

Closing Statement by the SSATP Program Manager Mr. Zaza Ramandimbiarison

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Honorable Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are getting to the end of three days of intensive work sessions that have enabled us to assess the importance of the work accomplished in relation to the objectives we set ourselves and to measure the many challenges that face us on the road ahead.

This exercise has been facilitated not only by all of our efforts, but also by assessing the results of the outputs to purpose review.

I should like to seize this opportunity to extend my heartiest congratulations to all of the participants for the brilliant results achieved and clearly reflected in the recommendations that were presented to us throughout the day by the spokespersons of the different thematic groups.

You will allow me too, on your behalf, to express our deep gratitude to our partners who guided us in formulating and implementing transport policies aimed at reducing poverty and promoting economic growth.

Honorable Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Strong messages have come through at the end of our work. Among these recommendations, all equally relevant, allow me to highlight a few of them:

Message from the Plenary Session

- Demonstrate the impact and improvements resulting from the PRTSR
- Consolidate the achievements of the SSATP and avoid dispersing our efforts
- Prioritize road safety
- Support the elimination of non-physical barriers in order to facilitate integration and intra-regional trade
- Work within the framework of the program approach and promote the dissemination of knowledge and information among all partners
- Prioritize mainstreaming of gender issues in SSATP work programs
- Strengthen the working relations with NEPAD-AU

Concerning OPR, the following requests have been received:

- Correct weaknesses observed in the areas pertaining to the procurement process
- Access to SSATP personnel and in particular to regional coordinators for follow-up in respect of the procurement process
- Support for REC training on procedures
- Ensure that the OPR's activities are linked to development partner operations
- Provide capacity building for developing transport policies and strategies

Regional Integration

- The CER Transport Coordination Committee has reviewed the issue of implementing regulation at national level and has decided that these activities should be a mainstay of the second phase of the LTDP. This will make it possible to monitor and step up the implementation of the Bamako Declaration
- The CER Transport Coordination Committee has also reaffirmed the objectives of this theme in order to guide the future activities on this and other existing themes

On the subject of the PRTSR and transport programs, we have recommended, among others:

- That the SSATP work towards a successful regional integration
- That the SSATP promote gender issues in transport projects
- That the SSATP develop transport to reduce poverty

Regarding the theme of Appropriate Transport Services, it has been recommended that:

- The group be restructured in two themes: urban and rural, in order to more effectively take into account stakeholders' concerns
- The transfer of the SSATP's functions to Africa-based centers is under way

Road Management and Financing

- Challenges: how to use stakeholders' and partners' synergies to reinforce SSATP action; how to step up reforms in the Roads Sector
- Realignment of these RMF objectives and actions with regard to these challenges is essential

Road Safety

- The results of road accidents on health and poverty are as serious as those of AIDS ; governments should therefore be committed at the highest level to enhance road safety in Africa
- Governments should allocate sufficient and sustainable resources for financing activities related to road safety in Africa
- Governments should support and approve the recommendations contained in the report "Make Roads Safer"

Transport Sector Indicators

- In spite of strong support from many stakeholders, the impact of the initiative on national transport data management systems is still limited
- It is now essential to go into top gear and to find means of establishing, on national and regional level, a data management system for transport that is reliable and sustainable

Women and Transport

- During its second meeting, the thematic group Women and Transport broadened and developed its vision beyond transport infrastructure
- The thematic group emphasized the development of transport services and rural mobility as a means of improving the condition of women and their families

Urban and Rural Mobility

- Establishment of a virtual tool for dialogue and exchange

SSATP Coordination

- Improve the coordination process
- Provide support and resources necessary for carrying out their functions
- Recognize the role played by women as well as the importance of their contribution to the program

UE-Africa Partnership

- The European Union has reaffirmed its partnership with the SSATP insisting on direct correlation between objectives and impact on the ground

Honorable Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Other conclusions and recommendations, no less important, have also been made. Each one of us should make sure that all the commitments made here in this beautiful town Maseru, are efficiently implemented. It is only in this way that we will succeed in meeting the numerous challenges before us and in enabling the transport sector to fulfill its strategic role in the economic integration process of our states and in poverty reduction strategies to which we are committed in our countries.

To meet all these challenges, we will have to give a clear answer to the following questions:

- How do we mobilize and strengthen the partnership?
- How do we reposition the SSATP within this partnership so that we are promoters and catalysts and not actors?
- How can we be accountable for the results and for the impact of the partnership, as far as available resources are concerned?
- Finally, faced by these challenges, how do we consolidate outcomes, at the same time avoiding waste of effort and promoting growth?

Dear participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our work will only end when the transport system in Africa has become competitive allowing the continent to benefit from world markets and the most vulnerable groups to have access to affordable transport services.

Our work will only end when the transport system in Africa facilitates free movement of people and goods, as well as access to basic services for our fellow countrymen.

Our work will only end when Africans can profit from a secure transport system.

Thank you for your attention.