

High-Level Commemorative Meeting

World Sustainable Transport Day | First Year of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035)

10th Anniversary of the First United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference

CONCEPT NOTE

Background and rationale

World Sustainable Transport Day, observed annually on 26 November, and the first year of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035) provide a timely opportunity to advance cooperation on accessible, safe, sustainable and resilient transport. The Decade was officially launched at United Nations Headquarters on 10 December 2025, following its designation by the General Assembly in resolution 78/148; World Sustainable Transport Day was proclaimed in resolution 77/286.

The meeting will also commemorate the tenth anniversary of the first United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference, held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on 26–27 November 2016, which helped build international momentum for sustainable transport.

Against this background, the Group of Friends of Sustainable Transport intends to convene a high-level commemorative meeting in New York around World Sustainable Transport Day. The meeting will also welcome countries that have joined the Group since its previous meeting and introduce the Group's proposed Road Map for 2027, connecting implementation of the Decade with the Awaza Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034.

Objectives

- Mark World Sustainable Transport Day and reflect on initial steps taken during the first year of implementation of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035).
- Commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Ashgabat Conference and highlight the continued relevance of its vision for sustainable, inclusive and resilient transport.
- Encourage concrete cooperation on the Decade's priorities, including connectivity, accessibility, road safety, low-emission mobility, resilient infrastructure and financing.
- Showcase practical tools and initiatives: the launch of the Group of Friends' website as part of the proposed 2027 Road Map, the Atlas of Sustainable Transport, and the Sustainable Transport Award initiative presented by the Global Sustainable Transport Innovation and Knowledge Center (GSTIKC).
- Welcome members that have joined the Group since its previous meeting and present the proposed Road Map for 2027 under the theme "Connecting the Decade and the Awaza Programme of Action: Sustainable Transport for LLDCs".

Format and participation

The proposed event will be a 90-minute, in-person, high-level lunchtime meeting convened by the Group of Friends of Sustainable Transport, co-chaired by Turkmenistan and China, with organizational arrangements coordinated by the Permanent Mission of Turkmenistan to the United Nations. Mr. Navid Hanif, Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), has confirmed his availability to deliver keynote remarks. The programme will welcome new members, introduce the proposed 2027 Road Map together with a launch of the Group of Friends' website, and feature separate short presentations of the Atlas of Sustainable Transport and the Sustainable Transport Award, followed by an exchange with Member States and the United Nations system.

Proposed arrangements

Date: 24 November 2026 (confirmed).

Time: 1:15–2:45 p.m. (confirmed). Venue: Conference Room 8, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

Organizer: Group of Friends of Sustainable Transport (co-chaired by Turkmenistan and China); organizational coordination by the Permanent Mission of Turkmenistan to the United Nations.

Expected outcome

A concise Co-Chairs' summary reflecting the commemorative messages, the proposed 2027 Road Map, opportunities for partnerships benefiting landlocked developing countries and voluntary follow-up actions in support of the Decade. No negotiated outcome is envisaged.

GROUP OF FRIENDS OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Provisional Agenda — High-Level Commemorative Meeting

World Sustainable Transport Day | First Year of the UN Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035)

24 November 2026 (confirmed) | 1:15–2:45 p.m. | Conference Room 8, UN Headquarters, New York

Time	Item	Proposed speaker / format
13:15–13:20	Opening remarks	Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends (Turkmenistan and China)
13:20–13:30	Keynote address	Mr. Navid Hanif, Assistant Secretary-General, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (confirmed)
13:30–13:35	Welcoming new members of the Group of Friends	Co-Chairs; acknowledgement of countries that have joined since the previous meeting
13:35–13:50	Presentation of the Group's proposed 2027 Road Map, including the launch of the Group of Friends' website	“Connecting the Decade and the Awaza Programme of Action: Sustainable Transport for LLDCs” — Co-Chairs; brief website launch presentation
13:50–13:55	Tenth anniversary of the First UN Global Sustainable Transport Conference	Brief commemorative reflection on the 2016 Ashgabat Conference
13:55–14:00	Presentation: Atlas of Sustainable Transport	Brief introduction and demonstration
14:00–14:08	Presentation: Sustainable Transport Award	Global Sustainable Transport Innovation and Knowledge Center (GSTIKC)
14:08–14:40	High-level interventions and exchange	Member States and UN system representatives; reflections on 2027 priorities and LLDC connectivity
14:40–14:45	Concluding remarks	Turkmenistan, Co-Chair of the Group of Friends

Note: The programme and speakers remain provisional. Assistant Secretary-General Navid Hanif (DESA) has confirmed his participation; no co-organization by DESA is envisaged. The names of new Group members will be confirmed prior to circulation.