

**Briefing to Member States by USG Wu  
Global Sustainable Transport Conference  
(26-27 November 2016, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan)**

**20 October 2016  
1:15-2:30 pm  
Conference room 12**

**[Introduction]**

Good afternoon.

Welcome to this joint briefing by the Mission of Turkmenistan and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Let me start with some background on this Conference.

As part of his initiatives in advancing climate action and sustainable development, the Secretary-General identified sustainable transport as one of the building blocks of his priorities for sustainable development.

One major initiative in this regard is the convening of the first-ever global sustainable transport conference.

Sustainable transport, including sustainable mobility, is crucial for sustainable development.

It helps drive inclusive growth, provide access to public services, jobs, markets, and it promotes trade.

It empowers women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups to lead a productive life and livelihood.

There are also challenges - transport is the source of growing CO2 emissions and contributes to air pollution and premature deaths.

More than one and quarter million people lose their lives due to traffic accidents, with most such fatalities occurring in developing countries.

Addressing these social, economic and environmental dimensions is therefore critical for advancing the implementation of the SDGS.

### **[GA Resolution]**

Indeed, the General Assembly, by its resolution 70/197 of December 2015, welcomed the initiative of the Secretary-General to convene a global sustainable transport conference.

The Conference, to be held on 26-27 November in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, will build on earlier intergovernmental discussions and be a platform for exchanges of experiences and best practices.

The Secretary-General has encouraged member States, UN system and civil society and business to launch partnership initiatives.

### **[The Government of Turkmenistan]**

The Government of Turkmenistan has generously offered to host this Conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey our deep appreciation to the President and Government of Turkmenistan for having offered to host this important event.

As many of you know, Turkmenistan has worked tirelessly at the General Assembly to advance sustainable multi-modal transport and transit corridors, as important means to connect countries and regions in sustainable development.

### **[Objectives of the Conference]**

Let me reiterate our gratitude to the Government of Turkmenistan for your commitment to sustainable transport and sustainable development, and for your generous support to the Conference.

I would like to add a few more elements.

First: on the objectives of the Conference.

The Conference will bring together key stakeholders from Governments, UN system and other international organizations, the private sector, and civil society.

It will focus on all modes of transport—road, rail, air and waterborne.

Some of the issues to be addressed at the Conference include rural and urban transport, multi-modal transport, public transport, the links of sustainable transport to climate change and energy, road safety, financing, and specific needs of countries in special situations.

A thread running throughout the Conference discussions will be the contribution of sustainable transport to the implementation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and targets.

There are several SDG targets directly addressing transport, such as SDG target 11.2 on access to sustainable transport systems and target 3.6 on road safety.

Sustainable transport also acts as an enabler of action to achieve other SDGs and targets, including on climate change, energy, equality, women empowerment, employment and health.

### **[Programme of the Conference]**

Second: on the programme of the Conference.

The Conference will feature an opening and closing ceremony.

In addition, each day will have a plenary session in the morning to hear statements of commitment and ambition, followed by parallel thematic discussions on various sustainable transport-related topics.

The programme of the Conference has been published on the Conference website<sup>1</sup>.

All United Nations entities working on sustainable transport have been invited to join the effort and are engaged in the preparations for the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/Global-Sustainable-Transport-Conference-2016>

Conference.

Colleagues from different parts of the UN system will support the preparation of concept notes for the thematic discussions and the panelists.

As I mentioned earlier, the Secretary-General is encouraging all member States, UN entities, major groups and other stakeholders to register their commitments and partnerships through the Conference website<sup>2</sup>.

Registered initiatives, which can be entered ahead of or during the Conference, will be an important outcome of the Conference.

### **[Advisory Group]**

Third, let me also bring you up to date on the Advisory Group.

As you may know, as an integral part of his action agenda on sustainable transport, the Secretary-General also appointed a High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport.

The Group has worked continuously for over two years in order to provide a global message and recommendations on sustainable transport and will launch its Global Sustainable Transport Outlook Report on 28 October 2016 and hand it over to the Secretary-General.

The report will provide an important contribution to the Conference.

In the same vein, I would also like to mention that High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia last week, will also serve as an important input to the Conference.

The meeting addressed particularly the challenges faced by landlocked developing countries and provided excellent recommendation for the Conference in Ashgabat.

### **[Information Note]**

Turning to the practical arrangements, DESA as Conference Secretariat has prepared a detailed information note that includes all the necessary information, including on accreditation of Delegations, inscription to the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/Global-Sustainable-Transport-Conference-2016>

speakers' list and other topics.

The note also includes the details for the accreditation procedure for the representatives of the UN system, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the private sector.

The information note has been circulated to all Permanent Missions here in New York. It has also been published on the Conference website that can be found through the UN website [sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org)<sup>3</sup>.

**Registration** for all categories of participants is now open. The pre-accreditation for Member States has been opened by the United Nations Protocol and Liaison Service.

We do strongly urge you to make use of the pre-accreditation option for Delegates before 17 November 2016 here in New York, since this will simplify the process and shorten wait times in Ashgabat.

You will find the details in the information note.

Now I would like also to make a brief update on other activities.

### **[Other Activities]**

**Side events** sponsored by Governments, UN system and other inter-governmental organizations, as well as major groups and other stakeholders, will be organized on the margins of the official meetings of the Conference.

The side events will allow additional informal space for sharing experiences and provide alternative opportunities for dialogue. The deadline to register side events of 17 October 2016 has passed and the requests are currently being reviewed.

In the margins of the Conference, **a Treaty Event** will be held. The event will be used to ratify, accept, approve or accede to a number of transportation treaties.<sup>4</sup> On 7 September, the Deputy Prime Minister of

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<sup>3</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/Global-Sustainable-Transport-Conference-2016>

<sup>4</sup> 1) International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Control of Goods; 2) Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs); 3) Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network; 4) Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network; 5) Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports; 6) Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention); 7) Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Conditions for Periodical Technical Inspections of Wheeled Vehicles and the Reciprocal Recognition of Such Inspections; 8) European Agreement concerning the

Turkmenistan and I sent a joint letter to the Foreign Ministers of Member States through the Permanent Missions in New York to invite them to the Treaty Event.

We would like to urge Member States to use the opportunity of the event to submit your country's instruments of ratification and/or accession to the transport related legal instruments listed in the letter.

I would like to remind delegations that instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession should be submitted for verification to the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations at least four weeks in advance of the Treaty Event.

### **[Business Forum]**

In addition to the official Conference side events, the Government of Turkmenistan will host a business forum in parallel to the Conference on 27 November. More information on this can be found from the Host Country's dedicated website for the Conference.

The Government of Turkmenistan will also provide information about the Conference social programme at a later stage.

On behalf of the Secretary-General I would like to join the Host Government in reassuring all participants that we will work together with all stakeholders to make sure that the first-ever Global Sustainable Transport Conference conclude successfully, with tangible, forward-looking and action –oriented outcomes.

Let us seize this unique opportunity to forge a new paradigm for the “sustainable transport we need” in the era of the SDGs, and to find concrete solutions to the challenges we face.

Hence, we hope to see you all in Ashgabat in November 2016.

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International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR); 9) Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used for such Carriage (ATP); 10) Convention on Road Traffic; 11) Convention on Road Signs and Signals; 12) Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and /or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions; and 13) Agreement concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and / or be used on Wheeled Vehicles.

The Division for Sustainable Development of DESA is serving as the substantive Secretariat for the Conference.

DSD colleagues will stay behind after this briefing to answer any questions you may have about the arrangements for the Conference.