Republic of Zambia

STATEMENT BY
HONOURABLE BRIAN MUSHIMBA, M.P.
MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

At the Side Event on

Financing Sustainable Transport Infrastructure for enhanced connectivity of Landlocked Developing Countries

Saturday, 26 November,

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

Side-Event room

26th November, 2016
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
Excellencies,
Honourable Ministers,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to express gratitude to you all on behalf of the group of Land locked Developing Countries for the solidarity, and also join Under Secretary General Acharya in welcoming you all to this side event on Financing Sustainable Transport Infrastructure for enhanced connectivity of Landlocked Developing Countries.

The group of Landlocked Developing Countries attaches great importance to the matters pertaining to financing transport infrastructure, which is cardinal to the achievement of the objectives and priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action. The high cost of infrastructure development and maintenance and in particular for the Transport Sector needs collaboration and support in all areas including mobilising international public resources, mobilising Official Development Assistance, Aid for Trade, as well as enhanced partnerships through North South, South South Cooperation and the Private Sector which are essential for the VPoA and the realisation of sustainable development goals.

The specific challenges of geographical constraint and lack of territorial access to the sea exacerbated by poor transit transport infrastructure contributes to high trading costs for our goods which are more than double that of the coastal countries. The global share of exports from LLDCs stands at just 1%, demonstrating our marginalisation from the global markets.

Two years ago in Vienna, we adopted the Vienna Programme of Action. In doing so, we resolved to renew and strengthen the international community’s commitment to addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries.
We agreed in Vienna, to develop adequate transit transport infrastructure networks across the landlocked developing countries; and effectively implement bilateral, regional and international legal instruments and strengthen regional integration. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscores the importance of sustainable transport. It also notes the special needs of the LLDCs.

We are making efforts to expand and upgrade all modes of transport and border crossing infrastructure in cooperation with the transit countries and our development partners. However we are faced with many challenges. Although there is progress in developing highway networks in Asia, Africa and Latin America regions, the road transport transit networks continue to have major missing links between key origins and destinations, with some poorly developed and maintained, and with delayed passage of goods at cities where by-passes have not yet been built.

Capacity constraints and high accident rates are also often of great concern. Railways can provide an economical freight option for transport of heavy and bulky goods over long distances, but only a limited number of landlocked developing countries have operational railways.

Air transport is important for the landlocked developing countries because it provides direct access to international markets without having to pass through the transit countries. However, the infrastructure needs for air transport are high.

Overall, the landlocked developing countries in addition to having reliable, seamless and efficient transit transport systems with well maintained transport infrastructure, they also require smooth implementation of the inter-
governmentally agreed trade facilitation measures to promote the effective use of the transport infrastructure.

In our meeting in Bolivia last month we discussed in detail challenges posed by inadequate infrastructure and the importance of mobilizing resources to fill the infrastructure gap in particular towards construction of roads, dry ports, railroads, inland waterways and airports. In the declaration that we adopted we stressed the need for partnerships that are mutually beneficial for the improvement and regular maintenance of their infrastructure connectivity and encouraged landlocked and transit countries to allocate a greater share of public investment to the development and maintenance of sustainable transport infrastructure.

We therefore call for greater partnerships with the cooperating and donor partners as well as the private sector to support financing efforts including through the promotion of public-private partnerships.

In the LLDCs’ Fifth Transport Ministerial Meeting Declaration of Bolivia last month, we encouraged the international financing institutions including the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Development Bank of Latin America (CAF), African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to address gaps in transport and transit-related regional infrastructure and to establish dedicated infrastructure funding for us and provide us with a special window and facilities for allocation of resources for infrastructure development and maintenance and to undertake analytical work and provide support towards better project preparation.
On behalf of the landlocked developing countries I welcome the launch of the Global Infrastructure Forum, led by the multilateral development banks, on 16 April 2016 in Washington, DC and stress that the Forum should address our infrastructure needs in a focused manner. We also welcome the Global Infrastructure Facility established by multilateral development banks and call for giving special priority to LLDCs in accessing funds from such facility.

It is my humble expectation that in this meeting we shall share experiences and concrete ways to help us mobilize additional resources to invest in sustainable transport infrastructure development as such investments are critical in unlocking our development potential.

I thank you.