

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION AND REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC FOR 2022 TO 2026





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Ministerial Declaration and Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026)

The fourth session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Bangkok and online from 14 to 17 December 2021 adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and a new Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026). At its seventy-eighth session held from 23 to 27 May 2022, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted the Resolution 78/3 on Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific.

Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific

We, the Ministers of transport and representatives of the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific attending the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport, held in Bangkok and online, from 14 to 17 December 2021,

Reaffirming our commitment to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",

Bearing in mind Commission resolution 75/3 of 31 May 2019 on advancing partnerships within and across regions for the sustainable development of Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling Commission resolution 76/2 of 21 May 2020 on regional cooperation to address the socioeconomic effects of pandemics and crises in Asia and the Pacific and Commission resolution 77/1 of 29 April 2021 on building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific,

Acknowledging the mutual understanding and comprehensive response to the challenges, restoring connectivity and building resilient transport networks,

Recognizing the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – and in this regard, underscoring the importance of the environmental dimension in the context of sustainable transport, highlighting in particular the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ and that countries may seek to apply a climate and environment-responsive approach to building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic,

¹ See United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

^{*} ESCAP/78/L.1.

Cognizant of the importance of Commission resolution 76/1 of 21 May 2020 on strengthening cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific,

Attaching continued importance to General Assembly resolution 75/313 of 29 July 2021 on strengthening the links between all modes of transport to ensure stable and reliable international transport for sustainable development during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, Assembly resolution 70/197 of 22 December 2015 on comprehensive cooperation among all modes of transport for promoting sustainable multimodal transit corridors and Assembly resolution 69/213 of 19 December 2014 on the role of transport and transit corridors in ensuring international cooperation for sustainable development,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 74/15 of 5 December 2019 on the Political Declaration of the High-level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 and Assembly resolution 74/217 of 19 December 2019 on the follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Emphasizing that unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation are key to building back better from the pandemic, focusing on the opportunities that the pandemic provides to harness innovation in the sector and to help to provide safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all,

Acknowledging the need for persistent efforts to address the road safety crisis, as called for in the Stockholm Declaration² and General Assembly resolution 74/299 of 31 August 2020 on improving global road safety, and as called for in the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030 and the related Global Plan of Action,

² See www.roadsafetysweden.com/about-the-conference/stockholm-declaration/.

Reaffirming Sustainable Development Goal target 11.2 on providing access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety and expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons,

Noting that continued progress in the area of automotive and smart transport systems could improve transport connectivity, traffic efficiency, users' convenience and road safety, including through the progressive development of highly and fully automated vehicles, smart mobility and other technologies,

Underscoring the need for continuously improved infrastructure of member States in order to facilitate regional and interregional transport connectivity and sustainability, including through the role of digitalization and automation.

Recognizing that the new developments in digitalization, such as big data, artificial intelligence, machine learning, the Internet of things, blockchain and automation, are of increasing relevance to improving mobility and the operationalization of the regional transport network,

Taking note of the Bangkok Declaration on City and Transport: Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability, adopted at the Regional Meeting for Asia and the Pacific on City and Transport: Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability, held in Bangkok and online on 9 and 10 June 2021,³ in which the meeting participants recognized the importance of safe, efficient and sustainable urban transport systems and reaffirmed the importance of quality, efficient, safe and environmentally friendly public transport for the creation of comfortable living conditions in cities and towns, as well as for the improvement of the health and well-being of the population and the inclusion of these populations in the socioeconomic dynamics of their cities and agglomerations,

³ See www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/BangkokDeclarationOnSustainableUrban Transport_10Jun2021-Adopted.pdf.

Emphasizing the importance of the further development of urban public transport systems and the facilitation of non-motorized transport for more equitable, healthier and less congested urban environments,

Commending the application of the sustainable urban transport index as an effective tool for enhancing overall sustainability of urban mobility in cities,

Recognizing the need to accelerate the transition to clean energy technologies and electric mobility including in public transport, the use of renewable energy in transport and the establishment of an electric mobility initiative for the region,

Recognizing also the importance of alternative fuels and ongoing national initiatives to increase adoption of such fuels in place of conventional fuels,

Stressing the importance of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport links for the economic development of the Asia-Pacific region in the context of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recognizing the need to continue the active efforts of the Commission in the comprehensive promotion of advanced management, technical and technological solutions aimed at developing sustainable supply chains with a particular focus on regional and interregional connectivity,

Noting the role of multimodal transport corridors in the Asia-Pacific region for the development of trade relations between the member States,

Recognizing the importance of integrating different modes of transport for an efficient and sustainable transport system in Asia and the Pacific,

Noting the efforts of member States to further strengthen the transport connectivity of landlocked countries in the Asia-Pacific region, notably, by promoting multimodal freight transport along existing and emerging interregional corridors and enhancing transport connectivity between

Central Asia and other subregions, by, inter alia, exploring the establishment of a regional centre for the development of transport connectivity under the auspices of the United Nations,

Supporting seamless integrated corridors of areas with high potential and the establishment of connections between Asia and Europe, with special attention to the role of cross-border multimodal and in particular railway connectivity in accelerating regional development and regional integration,

Supporting also the efforts of member States with regard to the coordinated development of multimodal transport corridors, in line with the activities outlined in the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022–2026),

Noting the ongoing national efforts of member States to enhance the sustainability of freight transport in the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, and considering that a regional approach to sustainable multimodal freight transport would provide the required focus and ensure that the benefits of sustainable multimodal freight transport are maximized and the negative externalities minimized,

Recognizing that the exceptional circumstances created by the COVID 19 pandemic have positioned transport connectivity as an integral part of pandemic response and recovery policies and of further progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, and calling for special attention to be paid to the issue of railway transport, which demonstrated its resilience during

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