

STATEMENT OF H.E. DR. ELHAM M.A. IBRAHIM, AUC COMMISSIONER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY, AT THE OPENING OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT, MALABO, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, 7TH – 11TH APRIL 2014

- **Your Excellency, Obiang Nguema MBASOA, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea;**
- **Honorable Francisco Mba Olo Bahamonde, Minister of State for Transport, Technologies and Telecommunications;**
- **Honorable Ministres;**
- **Representative of regional and international organizations;**
- **Invited Guests;**
- **Distinguished Delegates;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen:**

1. On behalf of Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini ZUMA, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) and on my own behalf, I would like to welcome you to the Third Session of the

Conference of African Ministers of Transport taking place in this beautiful city of Malabo. We would like to thank you most profoundly for responding positively to our invitation and joining us in advancing the transport agenda of our continent. Your massive presence here is the main determinant of the success of this conference which, indeed, belongs to you.

2. We are meeting here today because the Republic of Equatorial Guinea offered to host us and provide all the necessary support including substantial hospitality to all of us. We are, indeed, most grateful to the authorities for the generosity of their country. In this regard, I would like to particularly thank **Honorable Francisco Mba Olo BAHAMONDE**, Minister of State for Transport, Technologies and Telecommunications, for his determination to join and support the AUC in organizing this session of the conference. Also, I wish to similarly thank Ambassador **Simeon Oyono Esono ANGUE**, the Representative of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea in Ethiopia for his tireless efforts to facilitate us in the process.
3. When I mentioned Malabo as a beautiful city, it was not just a passing remark. The beauty is evident for everyone to see. You can all see that the natural environment is quite attractive and the speed

of modernization with particular regard to infrastructure development is impressive. I believe that we would have some lessons here especially in linking existence of natural resources and infrastructure development in Africa. It is an important development strategy for this continent.

Honorable Ministers

Distinguished Participants

4. Since the previous session of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport which took place in Luanda, Angola in November 2011, notable developments have taken place in the transport sector and in infrastructure development in general. The Bureau of your conference had the opportunity to review them in its meeting which took place on 23rd July 2013 in Luanda, Angola. In that regard, I would like to deeply thank Honorable **Augusto da Silva TOMÁS, Minister of Transport of the Republic of Angola and Chairman of the Bureau**, for his commitment as well as significant material and moral support in ensuring our responsibilities relating to the conference are accomplished appropriately.

5. The Chairman will present the report of his Bureau on the main activities achieved during the term of office of the bureau. As you would note, the Bureau oversaw the elaboration of some key policy, strategic and regulatory frameworks which have also been included on the agenda of your conference. In that regard, the Meeting of Experts which took place from the 7th to 9th April 2014 in preparation for your conference has deliberated on all the agenda items and made specific recommendations for your consideration and approval.

6. Let me express my deep congratulation to the experts for the good work and the quality of discussion during their session.

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7. This third conference which central theme is « Speeding up transport program delivery for facilitating Africa's economic growth » is taken place in a particular context where Africa is engaged in economic transformation for the prosperity of its citizen. To that end, African Agenda 2063 will be the long-term strategy framework for speeding up development and integration of Africa in the next fifty (50) years.

8. The adoption of the Program of Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) is an important milestone of Africa's development agenda.

9. In this context, I would like to highlight some of the main strategic frameworks whose adoption will constitute the main outcome of your conference as follows:
 - i. The Intergovernmental Agreement on Road Standards and Norms for the Trans-African Highways;
 - ii. The African Road Safety Charter;
 - iii. The Vision 2040 for Railway Revitalization in Africa; and
 - iv. The Regulatory instruments for the Yamoussoukro Decision on the Liberalization of Air Transport Markets in Africa.

10. This conference will, also consider and agree on specific strategic measures for enhancing the performance and contribution of the transport sector to the key African Aspirations in the Agenda 2063.

Honorable Ministers

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11. Another important development that has taken place at the African Union Commission relates to the introduction of fourteen (14) Ministerial Specialized Technical Committees (STCs). These multispectral organs which are to replace Ministerial meetings with effect from this year (2014). In that context, the transport sector has been included in of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) No. 4 on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism.

12. The STCs are scheduled to meet biennially (once every two years). We are now working on modalities for operationalising the STCs. Given the number of sectors involved in the STC and the likelihood of varying priorities with time, we have considered a number of options. One approach is to organize separate meeting of experts for each sector and bring the outcome to the STC Ministerial session. Alternatively, we may organize sectorial sub-committees to meet separately before the full STC meeting. In that case, as you would note, for the first time this year, this conference is convened as a Sub-Committee of the STC No. 4 on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism.

13. We will inform you once the process is completed in the AUC and the functional modalities with particular regard to the transport sector are in place. In the meantime, you may wish to also provide your views and guidance on the matter. Our focus is to ensure that the institutional arrangements for our transport sector Ministerial organ enable us to hold our consultative and decision-making meetings as efficiently as possible.

14. Finally, you will have to look at the Sustainable Development Goals (the MDGs) post 2015, in order to develop a strategy to take into account the transport sector in the priorities to be addressed by the United Nations agenda.

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15. I believe with your vast experience and wisdom, this session of the conference will produce significant and historic results. Most important, it will put in place the appropriate policy and strategic framework that is essential for guiding the activities of our countries, the AUC, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), NPCA, specialised institutions and our partners in the long-term

development of the transport sector within the context of the African Agenda 2063.

16. I would like to end by wishing you a successful conference with very fruitful deliberations.

THANK YOU