

Bangkok Declaration

Regional Meeting for Asia and the Pacific

“City and Transport: Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability”

Virtual Meeting, Bangkok, 9 and 10 June 2021

We, participants of the Regional Meeting for Asia and the Pacific on the “City and Transport: Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability” gathered in a virtual format on 9-10 June 2021 in line with the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) adopted in the Third Session of the ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Transport (Moscow, Russian Federation, 5-9 December 2016) and as recommended in the first international conference "City and Transport: Safety, Efficiency, and Sustainability" (Khabarovsk, Russian Federation, 4-5 September 2017):

Noting the key role of urban transport systems in meeting the transport needs of the population, developing urban economies and improving the quality of life in the context of urbanization and current trends in the motorization of population in agglomerations;

Drawing attention to the negative aspects of the current state of urban transport systems in a number of cities in the Asia-Pacific region, such as uncontrolled growth of motorization of urban traffic, insufficient level of quality and attractiveness of urban passenger transport to serve the needs of the population at a high level of operating costs, traffic congestion, excessive level of greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants from motorized transport, high number of road crashes, including fatal crashes;

Affirming as a key objective of sustainable urban transport policy the integration of transport and urban planning to effectively and harmoniously meet the public demand and needs for transport services, ensuring a high quality of urban transport system services and a decent level of accessibility of urban areas;

Reaffirming 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 well-being and health of the population and the inclusion of these populations in the socio-economic dynamics of their cities and agglomerations;

Noting that in many developing cities urban development and transport infrastructure planning are implemented in different points of time causing unexpected alternation in traffic use and shifting from prior traffic forecast used for infrastructure planning; and cases like these can often result in under-utilized or over-utilized urban transport facilities, the land use planning and development of public transport need to go hand in hand synergically;

Noting the increasing use of micromobility which refers to a range of small, lightweight vehicles operating at speeds typically below 25 km/h and driven by users personally, including bicycles, e-bikes, electric scooters, electric skateboards and non-motorized modes of transport in cities as first- and last-mile and short-distance transport;

Supporting the deployment of infrastructure for micromobility and non-motorized transport in cities, including shared mobility, to improve public health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollutants;

Welcoming the increased use of "electric mobility", including the development of urban electric public transport - subways, urban rail, trams, trolleybuses, electric buses, and electrified and hybrid personal vehicles and unlocking access to financing for new business models underpinned by those initiatives;

Noting the measures being introduced in the ESCAP region's cities to organize urban traffic with priority given to public transport, traffic calming, and limiting the use of personal vehicles, including through the creation of vehicle-free zones;

Supporting the further digitalization of urban transport systems carried out to manage traffic, public passenger transport, and improve the quality of transport services to the population;

Noting the importance of modernizing the rolling stock and infrastructure of urban passenger transport through the introduction of more environmentally friendly modes of urban transport, energy (fuel) used, as well as to ensure the reliability, comfort and safety of travel for all groups of the population;

Noting the effectiveness of economic methods to stimulate the use of public transport, the introduction of environmentally friendly and safe technologies in urban transport;

Noting the road safety related SDG targets 3.6 which is by 2030, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes and target 11.2 which is by 2030 provide access to safe, affordable, accessible transport system for all, improving road safety notably by extending public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

Drawing attention to the need to provide convenient, safe and reliable transport services to all population groups without exception, regardless of sex, age and social status through the formation of multimodal transport solutions with barrier-free transfers from one mode to another, providing transport services to a single quality standard throughout the agglomeration;

Acknowledging the need to address gender equality in use of transport modes, in time use, in access to resources for travel, and in mobility and safety that limit the ability of women to benefit from transport infrastructure and the need to mainstream gender issues in transport policy engagement;

Particularly noting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the urban transport behavior of the population in cities and the need to adapt urban transport systems to the changing transport needs of residents, ensuring safe conditions for healthy travel by urban transport;

Recognizing that research and collaboration among different parties on knowledge and experience sharing may go a long way to provide common solutions to urban transport challenges of today's world and given the importance of regularly sharing best practices in the creation and efficient operation of urban transport systems;

Recognizing the importance of safe, efficient and sustainable urban transport system which will ensure seamless connectivity especially during the time of pandemic, and of a need to enhance regional cooperation and sharing best practices in this regard;

Noting that the development and management of public transport is a continuous process and the ever-growing need for new urban transport facilities and maintenance of the existing ones calls for an efficient manpower to be developed and involves in the urban transport sector:

Recognized as necessary to:

1. Note that despite the new reality associated with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global threats of similar pandemics in the future, the problems of ensuring the sustainability of urban transport systems do not lose their relevance, although they require some transformation of tasks and approaches for their solution. As the need for safe travel during the current global pandemic situation has never been - more emphasized as of now, it is necessary that commuters are given guidance about healthy behavior while using public transportation so that safety is ensured for all the passengers and promote travel demand management measures to ensure health and safety in pandemics;

2. Continue support of efforts to improve the organization of public passenger transport as a key element of the transport systems of cities and urban agglomerations, ensuring efficient, high-quality and safety for life and health transport of passengers, including measures for:

- introduction of quality urban transport services to the population by increased interaction and consolidated efforts of state, public and private;
- promote transit-oriented development (TOD) to establish commercial, housing, jobs, parks and civil amenities within walking distance of transit stop for smart growth;
- improvement of the urban transport management systems, contributing to the motivation of carriers to increase the quality of service, the development of feedback aimed at eliminating the deviations of the system from the quality standards;
- increase of the efficiency of the urban transport network by increasing the share of rolling stock and types/ modes of urban transport of higher capacity, which helps to reduce operating costs, environmental costs and damage from road crashes;
- increase of the efficiency of transfer hubs by drastically reducing walking distances, prioritizing the organization of cross-platform transfers and transfers on a common platform;
- renewal of the rolling stock, its safety, environmental friendliness and comfort, ensuring accessibility for groups of people with limited mobility;
- introduction of attractive tariff systems and electronic fare payment systems;
- deployment of dedicated infrastructure for the movement of public passenger transport (including options for axial placement of dedicated lines in the street profile to increase the speed of service), the separation of tram and other rail tracks from road transport;
- development of urban electric transport (subway lines, light rails, trams, electric buses, trolley buses, urban rail and electric 2 and 3 wheelers) and bus rapid transit lines (BRT);
- introduction of information and telecommunication technologies;
- implementation of effective methods and systems of preventive cleaning and disinfection of rolling stock and infrastructure.

- facilitation of collective knowledge in ensuring sustainability of public transport facilities around the world.

3. Give priority, where possible and appropriate, to creating conditions for the development and safe and inclusive use of active mobility, such as cycling and walking (including the creation of dedicated cycling infrastructure and promoting the development of green corridors for harbouring those walking and cycling infrastructures, given the co-benefits on better health of city dwellers and pollution absorption); and integrated transport and land use planning fostering walkability and cycling at neighbourhood level and shared mobility for longer distance;

4. Welcome decisions on the mutual integration of transport and spatial planning documents as an essential part of measures to ensure the efficiency and sustainability of urban transport systems, increase accessibility of the urban environment, reduce the generation of excessive urban transport demand, including through urban planning that prioritize activity and consumption centers positioned close to housing, and widely use of transport modeling methods for this purpose;

5. Introduce measures to implement a systematic approach to improve the safety of urban transport systems, reduce the number of fatalities and casualties in crashes ("Safe System Approach");

6. Develop the use of mechanisms to manage transport demand and mobility of the population, to implement schemes and tools for ride sharing;

7. Encourage adoption of national policies for modal shift from road to rail to reduce GHG from urban transport;

8. Promote the widespread implementation of digital technologies and solutions in urban transport systems, including the management of urban transport and traffic, the introduction of autonomous and automatic driving systems, user information, real time and big data, artificial intelligence, etc.;

9. Promote the focus on public transport users through Mobility as a Service (MaaS) to create an integrated framework to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness in the increasing complexity of choices in the urban mobility environment;

10. Welcome measures for the use of electricity, hydrogen and alternative fuels in urban transport as the most important direction for increasing the environmental and climate safety of transport;

11. Pay necessary attention to the issues of urban transport provision for a better connectivity of remote and isolated territories;

12. Provide equal access to quality transport services for all categories of citizens, including people with limited mobility;

13. Promote the safety of women and girls in urban transport from sexual harassment, employment opportunities for women to work in the urban transport sector, consideration of gender and social dimensions at policy engagement level in relation to urban

transport policy and planning, and consideration of socio-cultural contexts and gender-sensitive infrastructure designs to maximize benefits for women;

14. Introduce effective methods of traffic management, take measures to redistribute road space in favor of the safest and most environmentally friendly modes of transport and travel, implement an effective parking policy to reduce congestion on the urban street and road network and implement comprehensive parking management to ensure effective use of limited urban space for all users;

15. Take measures to increase public participation in the debate on transport projects and solutions in urban transport, promote public transport services and active mobility, including through necessary information campaigns;

16. Put emphasis on developing skilled, experienced, and efficient manpower to meet the new challenges of the transport problems;

17. Consider development of an intelligent transport systems (ITS) council or a similar coordination mechanism to formulate ITS management policy for urban transport and support research and development activities;

18. Promoting integrated multimodal urban transport network to serve the urban transport demand effectively;

19. Continue active dialogue within the framework of ESCAP on the issues of environmentally friendly and gender-sensitive urban transport, as well as collaboration with the relevant international organizations and recommended to continue the practice of holding international events on the topic "City and transport: safety, efficiency, sustainability" on a regular basis.