

Brief remarks on behalf of UN DESA
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The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of UN (UN DESA) promotes and supports international cooperation to achieve development for all, and assists governments in agenda-setting and decision-making on development issues at the global level. DESA provides a broad range of analytical products and policy advice that serve as valuable sources of reference and decision-making tools for developed and developing countries, particularly in translating global commitments into national policies and action and in monitoring progress towards the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

As you also know, the 18th and 19th sessions of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) to be held in 2010 and 2011, will focus on 5 main themes -

1. 10 year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production;
2. Transport;
3. Waste;
4. Chemicals; and
5. Mining.

to undertake an overall evaluation of progress in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, while focusing in greater depth on identifying constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation as well as to address policy options and actions to address these constraints and obstacles.

Transport being one of the thrust areas of the current CSD cycle, the launching of this Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport is a very encouraging development.

As Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General of DESA, mentioned -“the access to goods and services is critically important for developing countries to engage in economic activity needed for development - especially those with the least ability to engage in markets. DESA supports this partnership which seeks innovative approaches to rework the way in which transport has been developing. We must ensure access for all while limiting the negative impacts of inefficiency in transport systems, including greenhouse gas emissions”

From the Under-Secretary-General’ message it is clear that while there is a need to address social and economic dimensions of the transport, there is a need to promote low carbon transport at the same time through effective policy and planning. Sustainable development and economic growth is supported by better access to and for goods or services. Developing countries are in need of transport systems especially for the rural poor so that they can access and join the market but funding of roads for economic development is becoming less of a priority. Increasingly the rural poor are moving to urban centers putting significant pressure on urban systems. This trend coupled with population and economic growth could create critical challenges in transport activity.

There are a number of key questions that must be addressed now in order to transition to a low carbon transport efficient economy within 2050:

How much motorized transport is needed for development?

How can urban form, regional planning, and infrastructure be designed to maximize access and mobility?

How the transport decisions and investments could be made pro-poor and at the same time climate friendly?

What are the benefits in terms of health, time saving, energy cost, climate change mitigation and poverty reduction?

Can these multiple benefits be assured simultaneously?

Hope this new Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport to be launched this evening officially could actively help address these questions as well as contribute options and advice on the development of sustainable transport systems worldwide to complement the objectives under the international climate change negotiations. We also know that there is a challenging task ahead for all of us in view of the Copenhagen negotiation.

Finally, UN DESA wishes all successes of the Partnership and encourages all the partners, countries, to effectively contribute under this Partnership.

Thank you.