



Economic Commission for Europe**Inland Transport Committee****Eighty-second session**

Geneva, 25-28 February 2020

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Environmental challenges for sustainable inland transport**Inland Transport Committee Declaration
on enhancing sustainable inland transport solutions to global
climate and environment challenges — a united call to action**

Note by the secretariat*

I. Background

1. In 2020, the general theme of the high-level policy segment of the Inland Transport Committee's annual session will be environmental challenges to sustainable inland transport. Five years after the signing of the Paris Agreement and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals by the General Assembly, climate change and environmental challenges remain urgent global problems whose negative impact can be felt in every region of the world.
2. At the end of the high-level policy segment, ministers and other heads of delegation of contracting parties to United Nations conventions under the purview of the Inland Transport Committee will be invited to express their support for an Inland Transport Committee declaration on enhancing sustainable inland transport solutions to global climate and environmental challenges. The declaration is a united call for universal action to leverage sustainable inland transport as an effective tool to respond to global climate and environmental challenges in terms relevant to the Committee's mandates. It does so by recognizing the Committee's relevance for international efforts to effectively address these challenges and by calling upon world transport leaders to embrace and even intensify their support for the work of the Committee as the United Nations platform for inland transport, for the benefit of the global community. Most importantly, the declaration articulates a united call to further strengthen the sustainable development of global transport and catalyse committed implementation, inter alia, of the Paris Agreement on climate change.
3. The draft declaration is annexed to the present document.

* This document was submitted late due to extended Government discussions required for its finalization.

Annex

Enhancing sustainable inland transport solutions to global climate and environmental challenges – a united call to action

Draft declaration

We, the ministers and other heads of delegation of contracting parties to United Nations conventions under the purview of the Inland Transport Committee, attending its eighty-second plenary session,

Recognizing the need for the transport sector to strengthen global response to the threat of climate change and the urgent call for more effective measures in reducing greenhouse emissions and adaptation actions to meet global emission reduction goals,

Taking note of the findings of the special report of 2018 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, especially the contribution of transport to the warming of the planet,

Fully aware of the new era in international cooperation aimed at addressing the changing climate and its impacts, marked in particular by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change,

Welcoming the Climate Action Summit 2019 convened by the Secretary-General, and taking note of the multi-partner initiatives and commitments presented during the Summit, in particular those related to climate friendly transport, as well as climate adaption and resilience,

Welcoming the specific role of the Ministerial Transport Conference for Landlocked Developing Countries under the theme Ashgabat Process: Financing for Better Connectivity organized by the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and the Government of Turkmenistan on 26-27 March 2020 in Avaza, Turkmenistan, to promote regional connectivity, particularly in the area of transit transport infrastructure development and for facilitating faster transit including advances in sustainable energy, investment promotion and diversification,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 74/219 on protection of global climate for present and future generations,

Acknowledging the unique role of the Inland Transport Committee as the United Nations platform for inland transport and thus, through the conventions of the United Nations under its purview, a key actor in improving the environmental performance of motorized road transport, supporting the energy transition in the sector and accelerating the shift to more environmentally friendly modes of transport,

Acknowledging that the support of new technologies in the area of digitalization, automation and intelligent transport systems may lead to efficiencies that improve the sector's environmental performance, and that the transfer of these technologies to developing countries on concessional and preferential terms would enhance their ability to respond to climate and environmental challenges, and contribute to the overall global efforts to combat climate change,

Welcoming the contribution of the Inland Transport Committee and its subsidiary bodies to addressing the increased vulnerability of inland transport infrastructure and mobility due to the increasing severity and frequency of weather-related catastrophic events, as well as slower-onset climate change impacts, including the report on climate change impacts and adaptation for transport networks and nodes,

Aware that all the changes that need to be implemented to address the challenges resulting from climate change, including reducing emissions, adapting to climate change, and

developing more resilient and safe transport systems, require global commitment and input from States Members of the United Nations that are contracting parties to the United Nations transport conventions administered under the purview of the Committee, including through availing the necessary technology, capacity and finance to developing and least developed Member States,

Declare:

(a) Our united stance on the need to leverage sustainable inland transport as an effective tool to respond to global climate and environmental challenges;

(b) Our commitment to implementing the relevant decisions articulated in the previous ministerial resolutions endorsed by the Committee, in particular in paragraph 4 of the ministerial resolution of 2017 on embracing the new era for sustainable inland transport and mobility, in which we decided to use the platform of the Committee to address the challenges faced as a consequence of climate change, and in paragraph 5 of the ministerial resolution of 2019, in which we pledged to support the harmonization of new technologies that would reduce pollution and greenhouse gases;

(c) Our readiness to promote the sustainability of inland transport systems through the development and dissemination of innovations in technology, especially in clean energy, sustainable mobility management or governance that may reduce the environmental impact of the sector and to encourage adaptations to current transport systems that ensure their continued viability through, inter alia, provisions of finance and capacity to developing Member States;

(d) Our resolve to strengthen the role of the Inland Transport Committee as the United Nations platform for inland transport and, through it, to foster an urgently needed, truly holistic and integrated approach to all inland transport modes;

(e) Our determination to continue using the Committee's relevant regulatory functions to reduce harmful emissions and promote harmonized solutions to climate issues and environmental degradation, in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement, while adhering to the principles of openness, inclusivity, and respective capabilities with regard to the contributions of all States Members of the United Nations;

(f) Our support for the work of the Committee in assessing future climate change impacts on inland transport, in line with the relevant best available science provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and identifying effective adaptation measures;

(g) Our expectation that the present united call to action feeds into the deliberations and final outcomes of transport-related global intergovernmental initiatives, starting with the Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference (5 to 7 May 2020, Beijing), in order to further strengthen our efforts in the pursuit of sustainable development of global transport and catalyse committed implementation, inter alia, of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.