

## Closing Remarks by Mr. Sanjivi Rajasingham, World Bank Sector Manager and SSATP Board Member



Mr. Chairman,  
Honorable Ministers,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the end of another admirable gathering of the SSATP community.

The past week has once again allowed us to renew friendships, revitalize professional discussions, update each other on developments in the sector on the continent.

Frequently during the week, I wondered if there was any community of transport professionals that had as much camaraderie, genuine interest in each other's work, and shared as much knowledge as we do in the SSATP.

And I think we are a very special group in this regard.

During this meeting we had some very important and interesting discussions on our thematic areas and on cross-cutting issues. I would like to acknowledge the advance work that was done to make this possible, by our SSATP national coordinators, our thematic leaders specialists and coordinators, members of the RECS, agency heads, members of CSO, and other colleagues.

It is evident that the SSATP has come a long way in identifying issues and defining policies, approaches, and principles in many of these areas.

It is also clear that as we go forward it will be necessary to prioritize and focus our work to areas where the SSATP has comparative advantages.

The presentation on the OPR was enlightening and gives us useful pointers for issues we need to consider as we move forward with the program. Much work has been done on this already and we all look forward to the final report.

The discourse by my colleague Uwe Deichmann on the application of gravity models to trade and transport in Africa was highly appreciated and gives us another perspective on trade facilitation on the continent.

We gratefully acknowledge the presence of our donors at the meeting – EU, Ireland, Sweden, and the UK, a strong contingent from the African Development Bank, and of course my colleagues from

the World Bank. This presence augurs well for a robust SSATP as we move forward, as well for increased harmonization amongst us in our country programs.

In this regard, I want to acknowledge, with thanks, the commitment of the UK to provide a generous contribution to the SSATP in 2007, and its announced intention to continue contributions at the same level thereafter.

The Ministerial Advisory Group met yesterday and today and has provided the SSATP with strong support -- reaffirming the Bamako Declaration, and taking ownership of its actions. We would like to thank the honorable ministers and their representatives for taking the time to be with us during these days. It was unfortunate that the weather delayed the arrival of three ministers, and we are pleased to have them with us today.

Of course, all this would not be possible without hard work, meticulous preparation and planning, and getting things done on the ground.

First of all I would like to express our gratitude to His Majesty the King Letsie III, the Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho, and especially the Hon. Popane Lebesa, Minister of Public Works and Transport, Mr. Monyane Mathibeli, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Mr. Karabo Marite, Director of Planning, SSATP Coordinator and Mrs. Maselomo Pama, Project Manager, Integrated Transport Project and all their staff for hosting the meeting.

Thank you very much for the magnificent facilities, the warm and generous hospitality, and efficient services.

We acknowledge the work of the conference service providers, who were available around the clock to help our participants with their particular issues and problems and to make sure all went well.

Our interpreters and translators. There was a lot of discussion among us in the past week, and almost every word was articulated by our interpreters. Thank you. Merci.

Zaza Ramandibarision, Tesfamichael Nahusenay and the SSATP program management team, Monique, Mark, Fanny and Tekie have been working tirelessly for the last several months and this past week to make this event a success. I would like to extend a special thank you to them from all of us for a job well done.

I would like to thank all the participants who attended. Je vous remercie.

Finally, allow me to convey the best wishes and salutations of Hachim Koumare, our Board Chairman to all of you. A series of last minute obstacles prevented him from being with us this week in person, but he is with us in spirit.

I wish you all well as return some, and hope to see you again soon.

Thank you, Merci et Bon Voyage.