Statement

by

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Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States

at the
Closing Session
of the

High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of
Landlocked Developing Countries

14 October 2016
Santa Cruz, Bolivia
- Your Excellency H.E. Mr. David Choquehuanca, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia,
- Your Excellency Mr. Milton Claros, Minister of Public Works and Services and Housing of Bolivia, Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General of DESA,
- Distinguished Ministers and delegates,
- Excellencies,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me a great pleasure to address this closing session of the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries. Allow me to first of all express a special thanks and sincere appreciation to you all and my appreciation to the Government of Bolivia and the city of Santa Cruz for hosting this meeting and for the generous and warm hospitality provided during our stay here.

Let me also convey my deep appreciation to all of you for your active participation and valuable contributions to this Meeting. You have come from all regions, and all corners of the world. This meeting has provided an important opportunity to share experience and lessons learned on how to improve transit transport and thereby achieve sustainable transport in your countries which will contribute to promote sustainable development for all. No one size fits all, but there are best practices that have been used in one region which can be replicated or adapted to the national situations in other regions because these are common aspirations and common challenges.
I would also like to thank the representatives of the many multilateral and regional development banks, including the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank and other regional banks and financial institutions, as well as the UN system and other international organizations. Their engagement and support is critical in helping LLDCs overcome their transport and transit challenges that constrain their development aspirations. This is an example of collaboration of all to promote sustainable transport in LLDCs.

The discussions that you have had over the last two days clearly highlighted the importance of efficient and sustainable transport for better connectivity of LLDCs, promoting trade and pursuing sustainable and inclusive development in a more accelerated manner. We focused on linkages with the SDGs, transit transport and regional and global trade, but also on legal frameworks as well means of implementation and follow-up. They are all important and there is strong inter-relationship among all these issues.

The meeting also gave us the regional perspectives of the collaboration between LLDCs, transit countries, supported by the regional organizations. As you know, the collaboration and cooperation between LLDCs and their transit neighbours is an indispensable component, when we talk about establishing transport and transit systems that span across the borders.

Transport is not only about the development of physical infrastructure. There is also a need to ensure that it contributes to sustainable development and enhances the capacity to trade and change the lives of the people. It also requires a conducive legal framework for transit transport. WTO trade facilitation measures should be implemented effectively. This has a special relevance to the LLDCs.
The meeting also emphasized the importance of ensuring that adequate resources are in place for the development and maintenance of transport systems. All sources of financing, from domestic resources to foreign investment, funding from development banks as well as innovative sources of financing need to be considered together, based on the national requirement and promoted by the national policies, with the national leadership of the LLDCs. You have heard earlier today also about some of the mechanisms that are available to you from the development banks and I encourage you to take full advantage of these.

Transport has not only been recognized as a critical element in the Vienna Programme of Action, but also in the context of the global 2030 Agenda. I would like therefore to encourage you to engage in the global follow-up processes to ensure that special attention is given to the specific challenges of the LLDCs in the transport sector and that special facilities are provided for the LLDCs so that they could be turned into land-linked countries.

Honorable Ministers, distinguished delegates,

You have just adopted a Ministerial Declaration that emphasizes the role of efficient and sustainable transport and transit systems for the sustainable development in LLDCs. It is important that you take this Ministerial Declaration with you to the First Global Sustainable Transport Conference to be held in Turkmenistan. I would like to urge you all to ensure high-level participation of your countries in the Conference. This meeting in Santa Cruz and the global Conference are inter-linked and a perfect opportunity to project the LLDC issues onto the global stage.

I wish all of you a safe journey home.

I thank you for your kind attention.