



PRESS RELEASE



UN OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

**UN Under-Secretary-General Calls for International Commitment
To Combat Global Environmental Threats**

**International Conference focuses on constraints of
Landlocked Developing Countries**

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 30 January 2005: The United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Anwarul K. Chowdhury, called on the international community to turn their attention to the problems facing 31 Landlocked Developing Countries, 15 of them in Africa. Mr. Chowdhury is the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

“Problems of access are particularly severe for the landlocked developing countries. These countries suffer from the constraints of lack of access to the sea, remoteness from world markets and dependence on transit services provided by their transit neighbours,” he said.

“By making trade expensive and uncompetitive,” Mr. Chowdhury added, “high transport costs cannot but have an enormous impact on the economic development prospects of developing countries, especially the landlocked ones among them.”

PAGE 2

Referring to the Kyoto Protocol, Mr. Chowdhury said that the financial community and insurance industry had a globally accepted legal basis to undertake measures and incentives to encourage environmentally sound technology and corporate performance.

“Efforts to ensure sustainable transport should be considered as part of the international commitment to combat global environmental threats such as climate change and air pollution.”

Declaring 2005 as a turning point to attain the Millennium Development Goals, Mr. Chowdhury said, “Sustainable transport is a key contributor to the attainment of the [Goals] including the specific targets for halving poverty and reduction of carbon dioxide emissions.”

He recalled the 2003 Almaty Programme of Action and reminded the international community that the “overarching goal of the Programme is to forge partnerships to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and to establish a new global framework for action for establishing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries.”

Mr. Chowdhury urged for support and cooperation of developed countries as an essential element for the development of sustainable transportation in developing countries.

“Engaged and meaningful international cooperation can bring so much economic and social benefits to the millions in the developing world,” he concluded.

Press Contact: Nosh Nalavala, Media Officer, United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (917) 367-2471, e-mail: nalavala@un.org.

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