SEVENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)

Bangkok, 26-29 April 2021

AGENDA ITEM 4(e)
Report of the Committee on Transport on its sixth session
12-13 November 2020

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Ministry of Road and Transport Development
Mongolia

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Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is my honour and privilege to have assumed the chairmanship of the Committee on Transport at its sixth session on 12 and 13 November 2020 and to present its outcomes here at the 77th session of Commission, which is dedicated to such a topical and important theme for our region.

2. The Committee deliberated against the background of the COVID-19 crisis and in full awareness of the vital role of transport connectivity during major global disruptions. Regional cooperation on transport is an integral part of the region’s response to the pandemic and any future efforts to make our region more resilient.

3. Importantly, the Committee recognized the pressing need to holistically incorporate sustainability in all its dimensions in the next phase of the Regional Action Programme 2022-2026 that will be considered for adoption at the fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport in late 2021.

4. Against this background, the Committee adopted 6 key recommendations, addressing the cross-cutting impact of transport on society, the new challenges arising in line with the region’s development agenda and the inevitable links to the issues of sustained economic development, environmental protection, climate change, resilience and social inclusion:

   (a) The Committee recommended that initiatives on sustainable freight and transport connectivity for efficient and resilient supply chains be taken up within the ESCAP regional mechanisms, including in the design of the draft of the next phase of the Regional Action Programme.
(b) The Committee recommended the enhancement of efforts to further advance regional and interregional transport connectivity, notably on the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network, maritime ports and networks and intermodal corridors involving dry ports, with due consideration for the situation of the countries with special needs.

(c) The Committee requested the secretariat to explore, in a cost-effective manner, the possibility of including additional stakeholders from government, the private sector and the scientific community as well as from other regions in the discussions on Euro-Asian connectivity.

(d) The Committee recommended that the fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport include relevant environmental dimensions of transport systems and services in the draft of the next phase of the Regional Action Programme, especially on issues such as limiting greenhouse gas emissions, improving energy efficiency, shifting freight and passenger transport to sustainable modes, smart transport systems and smart mobility, and promoting electric mobility and integrated urban transport planning.

(e) The Committee recommended that the fourth Ministerial Conference accord more comprehensive attention to the dimensions of accessibility and inclusion in the design of the next phase of the Regional Action Programme.

(f) The Committee also considered the proposed priority areas for the next phase of the Regional Action Programme 2022-2026 in the context of the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals and recognized
the need to accelerate progress. It, thus, recommended that the next Regional Action Programme will maintain the traditional focus areas such as infrastructure and operational connectivity, road safety, urban transport and digitization of transport and will be designed around three pillars:

- Transport Connectivity for efficient and resilient supply Chains
- Environmentally sustainable transport Systems and services
- Safe and inclusive Transport and mobility

5. On behalf of the Committee, we welcome and count on the continued support of the Commission and of the secretariat in the efforts towards sustainable transport systems in Asia and the Pacific, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

6. This concludes my intervention, thank you Chair.

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