economic growth, improving the social welfare of people and enhancing trade of landlocked developing countries,

Recalling the outcome document “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which includes a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets,

Acknowledging the importance of reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and targets as contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including transport-related targets, in particular target 3.6 which aims to, by 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents; target 9.1, which aims to develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all, and target 11.2, which aims to provide, by 2030, access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons,

Recalling the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, adopted on 27 July 2015, which recognizes the importance of addressing the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, including landlocked developing countries,

Recalling the Sendai Declaration and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,

Recalling the Paris Agreement arising from the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted in November 2014, which provides a comprehensive plan of action for the decade to address the special challenges and needs of landlocked developing countries,

Recalling the Livingstone Call for Action for the Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action adopted at the High-Level Follow-up Ministerial Meeting to the Vienna Conference held in Livingstone, Zambia, in June 2015 that highlights key measures and initiatives required to accelerate implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action,

Taking note of the Ashgabat Declaration, adopted at the High-level International Conference on the Role of Transit Transport Corridors in Ensuring International Cooperation, Stability and Sustainable Development held in Ashgabat on 3 and 4 September 2014,

Recalling Resolution 69/213 entitled Role of transport and transit corridors in ensuring international cooperation for sustainable development and Resolution 70/197 entitled Towards comprehensive cooperation among all modes of transport for promoting sustainable multimodal transit corridors,

Recalling the declaration adopted at the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs held in June 2016 in Geneva under the theme - Harnessing the trade potential of the LLDCs to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Reaffirming that Land-locked States shall have the right of access to and from the sea for the purpose of exercising the rights provided for in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, including those relating to the freedom of the high seas and the common heritage of mankind. To this end, land-locked States shall enjoy freedom of transit through the territory of transit States by all means of transport,

Welcoming the Global Sustainable Transport Conference, to be held on 26 and 27 November 2016 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan,

Taking note with appreciation of the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport, and looking forward to the consideration of the priorities of landlocked developing countries in the global transport outlook report,

Have adopted the following Ministerial Declaration:

Role of sustainable transport in the pursuit of sustainable development in LLDCs

1. We welcome the fact that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognize the special needs of the landlocked developing countries and emphasize the importance of strong synergy in the implementation of these agendas and the Vienna Programme of Action and encourage coordination and coherence in the follow-up of their implementation;
2. We note that transportation and mobility are central to sustainable development and recognize the importance of the efficient movement of people and goods and access to environmentally sound, safe and affordable transportation for all in an equitable manner, including for transport workers, in particular itinerant workers, with respect to human rights;
3. We emphasize the facilitating role that sustainable transport plays in driving regional integration and economic development of LLDCs and recognize the transformative potential of transport for structural economic change in the LLDCs when transport is fully aligned with logistics and economic development opportunities of the people;
4. We commit to integrate sustainable transport into regional and national development plans, including through the establishment and expansion of national sustainable transport systems for the movement of people and goods;
5. We underline that the establishment of new sustainable transport infrastructure and networks should take into account resilience to climate change impacts and other natural and economic shocks;
6. We emphasize that low greenhouse gas emission, efficient and equitable transport solutions should be at the forefront when developing sustainable transport systems;

7. We support that efficient logistics services and transport operations are interrelated and therefore crucial in reducing the effects of remoteness, in particular at modal interfaces, freight terminals and ports, including dry ports, all of which play a fundamental role in trade of landlocked developing countries;
8. We underscore that trade and transport regulations at national, as well as at bilateral and regional levels, encourage efficient and cost-effective trade and transport services;
9. We promote efficient logistics nodes to generate economies of scale and to facilitate consolidation of transportation between them, with positive impact in terms of reduced cost, delays and, most importantly, increased reliability;

Sustainable transport and transit systems and corridors

10. We recognize the importance of international intermodal transport and transit corridors for safe, efficient, reliable and affordable movement of goods and people for supporting sustainable economic growth, productive capacity building, improving the social welfare and enhancing regional and international cooperation and trade among Member States;
11. We recognize the importance of transport and transit corridors in promoting urban-rural, intra- and inter-country connectivity in order to boost economic growth at the local and regional levels, promote interconnections between cities, peoples and resources and facilitate intraregional and interregional trade;
12. We emphasize on the efficient and sustainable transport and transit systems, strong collaborative efforts in multimodal transport infrastructure development and interlinkage, the promotion of an enabling legal environment and institutional arrangements and strong national leadership on cooperative arrangements between landlocked developing countries and transit countries based on international norms and practices and the principles of equity, understanding and mutual benefit;
13. We affirm that the development of reliable and affordable infrastructure, regional connectivity, and its appropriate inter-linkage through science, technology and innovation, including transport, roads, energy and telecommunications are essential elements in improving the quality of life of our people, achieving structural transformation and advancing the sustainable development of our countries;
14. We underline the need to promote meaningful regional integration to encompass cooperation among countries and the importance of enhancing existing transport infrastructure facilities for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;
15. We emphasize that the establishment and maintenance of secure, reliable, efficient and quality infrastructure and transit transport systems remains critical for landlocked developing countries to enable them to reduce transport and trading costs, enhance their competitiveness and become fully integrated in regional and global markets;
16. We affirm that the primary responsibility for establishing effective transit systems rests with landlocked and transit developing countries and recognize the need to develop relevant policies to support the development of effective transit systems, while also acknowledging the critical role of international support in the areas of finance, technology and capacity building;
17. We underline the need for an increased role of regional, sub-regional and corridor organizations in transport infrastructure development;
18. We emphasize that missing links need to be addressed urgently, and roads, railways and inland waterways need to be upgraded to a level that can establish seamless and efficient transport infrastructure networks within countries and across their borders;

19. We reaffirm that inland waterways provide transit and transport services to landlocked developing countries to access to the sea. The efficiency of transit services along such waterways requires better infrastructure. In that sense, further efforts should be taken to expand the river infrastructure along the corridors linking landlocked developing countries to ocean ports;

20. We stress the importance of international trade and transport corridors, including bioceanic corridors in regional integration to promote unfettered, efficient and cost effective access to and from the sea by roads, ports, airports, railways, and waterways on the basis of the freedom of transit;

21. We reaffirm the importance to develop and upgrade road and rail infrastructure and to provide maintenance for the existing infrastructure at the national, subregional and regional levels;

22. We stress that the efficiency of port operations depends on adequate infrastructure and good management. Greater cooperation and coordination should be promoted between public and private institutions dealing with transit traffic in ports including customs administration, security personnel, port authorities, commercial banks, clearing and forwarding agents, insurance companies. Dry Ports in landlocked and transit developing countries should be promoted;

23. We reaffirm that pipelines provide a cost-effective means of transport for both oil and natural gas. We encourage landlocked and transit developing countries to cooperate and coordinate actions to construct pipelines along the most cost-effective and most suitable routes;

24. We stress that air transport requires enormous resources for infrastructure investment and a strong supporting framework to optimize connectivity, in particular the improvement of air navigations services, airport systems, facilitation, intermodality, and airline activities. Furthermore, we encourage the promotion of sustainable synergies between air transport, tourism and trade;

25. We stress that the harmonization, simplification and standardization of rules and documentation should be promoted, including through the full and effective implementation of international conventions on transport and transit and bilateral, sub-regional and regional agreements. We urge Member States to accede to and ratify in a timely fashion relevant international, regional and sub-regional conventions and other legal instruments related to transit, transport and trade facilitation and ensure their effective implementation, with a view to reduce transport prices and time for the landlocked developing countries;

26. We stress that cooperation on fundamental transit policies, laws and regulations between landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours is crucial for the effective and integrated solution of cross-border trade and transit transport problems, and underline that this cooperation should be promoted on the basis of the mutual interests of both landlocked developing countries and transit countries, with a view to facilitate a transformative change in the lives of the people;

27. We underscore the importance that transit countries guarantee free and unrestricted and efficient transit through their territories for landlocked developing countries allowing the enjoyment of a free and direct access to high seas;

28. We affirm that traffic in transit shall not be conditioned upon collection of any fees or charges imposed in respect of transit, except the charges for transportation or those commensurate with administrative expenses entailed by transit or with the cost of services rendered and stress that improved trade facilitation, including through further streamlining and harmonization of customs and transit procedures and enhanced transparency is critical for effective utilization of transport corridors;

Means of implementation for sustainable transport

29. We recognize the need for continued international cooperation to address the issues relating to transport and transit corridors as a major contribution to sustainable development;

30. We encourage the organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, relevant international financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and the private sector to further coordinate their efforts and to collaborate in enhancing financial and technical assistance to landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries for the sustainable and inclusive development of transport;
31. We reaffirm the importance of North-South cooperation and strengthening of South-South and triangular cooperation to support the development efforts of LLDCs and commend the efforts made towards building transit transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries. We request that these efforts be scaled up and reiterate that South-South cooperation is a complement to, rather than a substitute for North-South cooperation;
32. We stress that partnerships between landlocked developing countries and transit countries are mutually beneficial for the improvement and regular maintenance of their infrastructure connectivity and of technical and administrative arrangements in their transport, customs and logistic systems. We therefore encourage landlocked and transit countries to allocate a greater share of public investment to the development and maintenance of sustainable transport infrastructure, with the support of development partners;
33. We call upon development partners to assist landlocked and transit developing countries to establish multilateral sustainable and efficient transit transport regimes involving public and private stakeholders and to encourage and support the sharing of best practices related to experiences, policies and initiatives;
34. We encourage the World Bank and other multilateral development banks, including regional banks such as Inter-American Development Bank, Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to address gaps in trade, transport and transit-related regional infrastructure, including by completing missing links connecting, inter alia, landlocked developing countries within regional networks; and to establish dedicated infrastructure funding for the LLDCs and provide them with a special window and facilities for allocation of resources for infrastructure development and maintenance, to undertake analytical work and provide support towards better project preparation;
35. We call for a rapid ratification and implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. We urge members to continue to provide and enhance technical, financial and capacity building assistance to LLDCs, on a sustainable basis, for the effective implementation of the Agreement;
36. We welcome the launch of the Global Infrastructure Forum, led by the multilateral development banks, on 16 April 2016 in Washington, DC. We stress that the Forum should address the infrastructure needs of the landlocked developing countries in a focused manner;
37. We welcome the Global Infrastructure Facility established by multilateral development banks and call for giving special priority to LLDCs in accessing funds from such facility;
38. We encourage new MDBs, such as the New Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, to expand the allocation of finance and technical assistance for sustainable transport infrastructure and services to landlocked developing countries;
39. We welcome the launch on 26 September 2015 of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Transport, developed by the International Road Transport Union and the United Nations Global Compact and stress that the Partnership should give particular attention to the needs of LLDCs;

40. We recognize the need to develop the necessary policies and regulatory frameworks to promote private sector involvement in transport infrastructure development and promote an enabling environment to attract foreign direct investment;

41. We underscore the need to mobilize, as appropriate, additional financial resources for the development and maintenance of sustainable transport infrastructure and services in LLDCs, including through the promotion of public-private partnerships, so as to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. We encourage the involvement of road, rail, inland waterway and air transport business associations in public-private partnership projects;

42. We encourage innovative solutions, entrepreneurship and the use of modern, cost-effective and locally adapted technologies in the transport sector;

43. We urge the development partners to provide financial and capacity-building support to LLDCs to enable them to advance research and expand environment-friendly and sustainable transport systems and technologies;

44. We encourage international organizations to make use of transport-related climate funding mechanisms available to LLDCs;

45. We call upon the United Nations system, other international organizations, multilateral and regional development banks, multilateral and bilateral donors, and the private sector to provide LLDCs and their transit countries with comprehensive and long term capacity-building support in order to help them develop bankable sustainable transport projects and design public policies that can support sustainable infrastructure investments;

Way forward

46. We call on the United Nations and other international organizations to provide technical assistance and capacity building support to LLDCs with regard to establishing comprehensive monitoring and evaluation methodologies for sustainable transport in the context of the SDGs and the VPoA;

47. We commit ourselves to engage fully in the implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to develop and further improve transport systems for the benefit of the LLDCs and to promote sustainable transport in the LLDCs by strengthening the coordination of LLDCs and transit countries and fully implement the outcomes and recommendations of this meeting;

48. We welcome and support the regional initiatives for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, such as the initiative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the Republic of Paraguay to launch, with the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), a regional plan of work for the implementation of the Vienna Program of Action in South America, combining the update of analytical Studies with training and strengthening of the regional dialogue in accordance with the objectives and priorities of the Vienna Program of Action;

49. We also welcome and support the other regional initiatives such as the Northern Corridor Integration Projects (NCIP) in Eastern Africa for strengthened partnerships between landlocked and transit countries in priority areas of regional integration and infrastructure development in transport and energy which is in line with the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;

50. We call on all development partners and financial institutions to enhance the allocation of financial resources to accelerate the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and related services in LLDCs, to complement their national efforts and investment;

51. We call upon Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries in the outcome document of the Global Sustainable Transport Conference to be held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, in particular pertaining to sustainable

transport systems and infrastructure, including transit and border crossing infrastructure, efficient transport and transit operations and procedures, adequate legal frameworks for transit transport, ensuring unhindered access to and from the sea and sufficient financing for sustainable transport in order to link them to international markets;

Acknowledgment

52. We thank the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for hosting this meeting and for its generous hospitality extended to us during our stay in Santa Cruz;

53. We express our sincere appreciation for the efforts undertaken by Zambia in its capacity as the Global Chair of the Group of LLDCs and by Paraguay in its capacity of Coordinator for trade and development issues of the Group of LLDCs in Geneva;

54. We express our gratitude to the substantive support and financial contribution of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs and Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to the Meeting;

55. We also note with appreciation the active participation and substantive contributions of other development partners such as UN system organizations, other international organizations, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders.