



2021 ITF VIRTUAL OPEN MINISTERIAL SESSION – SUMMARY

Thursday 27 May 2021, 14:00-15:30

The Open Ministerial provided eight Transport Ministers as well as high-level representatives of international organisations, civil society, and the private sector with an opportunity to exchange views on how governments can better foster innovation in the transport sector. In his opening remarks, the Irish Minister Eamon Ryan noted that addressing this question is key as countries seek to respond to the dual challenges presented by the Covid-19 and the climate crisis. Minister Ryan introduced the Ministerial Declaration that sets out ITF Ministers' collective vision for the transport sector's future. In recognition of the severe disruption caused by the pandemic, the Declaration reaffirms Ministers' commitment to building back better and ensuring a sustainable recovery, which promotes equality of access for all transport users while also seeking to upskill the transport workforce to meet the future challenges.

Ms. Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland and Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, stated that decarbonising transport is the most important challenge for countries across the world. Ms. Robinson recognised that there had been a significant increase of efforts and commitments to achieve climate goals. Ms. Robinson noted that the innovations to help achieve this goal are already available. Good governance and effective investment remain key enablers of innovative solutions and accelerate a transition towards sustainable future. This transition, however, should be just, and take into account affordability and availability of transport services, especially in rural areas.

Mr. Takeshi Uchiyamada, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Toyota, highlighted the importance of innovation in decarbonising transport. Toyota's role in development and deployment of hybrid electric, battery electric, and fuel cell electric vehicles. Scaling up hydrogen can contribute to the decarbonisation of the whole society, and this goal can be accelerated by investment in the necessary infrastructure and distribution channels. He also reminded that. Collaboration among various sectors is essential for a hydrogen-based society to become a reality.

As a comment to Mr. Uchiyamada's intervention, the Swedish Minister Tomas Eneroth highlighted the importance of focussing government initiatives on the "3 Cs": cooperation, competition, and carbon-free solutions. Sweden aims to become the first fossil-free steel nation in the world. Technologies fostering carbon-free solutions already exist in the transport sector, and now is the time to implement them. The Brazilian Vice-Minister Felipe Fernandes Queiroz added that decarbonisation is a key objective for his country and reaffirmed that Brazil aims to achieve carbon-neutrality by 2050.

Mr. Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD, recognised the ITF Summit as an unrivalled platform for a global dialogue for better transport. Mr. Gurría underlined the important work that ITF has been doing to advance transport policy. Mr. Gurria pointed out that with the Covid-19 pandemic it became clear that

all countries are dependent on the movement of people and goods. Therefore, there is a need to plan for a sustainable, affordable, equitable, and resilient future of the transport sector.

In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

The Canadian Minister Omar Alghabra outlined Canada's long-term vision for a safer, more secure and greener transport. Transportation corridors are critical to ensure Canada's competitiveness and economic growth. Action is also taken to reduce pollution across all sectors, including the adoption of zero-emissions vehicles. As connected and automated vehicles have the potential to improve road safety, investment in research and development of these technologies, as well as in infrastructure to support their deployment are key. Skilled, talented and creative people are the backbone of a more innovative society.

The Singaporean Minister S Iswaran noted that innovation lies at the heart of country's transport strategy. The strategy aims to encourage adoption of cutting-edge technology. To achieve this goal, the government provides regulatory sandboxes, encourages partnerships between sectors to co-create innovative solutions, and provides investment in technology, also through the establishment of innovation funds that enable advances in the country's aviation and maritime sectors. The enhanced health protocols necessitated by the pandemic have accelerated Singapore's efforts to foster innovation in transport, for example through the introduction of contactless bunkering operations in ports.

The Portuguese Secretary of State Moreno Delgado highlighted the challenge of restoring consumer trust in the transport sector. Multilateral organisations, such as the ITF, have a very important role to play in alleviating this challenge. Portugal established a special website dedicated to transport during the pandemic, where data from various sources are collected to the benefit to professional drivers. A webpage dedicated to the transport sector in the wake of Covid-19 has recently been added to the website. It compiles best practices from relevant organisations at an international level.

The Norwegian State Secretary Anders Tyvand noted that earlier in the year the government presented a new national transport plan. The plan outlines the national strategy for transport for the next 12 years, which highlights opportunities offered by implementation of new technologies. Mr. Tyvand stressed that good governance can effectively promote innovation. Governments need to embrace innovation-friendly approaches to regulation. International collaboration can help set best practice, ideally through cooperation among transport authorities, research bodies and the private sector.

The Turkish Deputy Minister Fatih Sayan noted that Turkey started developing a new regulatory system to foster innovation in transport, taking into account the existing national, regional and urban plans. Turkey has embarked on a number of innovative project sin transport, including enabling contactless inspection of road vehicles, integration of e-government services into one platform so vehicle owners can easily access relevant information.

In addition, the Netherlands noted that smart and green mobility are key to a more accessible, more sustainable and safer transport. Collaboration between governments and businesses is also essential. In the Netherlands, seven national MaaS pilot projects have started, enabled by public-private partnerships. While Italy highlighted that the pandemic exposed weaknesses in the current administrative processes. They underlined that the replacement of documents within the ECMT quota system with their electronic versions could set the standard for a wider administrative reform.

Ms. Fang Liu, Secretary-General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) underlined that national governments and aviation authorities strongly support new technologies, fuels and operations in aviation. ICAO is monitoring and collecting information on the latest green developments in aviation as it is assisting its member countries with setting the next long-term goal to reduce CO2 emissions from the sector, which will be discussed at the next ICAO General Assembly in 2022. Ms. Liu highlighted the

importance of technological progress to help the sector achieve sustainability. ICAO's standards drive progress in this regard, while setting targets that are not technology-specific.

Mr. Michael Christides, Ambassador of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) noted that improving transport connectivity through innovation is a challenging task. The pandemic has shown the need for more cooperation and coordination not only among, but also within, countries. The crisis has provided everyone with lessons on how world leaders should approach global problems, such as the climate-change crisis.

Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) underlined UNESCAP's efforts to promote sustainable and seamless transport connectivity in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Ms. Alisjahbana highlighted UNESCAP's cooperation with the ITF to develop the Covid-2019 recovery guidelines for resilience and sustainable international road freight transport connectivity in Asia. She also called for creating links between the ITF-led global dialogue on transport policies and the ongoing preparatory work by UNESCAP on the next regional action programme on sustainable transport at the Ministerial Conference on Transport at the end of the year.

Using United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) work on assessing the impacts of short-term decarbonisation measures on the maritime sector, Mr. Jan Hoffman, Chief, Trade and Logistics Branch, UNCTAD, stressed that the implementation of decarbonisation measures will increase costs of maritime logistics, which is a challenge that the governments will need to address. The international transport of goods by ship and by air cannot be excluded from the global decarbonisation efforts. For the private sector to invest in the necessary transport innovation, it needs to have predictable global rules. One way to achieve the right incentives for the private sector, and at the same time a global level playing field, is a global predictable price for carbon.

Mr. Binyam Reja, Acting Global Manager in the World Bank highlighted the importance of a coordinated action to develop and enforce minimum environmental standards. Mr. Reja also noted that tackling the emerging green divide between the Global South and the Global North will require a strategic approach to transport decarbonisation in developing economies, which would go beyond development and deployment of pilot projects.