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Day 2 - Informal Hearings with Stakeholder Groups

Panel 4: Effective Implementation

7th June 2016

On behalf of ITDP and the SLoCaT Partnership as well as the global sustainable transport and development community, I want to thank the GAP for the opportunity to participate in this session.

Transport systems define cities and the experience of living in them, for better and for worse. All great cities have great mobility systems. However, the role of transport (and the access it provides) is often underestimated: a lack of access to urban opportunities is a major cause of urban poverty and inequality, while providing high-quality urban access, particularly to the disadvantaged, brings great social and economic benefits.

We appreciate that the Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda highlights the importance of urban mobility. In the vision statement (para. 5) as well as in a number of sections – and we have sent out detail comments collected from the global transport community.

There is widespread understanding and growing support for sustainable transport policies that emphasize the need for good planning to minimize the need to travel – as well as urban mobility through Transit Oriented Development based on walking, cycling, public transport and new “shared mobility” options. But what we face now is a lack of global implementation, at scale.

The lack of implementation is why urban mobility remains unsustainable and why we have urban traffic congestion, poor urban air quality and millions killed and injured in avoidable urban road collisions every year. We know what works – it’s just NOT YET implemented.

So it’s a pleasure to be here today to tell you what we are doing and what we would like from you in this process and beyond.

ITDP and the SLoCaT Partnership are committed to supporting the Habitat 3 process to maximise the contribution of transport to sustainable urbanisation. We have produced a number of reviews, messages and comments on the Habitat III process – they are all available from the website: <http://www.ppmc-transport.org/habitat-3-and-transport>.

We actively support the implementation of the UN Climate and SDG processes – and we fully intend to contribute to implementing the New Urban Agenda in the years ahead.

We will do this throughout the world, in an open, coordinated, transparent, measurable and accountable way. Together we are preparing a Quito Action Plan for Sustainable Urban Mobility that brings together actions of companies, cities, International Financial Institutions, NGO's, citizens and academia. We will introduce this Action Plan in Surabaya and will launch it in Quito – we look forward to seeing you at the launch!

So, the transport community is ready – what we need now is for the Member States to commit to give urban mobility the attention it needs.

This is why we call on you, the UN Member States, to support the recommended language on mobility in the NUA and provide the national supporting frameworks that are required to implement sustainable urban mobility at the local level throughout the world.

What do we want from you? I will try to be brief and clear.

You have already agreed in 2015 on important, bold and ambitious objectives in the SDG process and in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The NUA is the first opportunity to start delivering on these agreements; however, much of the Zero Draft is characterized by general statements of what needs to be done – we need more specific language on HOW to do it.

Like other urban objectives – delivering urban mobility requires bringing together a large number of actors; however, we believe that specific meaningful targets are necessary to provide the focus and co-ordination required for measurable success.

We propose a more explicit linkage to SDG target 11.2 which deals with improving access, to ensure safe access for the 2.5 billion people that will be added to the urban population up to 2050.

Implementation ultimately will happen at the city level. So building the capacity at that level to plan, design, and implement will be critical. When cities and metro regions have funding and legal authority, in addition to technical capacity, the results will be better.

On climate change. Implement the Paris Agreement and moving well beyond a 2 Degree Scenario towards a 1.5 Degree target means that urban transport will need to be well on its way to becoming decarbonized by 2036, when we meet for Habitat 4.

Investments in sustainable transport infrastructure can bring great environmental, social and economic returns. Investments must focus on delivering specific access improvements, especially for the disadvantaged, in an orderly manner and as part of a comprehensive and visionary plan. We should not forget that we can only realize the benefits if investments are actually being made. It is important therefore to promote improved access to financing, e.g. through the establishment of National Urban Infrastructure Funds as proposed in the NUA and through a better use of Climate Finance

We very much appreciate the promising section on Mobility; however, some important aspects are missing:

- Congestion: Poor/ineffective allocation of road space has created urban road congestion, which is a chronically inefficient use of space, vehicles and infrastructure and a major drag on economic development. Thus, the NUA needs to specifically address tackling congestion through pricing, bans, low emission zones, low speed zones, parking policy as well through investing in better transit oriented development, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.
- The massive impact of road collisions killing and injuring millions of people every year – increasingly in cities – deserves more specific attention. These are not “accidents” but events with identifiable causes that can be prevented.
- Mobility is not just about moving people but also about moving freight. The prosperity of cities depends on an effective movement of goods and services. However, this also needs to be done in a more sustainable manner.

The sections on Finance are also rather general. We ask that they are more specific and address, inter alia;

- ensuring the increase in property values caused by public investments (e.g. a bus rapid transit service) are captured for public benefit.
- ensuring that long term social (e.g. health, wellbeing) and environmental benefits (e.g. reduced pollution) of investments (e.g. cycling facilities) are fully included in project cost/benefit evaluations.

Globally, transport greenhouse gas emissions are a particular challenge. But in cities we already know how to provide safer, cheaper, cleaner and lower-carbon urban mobility – with tremendous co-benefits. The importance of a transformation of urban mobility to deliver on the Paris Agreement needs to be explicitly mentioned.

In conclusion, without increased attention to urban mobility the promise of cities as safe, healthy, efficient and attractive places to live and work will NOT materialize, and billions of people will continue to live in needlessly polluted and congested cities.

The missing element necessary to solve these problems is Member State commitment and national urban mobility policy frameworks – it's in your hands.

ITDP and the SLoCaT Partnership look forward to your continuing engagement to deliver a meaningful NUA in the area of sustainable urban mobility.

Thank you for your attention.