

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> COMCEC TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS WG MEETING**

A policy debate session was held during the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Transport and Communications Working Group regarding the possible policy actions to be taken to approximate member state policies in the field of Urban Transport. The items discussed in this session were identified by taking into consideration the analytic study titled “Urban Transport in OIC Megacities”, as well as the responses of Member States to the policy questions sent by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for this meeting.

### **Policy Advice I: Promoting Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Urban Transport Financing**

#### **Rationale:**

Ensuring smooth and efficient movement of people and goods in urban areas has direct economic and social benefits. The availability of good and efficient transportation services at affordable costs also enhances the quality of life of residents. However, national governments or international funding alone cannot fulfil the vast infrastructure needs in the urban transport sector. It is key to attract private sector investment and financing by ensuring a viable regulatory and legal environment, appropriate design and structure of markets, long term incentives for private investment and protection from investment risks.

In this context, Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) emerging as one institutional structure, in which the public authorities deal with network or environmental externalities, demand uncertainty, and administrative costs associated with the project. On the private side, if infrastructure privatization is combined with deregulation or liberalization of market entry, competition in terms of the provision of services may increase. PPPs have been embraced by many developing countries that have followed a more proactive approach in attracting funding, but this has been so far used primarily for financing airports and ports, rather than for sustainable urban transport used by the majority of people on a day to day basis. PPPs in urban transport should provide the following results: Maximize the social-economic benefits to the society through implementation of the most cost-effective option for urban transportation; Capture value from direct benefits to project users and as well as value from significant positive externalities that will accrue indirectly from the project; and ensure affordability of public transportation fares to encourage usage and maximize consumer welfare.

### **Policy Advice II: Enhancing ICT Applications for Traffic Management in OIC Cities**

#### **Rationale:**

Increasing transport demand is creating a major challenge in traffic management in urban areas. Decision makers have at their disposal a wide range of technology solutions that have emerged from recent research and development, especially in ICT Applications. These applications systems are now being employed to optimize use of road infrastructure and to manage urban traffic flows by balancing road use by private cars, public transport and freight vehicles, optimizing energy consumption, and reducing congestion and transport emissions. Traffic management can be further improved through integration and interoperability of the transport

networks. To this end, there is increasing emphasis in urban areas on interconnecting road, rail, underground metro infrastructure and services, bus lanes, cycle lanes and pedestrian zones. The aim is to facilitate a shift to more environmentally friendly transport modes and to increase efficiency in freight logistics. Studies and implementation projects have demonstrated that innovative concepts, such as green zones, urban charging schemes and e-mobility, improve the performance of transport networks.

**Policy Advice III: Improving institutional structure to ensure the delivery of a sustainable transport strategy.**

**Rationale:**

Sustainable urban transport requires institutional and organizational coordination in order to ensure that appropriate rights and authority are given to both bottom up and top down planning. On the one hand, a clearly defined institutional framework should support the consolidation of responsibilities and coordination of activities of all stakeholders. At the same time, it is of utmost importance to allow space in the planning procedures for bottom up input. Particularly in the urban areas where social activity and human interaction and mobility are inevitably intense, it is the citizens that recognize the problems and needs of the city the most, particularly when it comes to transport. It has been proven that public participation, advocacy and awareness rising on issues such as road safety, public space planning and active travel can provide valuable inputs and solutions to urban problems.

The development and implementation of transport policies requires a combination of institutional structures and synergies to be in place in order to succeed. The concentration of all operations and planning under a single transport authority for a city is considered a key action to ensure the delivery of a sustainable transport strategy. This transport authority needs to be able to develop a transport strategy for a city, ensure that the necessary synergies with other sectors and authorities are in place, monitor the implementation of the plan, evaluate its success and adapt it according to the changing needs of the city. In addition, the participation of all relevant stakeholders, such as the public, private operators and local authorities, needs to be secured in order to deliver equal access opportunities, service levels and economic benefits.

***Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:***

**COMCEC Transport and Communications Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

**COMCEC Project Funding:** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organization of seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing of analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents, etc.