

EC/ARCID/TPTCOM/MIN-12/02/SYMP-7



**UNITED NATIONS**  
**Economic Commission for Africa**

# **SECOND TRANSPORT SYMPOSIUM**

**REPORT AND COMPILATION  
OF PRESENTATIONS**

**May 2002**  
**Addis Ababa**

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## I. Introduction

1. Without transport and communications there could be no exchange and movement of goods, information or people engaged in social activities. As a result, there could be no economic development at the national and regional levels. Transport is central to development and is a decisive factor in the efforts to alleviate poverty and to confront the challenges of globalization and competition. Therefore, it was imperative that the development of the sector features prominent on the political and economic agenda of all African countries, when considering the poverty dimension and the globalization of economies and competition. To respond effectively to the above objectives and challenges, the transportation system in Africa should be sustainable, integrated and safe to meet the needs of the users.

2. The second United Nations Transport and Communication Decade for Africa (UNTACDA II) and Sub-Saharan African Transport Policy Programme (SSATP) as well as the programmes developed by OAU, AfDB the RECs and specialized institutions have been at the forefront in developing and implementing policy reforms and providing assistance to African countries to develop the sector (through policy dialogue), mobilizing resources and disseminating best practices. The programmes and actions initiated by all stakeholders have provided appropriate fora for African Ministers, policy-makers, researchers and the academics to meet and exchange views and experiences and to adopt common positions for transport infrastructure and services.

3. The SSATP and UNTACDA II programmes have helped to develop other components such as RMI, RTTP, urban mobility, railways restructuring, trade and transport. Indeed, during the last Decade, concerted efforts have been made by OAU, AfDB, African countries as well as bilateral and multilateral donors to improve safety, quality of infrastructure and services and mitigating the negative impact of transport on the environment through assistance and fora organized by all stakeholders. In this regard, the First African Transport Symposium was organized by ECA in collaboration with its partners including the AfDB, SSATP and held in Cairo, Egypt in 1997. The event was attended by more than 250 participants including African Ministers and other high-level policy-makers of transport and communications from some 40 countries. The first Symposium adopted a policy framework and areas of concentration for future actions in infrastructure and services development. After more than ten years of implementation, the SSATP has developed various transport policies that need to be implemented by African countries and their existence and objectives need to be disseminated to users for appropriate application in preparing relevant transport policy.

4. The theme selected for the Second Transport Symposium was **"Developing yesterday's African transportation into future's system for reducing poverty and**

**meeting globalization challenges"**, which means drawing lessons from yesterday to design better transport infrastructure and services of tomorrow.

5. The Second Symposium was organized on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2002, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in conjunction with the meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the African Ministers of transport and communications.

### **Objective and expected outcome**

6. The objective of the Symposium was to learn from the lessons of the past in order to assist the participants to translate into operations the various policies and best practices for making the African transport improve the lives of people throughout the continent. The event provided an opportunity for Ministers to meet fellow Ministers, exchange ideas and experiences, meet experts, and representatives of multilateral and bilateral aid agencies from around the world. The Symposium highlighted the following achievable goals:

- Raise awareness of the problems faced;
- Learn from recent experiences gained; share lessons of yesterday and the main challenges of tomorrow transportation;
- Improve networking with others;
- Clarify specific issues;
- Identify strategies which can be used to resolve challenges;
- Identify potential donors for project;
- Recognize contribution made in the sector and quality of work by means of awards; and
- Adopt actions leading to sustainable transport development.

## **II. Account of Proceedings**

7. Five presentations were made in the Transport Symposium focusing on the different issues of transport in Africa. The first presentation was on Transport Infrastructure and policy issues presented by Mr. Nigel Ings, Program Manager of the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy (SSATP) Programme. The presentation clearly outlined the key role played by the SSATP and its various components through helping partner governments in introducing sound approaches to transport sector policy formulation and implementation. The benefits of the outcomes in terms of actual implementation activities and the part they have played in providing enabling environments for sector investment programmes were also discussed. In addition, the role of the SSATP in promoting and facilitating policy implementation concerning international transport and transit were highlighted and then the changing character of the SSATP was noted by the presenter.

8. The second presentation was on Transport Costs in Africa and their various effects was presented by Mr. John Hine of the TRRL, based on four comparative studies which showed that long distances freight transport costs of Africa are many times higher

than those found in comparable operations in Asia. The presentation outlined the key factors leading to high transport costs and suggested possible measures to improve the situation. It also called for a serious look at how a range of interventions in the transport sector may be incorporated into each country's poverty reduction strategy.

9. The third presentation was on public-private partnership in developing and managing road infrastructure, presented by Mr. Anil Bhandari, Road Advisor in the Transport and Urban Development Department of the World Bank. The presentation highlighted the social and economic importance of roads and transport; examined the case for private sector participation in the provision and management of road assets; introduced the different types of public-private partnerships and the key elements in packaging private sector participation; and discussed key success factors and lessons from past experience, including implications for Africa.

10. The fourth presentation was on investment in infrastructure focusing on how to increase private sector participation. It was presented by Mr. John Robert Moon of ESCAP. In his presentation he showed the Asian countries experience, since the 1980's and indicated that many countries in the region are now in the process of introducing policies and taking actions to create more conducive environment to the private sector participation. The presentation showed that based on past experiences, the concept could be further expanded to include more innovative means of financing the development of transport infrastructure through public-private partnerships (PPPs). It also considered some of the actions that were being taken by ESCAP members at the national and sectoral levels, designed to create an environment that was conducive to PPPs.

11. The fifth and final presentation made by Mr. N'Guessan N'Guessan, consultant (INCO TRANS- International Trade and Transport) was on Transportation issues along some West Africa Corridors. The presenter showed the different operational activities in the West African Corridors supported by facts and figures. He indicated that the transport operations in West African Corridors, specifically within ECOWAS and UEMOA, were governed by four principal conventions, namely: Inter-State Road Transport TIR/ECOWAS; Inter-State Transit Transport ITIR/ECOWAS; Brown Card (third party Insurance) ECOWAS and the CIMA Code and International Rail Transport (TIF). He further explained these agreements and proposed that they need to be updated in light of the increasing economic integration and liberalizations in all sectors.

### **III. Issues raised during the Symposium**

12. The followings were points were raised during the discussion that followed the presentations:

*(a) High cost of transport services in Africa and experiences of transport operation in the West-African corridors*

- The need to enforce strong policy measures having positive impact on human behaviour

- Consider removing all the intermediary barriers and maintaining only the principal cross-border control posts
- Consider reducing the fiscal share in operation costs
- Harmonize procedures and establish agreements between countries
- Reduce delays in clearing procedures
- Reduce the number and consolidate the remaining taxes into one for each sub-regional community
- Establish a single window for recovery of taxes
- Establish Community Road Funds to improve the infrastructural maintenance, etc.
- Promote vehicle and spare parts manufacturing in Africa
- Construction of warehouses to address issue of low load factor and consolidation of traffic
- Establish bottle necks monitoring mechanisms
- The need to regularly carry out an assessment of transport costs
- The need to extend the assessment to other modes
- Reduce the “Customs doubt” by adopting the so-called “Plumbed grid” in trucking services.
- Define the integration networks and ensure their maintenance

*(b) Involvement of private sector – PPP*

- Promote integration through the sharing experiences among African countries. Egypt, South Africa and Tunisia have proposed to share their experiences
- The need to include in PPP schemes issues such as the empowerment of women capacity building; promotion of community acceptance
- Caution on the issue of efficiency of privatization, given the major failures that have been recorded worldwide, other possibility as corporatization to be considered.
- The importance to be accorded to environment protection in the design and implementation of projects
- The importance of governments participation, particularly in PPP schemes where cost recovery time is long
- The need for SSATP to prepare a consolidated information and knowledge on PPP experiences in the Transport sector
- The need for Governments to regulate the rate of tolls in relation to subsidization schemes
- ECA to work with ESCAP in developing and sharing knowledge and experiences in PPP
- Necessity to adapt the legal regulation text
- Difficulties of African private sector to participate in the financing of transport infrastructure

*(c) SSATP*

- The need to build ownership of SSATP by establishing closer collaboration with African Institutions.

- The need to extend SSATP programs to North African countries.

#### **IV. Benefits to participants and who attended**

13. The Symposium and discussions lead to:

- Create awareness of emerging issues and policy reform
- Benefit from best practices
- Share experiences
- Network within and across professional group
- Simulate discussion on issues of concern and receive feed back
- Expose participants to challenges
- Provide an opportunity to developing meaningful relationships
- Learn how to tap government and donors resources
- Learn and exchange experiences
- Meet with appropriate people and Ministers within and outside Africa

14. The meeting was attended by:

- African Ministers
- Policy makers
- Planners and engineers
- Researchers and lecturers from institutions and universities
- Environmentalists
- Regulatory organizations
- Bilateral donors
- Senior representatives of the Private Sector
- Representatives of multilateral Aid Agencies.

#### **V. Conclusion**

15. At the closing session, the participants expressed the need to organize such events in the future in order to maintain the momentum and to develop African capacity.

#### **VI. Annexes**

VI.1 Transport infrastructure and policy issues: Case of Sub Saharan African Transport Policy (SSATP)

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VI.1 Transport infrastructure and policy issues:  
Case of Sub Saharan African Transport Policy (SSATP)

(Mr. Nigel Ings, Programme Manager, SSATP)

# ANNEX I

VI.2 Transportation issues along West Africa Corridors:  
Practical case from an operator

(Mr. N'Guessan N'guessan, Consultant, Director of  
INCOTRANS – International Trade and Transport)

**ANNEX II**

VI.3 Transportation cost in Africa

6. (Mr. John Hine from Transport Research Laboratory, United Kingdom)

**ANNEX III**

VI.4 Private sector participation in infrastructure and services

(Mr. Anil Bhandari, World Bank)

**ANNEX IV**

VI.5 Experiences of Asia

(Mr. John Moon, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) )

**ANNEX V**