

Intervention by Maruxa Cardama, Secretary General, SLOCAT Partnership

Mr Vice-President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

SDG 11 is about place-making; is about improving the systems that underpin cities. Target 11.2 *to provide access to transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport*, requires the transformation of transport systems in cities. If we don't provide transport options that work for the many, including population groups in vulnerable situations, then our cities will not work.

Only 51.6% of the world's urban population has convenient access to public transport, with considerable variations across regions – for instance in Africa, it is only 31% with access to formal public transport or informal transport.

This is bad news for target 11.2 and for several SDGs. Access to transport is access to jobs and socio-economic opportunities. Therefore, this is bad news for poverty and inequality, for economic growth and for women's and girls' empowerment. It is bad news for air pollution and road traffic crashes. 99% of the world's urban population breathe polluted air. Road crashes are the third biggest cause of death for the economically active population globally. No access to public transport means congested cities and productivity losses and bad news for action on climate change. For instance, private car ownership rates in some Asian countries rocketed by 200% from 2010 to 2019. Transport accounted for 22% of global CO₂ emissions in 2019, with road transport contributing more than three-quarters of such emissions.

There are four interconnected challenges in the implementation of target 11.2 and there are also impactful measures to act these challenges.

The limited capacities for integrated transport planning and land planning are a challenge. We need capacity building programmes bringing together both professional areas and both government departments. We need to support sub-national governments in the elaboration of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans. We need more proximity-based planning for transport, such as the concept of the 15-minute city. And above all, we need the balanced application of the *Avoid-Shift-Improve* hierarchy for both passenger and freight transport. This means that, while guaranteeing accessibility to transport, we should first, *Avoid* unnecessary motorised trips; then, *Shift* to less carbon-intensive modes; and last, we should *Improve* vehicle design, energy efficiency and clean energy sources.

The prevalence of fossil fuel energy and subsidies in transport is a challenge. The transport sector remains 97% powered by fossil fuels. Fossil fuel subsidies in transport provoke distortions in transport services and indirect costs, such as respiratory diseases, are 10 times greater than direct financial costs. The introduction of renewables blending mandates to complement national and sub-national targets for transport electrification are a way forward. Cities like Chennai (India), Curitiba (Brazil), Vancouver (Canada) have renewables mandates for their public transport systems.

The limited economic valuation of public transport and active mobility by decision-makers is another challenge. Public transport is the most cost-efficient way of giving people access to transport while decarbonising daily lives. However, many local governments and public transport operators are struggling with the financial viability of their public transport systems given the impacts of the pandemic and the energy crisis. Walking and cycling are essential feeders to public transport. Walking accounts for up to 70% of all trips in some African cities. However, investment in safe walking and cycling infrastructure is very often disregarded by national and international financial institutions. It is essential to build capacity for the economic valuation of public transport and active mobility. For instance, the Health Economic

Assessment Tool for Walking and Cycling by the World Health Organisation enables policy makers to do so. We got the opportunity to harness the plethora of active mobility measures we saw in the pandemic into permanent approaches. And fundamentally, we must repurpose fossil fuel subsidies in transport towards investments in public transport and active mobility.

Last not least, there is the challenge around lifestyles and behavioural change. Across geographies we need to facilitate lifestyles that are less car-dependent and a more democratic use of public space. We don't want to perpetuate the segregation in cities between those who own a car – electric or not - and those who don't. And we should pay attention to the risks of an electric mobility divide between cities in Higher-Income Countries and in Low- and Middle-Income Countries.

In conclusion, equitable, healthy, green and resilient transport and mobility systems are a powerful driver for the systemic transformation of our cities and societies. To enable such systemic transformation, we must enable adequate progress on target 11.2.

Thanks for your attention.

SLOCAT Knowledge Products and Resources

Transformations towards Sustainable, Low Carbon Land Transport: A Vision for People and Planet	Global Status Report on Transport, Climate and Sustainability
Six Actions to Enable, Walking, Cycling and Public Transport for People and Planet: A Call to Action	Strategies to Phase-in Renewables and Phase-Out Fossil Fuels in Transport Summary Analysis Country fact sheets
Wheel on Transport and the SDGs	Knowledge Base on Transport Systems that Protect Health and Climate
Transport and SDGs Voluntary National Reviews Annual analyses since 2016	Analysis of Nationally Determined Contributions and Long-Term Strategies under the Paris Agreement Regional snapshots for Africa , Asia , LAC and MENA Library of analyses and reports Tracker Database
African Voices – A Blog Series towards COP27	Report on COP27 Outcomes for Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport