

Summary of Side Event

The side event “Making the Road Sector a Key Vehicle for Sustainable Development” was organized by ESCAP on 26 November 2016 during the Global Sustainable Transport Conference. The delegations of the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan attended the event. The representative of ECE also attended the event. Some other delegations collected the materials from the event.

Mr. Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Executive Secretary for Sustainable Development, ESCAP, opened the side event. H.E. Mr. Jeong-ho Choi, Vice Minister, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, the Republic of Korea, and H.E. Mr. Kosayew Annadurdy, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Motor Transport, Turkmenistan, delivered their keynote speeches. Mr. Yuwei Li, Director, Transport Division, ESCAP, made a presentation on the latest ESCAP study entitled “Making the Road Sector a Key Vehicle for Sustainable Development”.

The study summarized that roads played a significant role in economic and social development as the most efficient, convenient and flexible mode of transport but the sector was facing overwhelming challenges under the 2030 development agenda:

- Road transport consumes 77 per cent of the energy used within the transport sector and produces more than 75 per cent of total CO₂ emissions of the sector;
- Globally 1.25 million people were killed on roads;
- There are 1.78 billion road vehicles and this figure increases by two digit every year in many countries;
- Road is more internationalized but facing difficulties to cross the border;
- More road vehicles are used to attack people by terrorists;
- Vehicles carrying dangerous goods cause huge damage to people, property and the environment.

The study identified insufficient intergovernmental support at international level as a key cause of the challenges in the road sector. Recognizing the significant role of intergovernmental support for other modes of transport, like International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the study proposed the establishment of an intergovernmental international organization for roads to help align the sector with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

After the introduction, ESCAP answered questions from the participants of the side event. Some participants advised ESCAP to solicit further views on the report in order to further detail the case for such an organization to transform the road sector to a more formalized and regulated industry.