The 4th Ministerial Conference on Transport

on Agenda item 7. Policy statements on scaling up sustainable transport initiatives in Asia and the Pacific to strengthen regional cooperation

Thursday, 16 December, 14:00-16:00(BKK)

By H.E. Mr. Hwang Seong Kyu, Vice Minister of Transport
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Republic of Korea

Honorable Executive-Secretary Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana and
Distinguished Chair and delegations from each member state,

I am Hwang Seong Kyu, Vice Minister for Transport at the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea.

First of all, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Secretariat for such excellent arrangements for this conference despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

This year marks the fifteenth year since our first conference was held in 2006 in Busan, Republic of Korea.

While two more conferences were convened during the course, the ROK has made active contributions in enhancing transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific by working closely through ESCAP.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to reassure all of you that the ROK will continue to make every effort to support ESCAP’s development as well as stronger cooperation in transport in the region.

Excellencies and distinguished delegations,

Transport development helps people and goods travel longer distances for shorter time.

With more advanced transport systems, we can enjoy better opportunities for work, education, medical services, leisure activities, etc.
Considering this, establishing efficient networks and providing seamless services in transport is an essential task for every nation.

It is also a prerequisite for building a sustainable community on our planet.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic that lasted for almost two years has affected virtually every facet of human activities.

More than anything else, activities and patterns in the movement of people and goods have changed dramatically.

Facing this massive change, we are being called upon to prepare for the future of transport together.

For this, we need to make timely responses to ongoing or emerging challenges, including international politics, pandemic, climate crisis, digitalization, carbon neutrality, and a platform economy.

In the process of transformation, we must be determined to leave no one behind, envisioning a sustainable transport future for all.

In that sense, our ministerial declaration and 2022-2026 regional action programme at hand clearly demonstrate our strong will to cooperate in transport in order to achieve a more advanced level of inclusive recovery than before the pandemic.

On a related note, the ROK has implemented the “Korean New Deal” in an effort to embrace a post-pandemic era and fulfill our goal for carbon neutrality.

In particular, we are focusing on building more efficient and resilient transport and logistics networks under the Digital New Deal initiative.

Regarding this, we are committed to sharing our policies on the digitalization of transport networks and deployment of smart logistics systems for enhanced safety and convenience.

Furthermore, we will continue our active research and development efforts and people-to-people exchanges for future-oriented projects on C-ITS, smart mobility, autonomous driving, etc.
Distinguished participants,

In the fight against COVID-19, we have seen that all of us are closely connected, relying on and affecting each other greatly.

I believe this urgent sense of connectivity can be applied to the fulfillment of sustainable transport as well.

Only through solidarity and partnership of the international society, we can build a sustainable community on our planet with a promising future of mobility.

Meanwhile, the widening divide during the pandemic must be recognized seriously.

The international community as a whole is required to address such divide and inequality between regions and countries, which have surfaced in the transition toward a non-face-to-face, digital economy.

The ROK will do its part with continued contribution to inclusive digital transformation by increasing its ODA funds for the establishment of digital infrastructures in least developed countries.

We would like to reiterate our commitment to strengthening cooperation and collaboration within the UN system in tackling the COVID-19 challenge as well as facilitating inclusive recovery and sustainable growth.

In closing, it is my sincere hope that each and every one of us plays a role in bringing the world ever more closely together and leading it into sustainable and shared prosperity.

Thank you.