Honourable Ministers,

Expert Speakers and Moderators;

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Let me start with my gratitude to the Transport Division of UNESCAP for inviting me to address this august forum.

It is indeed heartening to see the global community conscious of its collective responsibilities even in these difficult times of COVID-19 pandemic. We stand challenged but undefeated in the face of several problems. The secret to success lays in mutual cooperation of nations for our generations. The sustainable transport may lead to poverty eradication and economic recovery from COVID-19.

The issue of sustainability is rightly rising to the top of governments agendas around the globe. It’s a discussion that involves every level of government, from municipalities to provinces and federal governments. It affects every community, town and city.

You will appreciate that the Government of Pakistan, National Command and Control Authority (NCOC) devised a comprehensive strategy and an effective implementation mechanism of smart lock downs and enabled optimal mobility during the COVID-19 pandemic. We saved millions of people from falling into poverty trap and kept transport activity going on. It was unlike Neighbouring countries where daily wage earners, millions of laborer went under poverty causing more misery in shape of higher infections, deaths and lost livelihoods.

Excellencies,

The Government of Pakistan under the dynamic leadership of our Prime Minister is fully committed to turning around its economy and develop it into a stable and truly progressive country. We have embarked upon various infrastructure development programs to enhance the regional connectivity, improve efficiency of transport and trade logistics sector. Our vision is to provide safe, reliable, affordable and modern means of communications which effectively supports the economy and act as a catalyst for the socio-economic growth. The Pakistan is committed to UN agenda for Road Safety. National Road Safety Strategy was approved in 2018 with a view to save 6000 lives by 2030

Our Government in collaboration with China has initiated China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. CPEC is not just a bilateral project between Pakistan and China, it will serve as a fate changer for this entire region. CPEC will improve quality of life through social
and economic interventions. It also seeks to establish special economic zones, which will create tremendous trade and economic opportunities. Development of Gwadar Port and construction of eastern, western and central alignments will connect all the provinces.

Mr. Chairman!

No one can deny that the sustainable transport connectivity can only be achieved if infrastructure is built and services are delivered through sound policies, adequate institutions, and harmonized norms, standards and practices.

The Government of Pakistan is giving the highest priority to sustainable transport means through sound policies and harmonized standards. Mass transit systems in the form of BRT called METRO are operating in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Lahore. Green line Bus system has been launched in Karachi. Government is also committed to revive Karachi circular railways. These projects will not only benefit millions of commuters but will also go a long way in promoting the sustainable transport means in the country.

The Government of Pakistan is committed to curb harmful effects of emissions to mitigate and adapt to the country of climate change. Transportation accounts for 43% of the airborne emissions. Therefore, the Government of Pakistan has developed National Electric Vehicle Policy to ensure meeting the clean air targets. We hope that this policy will begin an era of in the country that we desperately need for our future generations.

Although we are a small contributor to environmental degradation, however, as a responsible State, we have started “Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme”. This is an ambitious project supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and sets out to plant ten billion trees by 2023. Launched in 2019, the project has just reached a new milestone i.e planting of the billionth tree.

We are emphasizing and adopting renewable energy, electric vehicle technology, sustainable bio-fuels, Intelligent Transport Systems to resolve the issues to a great extent.

Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen!

In the end, I again thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.
Thank you and God bless you all.

******