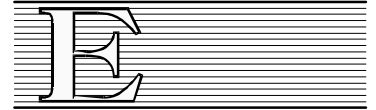




UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.: LIMITED  
ECA/TRID/Transp/05/03/ACPL  
May 2003

Original: ENGLISH

---

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

African preparatory meeting to the International  
Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing  
countries and Donor Countries and Financial and Development  
Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

5-7 May 2003, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

# AFRICAN ACTION PLAN

# **African Action Plan**

## **I. Introduction**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/242, the African preparatory meeting to the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing countries and Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation took place at the Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa from 5 to 7 May 2003 in Addis Ababa.

The participants of the African Regional Meeting of landlocked and transit countries, which is being held as part of the preparatory process for the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions to be held in August this year in Kazakhstan, emphasized the particular needs and problems faced by landlocked developing countries linked to their geographical handicaps. The right of access of landlocked developing countries to and from the sea by all means of transport through the territory of their transit neighbours was also emphasized.

Although the difficulties of being landlocked permeate every aspect of development, their impact on trade is particularly severe. The lack of access to the sea, remoteness from major international markets, inadequate transport infrastructure and the cumbersome transit procedures imply that these countries have to bear additional costs for their external trade transactions. They also cause inflation of the price of imported inputs for manufacturing. Moreover, high transport costs also reduce the level of investment, both directly through increasing the costs of imported capital and indirectly through reducing the level of total savings that is available for investment. Both have a negative impact on growth in the long run.

Trade success or failure of landlocked developing countries is largely determined by transport availability and cost. Excessive transport costs constitute more important barriers than most favoured nation tariffs. There is urgent need for granting preferential treatments to developing land locked countries so as to enable them to meet their challenges as was done for the least developed countries. Also landlocked and transit developing countries of Africa need urgent assistance by the World Trade Organization as well as other relevant international organizations in identifying needs and priorities in the context of the Doha Ministerial Declaration of the WTO as related to the trade facilitation.

Africa has 15 landlocked developing countries, which face the most severe forms of these problems. In spite of a number of initiatives the challenges faced by these countries continue to be formidable. It requires urgent action at the national, subregional, regional and international levels to address these issues. In this context, the importance of the further development of the regional cooperation and relevant initiatives, in particular NEPAD supported by some regional initiatives was emphasized. Establishment of efficient transit systems should bring benefits to both landlocked and transit developing countries.

The objective of this Meeting, inter alia, was to develop regional action plan for Africa for the reduction of costs and improvement of transit services so as to increase the competitiveness of its exports; to reduce impact costs; to have routes free from delays and uncertainties; to reduce en route loss, damage, and deterioration; and to open the way for export expansion. This document

contains an introduction, the assessment of main corridors; the actions to be undertaken; and the implementations and support measures.

## II. Assessment of the main African corridors

Various transport corridors serve the 15 African landlocked countries. These corridors represent the well-established, historical routes in the region and form the backbone for intra-regional, inter-continental and domestic trade. They provide the link between the regional centres of economic activity and the regional ports, which handle essentially all exports and imports of the region with the rest of the world. Their cost effectiveness, efficiency and reliability determine to a great extent the international competitiveness of the entire region in various productive and service sectors. However, it must be noted that over the last decades, a number of factors have brought changes in the group of the regional transport corridors, notably:

- Political unrest leading to closure of corridors to trade facilitation;
- Pro-active development strategies to open new corridors.

### (a) African main corridors and their characteristics

The main corridors in Sub-Saharan Africa are given in the table 1 below.

**Table 1: Main corridors in Africa**

Corridor	Distances	Remarks
Dakar - Mali	1250 km	Rail
Abidjan - Burkina Faso - Mali	1200 km	Multimodal options to Ouagadougou, then road
Tema / Takoradi - Burkina Faso - Mali	1100km to Ouagadougou	Road
Lome - Burkina Faso - Niger / Mali	2000 km	Road
Cotonou – Niger-Burkina-Mali	1000 Km upto Niger	Multimodal options
Lagos - Niger	1500km	Road
Port Harcourt-Tchad		
Douala – Central African Republic-Tchad	1800km	multimodal
Pointe Noire – Central African Republic-Tchad	1800km	Rail/River
Lobito - DRC - Zambia	1300km	Not currently used
Luanda-DRC-Rwanda-Burundi		Not currently used
Walvis Bay - Zambia - DRC (Trans Caprivi)	2100km to Lusaka	Road
Walvis Bay - Botswana - South Africa (Trans Kalahari)	1800km	Road
Durban - Zimbabwe - Zambia - DRC (North-South Corridor)	2500km to DRC	Multimodal options available
Maputo - South Africa	600km	Multimodal options available
Beira - Zimbabwe - Zambia - DRC		Multimodal options available
Nacala - Malawi - Zambia - DRC	1800km to Lusaka	Multimodal options

Corridor	Distances	Remarks
		available
Mtwara - Malawi – Zambia - DRC		Not yet used for transit
Dar-Es-Salaam - Zambia - DRC (TAZARA Corridor)	2000km to Lusaka	Multimodal options available
Dar-Es-Salaam – Rwanda – Burundi – Uganda - DRC (Central Corridor)	1400km to Kigali, 1600km to Kampala	Multimodal options available
Tange – Uganda	1500km	Not yet developed
Mombasa – Rwanda – Burundi – Uganda - DRC (Northern Corridor)	1200km to Kampala, 2000km to Bujumbura	Multimodal options available
Berbera – Ethiopia	850 km	Road
Djibouti - Ethiopia	900km	Multimodal options available
Assab - Ethiopia	900km	Not currently used
Massawa - Ethiopia		Not currently used
Port Sudan - Ethiopia		Not currently used
Lagos - Niger- Mali and Lagos- Tchad as part of the CLRT	8,000 km	Multimodal options available

**(b) Issues of the corridors development**

All the above main African corridors suffer to some extent of inefficiencies of the transport systems - long transit time, translating in poor utilization of equipment- and therefore high transport costs.

The inefficiencies have to be addressed at two levels:

- Improving and maintaining the infrastructure (ports, roads, rail tracks and equipment, ICD, dry ports etc...)
- Streamlining the logistics for movement of freight, and rationalizing the procedures for the free movement of persons, etc., in short, transit facilitation.

The development of efficient and affordable air services could also be addressed in improving the efficiency of the corridors. This issue has been tackled under the Yamoussoukro Decision to liberalize the access to air transport markets in Africa adopted in 2000 by the Heads of State and Government of the OAU/AU.

The main constraints affecting the corridors are among others:

- Radial aspect of the transport corridors, with no or little connections between corridors (this is particularly true for railways, which have been built according to different gauges, and without interconnection, the notable exception to this are the Southern African railways, sharing the same gauge and interconnected)
- Generally poor condition of the infrastructure, due to age and lack of maintenance;
- Obsolete and inappropriate equipment;
- Weak environmental measures;
- Roadblocks;
- Long and inappropriate documentation procedures
- High transit cost including insurance

- Corruption
- Inefficient port and railway services and operations
- Lack of enforcement mechanisms as well as harmonization of rules
- Lack of political commitment
- Limited capacity of RECs and operators to manage and monitor the transit corridors identified
- Lack of conducive environment for private sector participation and difficulties of mobilizing resources for the regional projects
- Limited use of ICT
- High cost of maintenance and financing of infrastructure
- Lack/insufficient integration of transport issues in the strategies of poverty reduction and export promotion programmes
- Missing links
- HIV/AIDS and
- High occurrence of accidents.

(c) *Infrastructure development issues of corridors*

To improve the current situation of African corridors, effort should be made to establish a good infrastructure network that provide direct links between production and consumption centres; foster political, economic and social integration and cohesion of Africa; and ensure sustainable transport facilities.

In this regard, the development of infrastructure (road, ports and railways) could be concentrated on the following priorities as already identified by the RECs and the NEPAD:

(i) *Roads*

The development of the road network systems of the following main 9 Trans African Highways (TAH) as well as the interconnections network to these TAH as defined by the RECs: Cairo-Dakar; Algiers-Lagos; Tripoli-Windhoek; Cairo-Gaberone; Dakar-N'djamena; N'djamena-Djibouti; Dakar-Lagos; Lagos-Mombasa and Beira-Lobito.

(ii) *Ports*

Each port of the Continent is a potential Transit corridor, as with 15 landlocked countries in Africa, most of the ports are in a position to serve one or several of them in addition to domestic traffic. The corridors radiating from these regional ports constitute the main corridors of the region, and their status is linked to their efficiency. The main ports as follow:

*West Africa:* Dakar, Abidjan, Tema, Lomé, Lagos and Cotonou and Takoradi.  
*Central Africa:* Douala, Pointe Noire  
*East Africa :* Mombasa, Dar-es-Salaam, Djibouti, Massawa, Assab, Berbera, Port Sudan, Tanga and Mutwara.  
*Southern Africa :* Mtwara, Nacala, Beira, Maputo, Durban, Lobito, Walvis Bay.

In addition to the above ports, efforts should be made to develop inland water ports available in different sub region.

(iii) *Railways*

Actions to be undertaken should be devoted to restructuring and strengthening the existing network and to develop the interconnection of sub regional railways networks.

***(d) Financing issues for the development of the corridors***

The existing infrastructure is not only insufficient, but offers low level of service in terms of quality. Several missing links have been identified. It has become evident that as from 1980's, there has been a drastic fall in Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding for infrastructure development partially contributing to deterioration of all modes of transport infrastructure in Africa. Therefore, African countries are facing the problem of how to generate and mobilize resources for the renewal of infrastructure and equipment. In addition the private sector is lagging due to lack of conducive environment and appropriate mechanism for the implementation of regional projects.

***(e) Transit facilitation issues***

African Sub-regional institutions, notably, COMESA, EAC, SADC, ECOWAS, UEMOA, CEMAC, and IGAD have played a key role in promoting transit transport cooperation in Africa through the designing and the implementation of the following instruments: a) harmonization of axle load limits; b) carrier license and transit plates; c) harmonized road transit charges; d) regional customs bond; e) road customs transit declaration document; and f) third party motor insurance, g) inter-state road convention state; h) convention relating to customs transit, i) implementation of ICT initiatives. Regional institutions such as Trans African Highway bureau and Liaison Committee have also been set up to monitor the implementation of the treaties and convention as well as the planning and resource mobilization for projects. All but one of the bureaus have been closed due to lack of financial and technical resources and appropriate empowerment responsibilities.

The challenge ahead will be to extend the application of the regional instruments to all member countries and to ensure their uniform and effective implementation. Member countries which have not yet taken the necessary actions required to put into operation in their territories one or more of these regional instruments should do so. The sub-regional organizations should provide technical support and where necessary, the international community should provide financial and technical assistance. In addition effort should be made to set up efficient and appropriate sub regional and regional institutions to monitor the transit corridors development and operations.

***(f) Monitoring issues of corridors***

Improvements of the above situation are necessary, and degree to which such improvements are made can only be assessed if measures are put in place to monitor transport corridor performance, inclusive of infrastructure serviceability, operations, institutional and management issues, safety, environment and the overall impact on the economy and regional integration.

### **III. Measures to be taken**

In order to remove the main constraints of the transit corridors as indicated above and related to: missing links; road blocks; operational issues; human resources and institutional issues;

financing of regional projects; ICT development and socio – economic impact of HIVS/AIDS and road accidents; effective private sector development and participation; capacity of operator, RECs, and member States; and lack of competition, the Development partners’ assistance is necessary to facilitate implementing the following priority programmes:

**(a) Infrastructure development and financing issues**

To correct the inefficiency of infrastructure and secure the necessary financing of infrastructure as identified above the actions indicated below should be taken.

***(i) Member States at national level***

The African countries are aware of the need to adopt and implement measures to facilitate transit transport in Africa, and to attract the required investments. The implementation of most of the measures is underway and the continent commits itself to furthering such measures, which include:

- Development of comprehensive transport policies taking into account macro – economic framework and regional cooperation.
- Adoption by each country a sustainable and efficient infrastructure maintenance and management programme based on transparency and private sector participation and with user funds.
- Enforcement of sub-regional maximum permissible axle load limitations to protect road infrastructure as well as vehicles.
- Harmonization of construction standards of all types of infrastructure
- Institutionalization of a sound safety and accident prevention measures.
- Harmonization of ports and airport regulations as well as safety measures
- Restructuring the railway systems by encouraging Public-Private Sector Participation.
- Establishment of transit facilitation measures especially along the corridors to the land-locked countries. (removal of road blocks and corruption)
- Ensuring a conducive, legal and regulatory environment to encourage private sector participation in the development of infrastructure.
- Supporting the institution for the sub-regional management of Trans-African Highway
- Coastal countries giving special attention to the development of corridors so as to open up land-locked countries and facilitate their international trade.
- Exploring avenues for developing inland water-ways as alternatives to road, rail and air transport services.
- Developing Dry Ports to decongest the Seaports and to enable customs facilitation to faster goods clearance.
- Encouraging through appropriate measures the development and promotion of Cargo consolidation and freight forwarding to promote transit trade in member States.

***(ii) Development partners***

Development partners should:

- Provide institutional and human capacity building to the REC’s to ensure that they are able to coordinate national efforts in the development of physical infrastructures.

- Support the ongoing initiatives taken by some regional institutions towards facilitation of transit transport, which should be an accompanying measure for physical development of infrastructure.
- Assist the REC's to finance the completion of the missing links identified in the priority corridors as presented in table 1 above.

**(b) Facilitation**

The actions below should be undertaken by RECs, members State with the assistance of the development partners in order to improve the facilitation along the main corridors:

- Harmonization of various instruments at regional and sub regional levels
- Enforcement of regional frameworks
- Coordination among the RECs and other institutions
- Capacity building for both private and public sector at national and sub regional levels
- Completion of missing links already identified in priority corridors and for which resources have been mobilized
- Strengthening of existing transport chains along the corridors through the development of multimodal transport
- Increase African countries and RECs capacity to implement ICT as a support services to transit transport corridor facilitation
- Preparation and implementation of appropriate regulatory framework for the private sector participation

**IV. Implementations and support measures**

In order to ensure successful implementation and follow up of the Programme for Landlocked and Transit developing countries, the following support measures need to be put in place, namely:

**(a) Member States**

Continued political commitment needs to be maintained at the highest levels in order to facilitate implementation at national level of the decisions and treaties agreed at regional level.

States are urged to put in place and implement appropriate investment, legal, regulatory environment and institutional arrangements in order to promote and increase private sector participation in infrastructure development, maintenance and provision of transport services.

Member States along corridors should establish and support national and Inter-State Corridor Facilitation Committees.

States and donors should ensure that all programmes and projects should provide for participation by women and cater for programmes aimed at mitigating and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

**(b) RECs and development partners**

Inter-RECs coordination meetings should be established and involve other key players including African Union, Development partners and other international and UN organizations. In

this regard, the mechanism put in place by the African Union for the harmonization of policies; strategies and programmes in the continent will form the basic framework for the envisaged inter RECs coordination. RECs should also establish Inter Agency Coordination mechanisms for Stakeholders involving sub regional organizations specialist transport institutions, private sector associations, and civil society.

The RECs with the assistance of development partners should develop programmes for awareness and advocacy campaigns in order to sensitize all the stakeholders on the policies, programmes and initiatives adopted at regional level.

Donors should coordinate and provide funding for technical assistance to RECs and member States for programme design, implementation, supervision and monitoring. Donors should also support capacity building programmes for operators.

The donor community should devise new financing mechanisms including grants and/or concessionary loans for increasing investments in the development, upgrading and maintaining transport infrastructure and services in LLD and Transit countries. They should also assist in developing capacity building programmes for the private sector including the operators.

**(c) United Nations and other International organizations**

The member States acknowledge the role played by the OHRLLS and the other UN system organizations in coordinating and mobilizing worldwide support for this programme and further urge them to continue to undertake a wide range of advocacy effort to mobilize international awareness and generate international support for the implementation of this Plan of Action.

The office of High Representative shall consider the establishment of mechanisms including a database to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan.

The High Representative (for the Least Developed Countries', Land Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States), in his capacity as the Secretary General of the Conference is further requested to integrate the Plan of Action into the final outcome of the Inter-Ministerial Conference

The Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Trade Organization, and the World Customs Organization should give priority to requests for technical assistance to supplement national and regional efforts to promote the efficient use of existing transit facilities, including the application of information technologies and the simplification and harmonization of procedures and documents.

Development partners should establish technical cooperation programmes aimed at: (i) utilizing national and the diaspora to contribute to development of their countries as envisioned in the IOM "Migration for Development in Africa" (MIDA)

The International Community shall ensure that special attention and preferential treatments are accorded to developing landlocked countries to enable them to meet their challenges.

**(d) Additional documentation**

Specific programmes have been identified by the Africa region and included in various compendia including NEPAD. These programmes will be submitted for consideration during the process leading to end at the International Ministerial Conference scheduled to take place at Almaty in Kazakhstan.