

9th TRANSPORTATION FORUM STATEMENT OF CONCLUSION

Transportation is defined as “economical, fast and safe movement of people and goods in order to obtain a beneficial result”. The dynamism of a country certainly has a direct link with the form of its transportation system and the latter’s capability of improving itself. In that context, using respective advantages of the sub-systems of transportation in such a way as to ensure that they complement each other would make great contribution to the creation of extra value for the whole country. Coordinated operation and a combined structure of transportation systems are universally considered to be prerequisites for economic development. Telecommunication infrastructures are getting more sophisticated and individual mobile communication systems more widespread. These facts and the communication possibilities offered by satellites contribute to countries’ getting closer to one another regardless of distances and to globalization, thus create great value for economies. This is why all countries are in efforts to improve their transportation and communication systems in purpose to reach higher levels of comfort, modernity and speed. Industrialization and economic growth have also been urging transportation and communication systems to improve themselves.

In line with the targets set by the founders of our Republic, we must adopt policies that also take into account our own resources in the field of transportation and communication in the 21st first century so as to satisfy cultural, social and economic requirements of our country.

Transportation and communication should in the first place be considered as a system where all sub-systems are used in the most economical and appropriate way, complementing each other. The government’s archives are filled with projects of various contents and measures left on the shelf that had been prepared in the past with this concern. Decision-makers in charge of transportation investments failed, even during the era of planned economy, to carry out the plans and took decisions that were completely contrary to the principles and targets envisaged in such plans. Turkey, a country surrounded by seas on three sides, located in an extremely critical geopolitical position and oriented to foreign markets, must adopt the appropriate transportation policies and plans within the framework of a strategy of sustainable development in line with the role she wants to assume in the region with the spectacular growth rate she has achieved despite all unfavourable conditions and with her ever-increasing population. In this regard, consciousness need to be raised to put pressure on decision-makers at the stage of the implementation of such transportation policies and plans.

REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES AND COORDINATION

We need a new structuring to ensure coordination between transportation sub-structures. To do that, we should stop creating a ministry for each system: all modes should be left to the care of the Ministry of Transport.

The shape that our transportation industry should take in the 21st century must be determined in a Transportation Master Plan and a Sector-specific Master Plan intended to become a government policy. To do that, a 10-year plan should be prepared on the basis of projections for the next 25 years and that plan should be revised once every three years.

As the environmental aspect of transportation has become a more important issue, particularly in developed countries, we should pay particular attention to vivifying public transportation. New policies should converge to this direction. In this respect, the following order of priority should be followed in investments: railways, marine transportation, pipelines, roads and air transportation.

The main targets should be a more autonomous sector and privatization. In this context, we should stop dividing existing institutions before privatizing them. Instead, the State Economic Enterprises in the transportation and communication sectors should be maintained as a whole and the whole process of their privatization should be left in the hands of the Ministry of Transport.

We should support all kinds of combined (multi-modal) transportation, in particular marine transportation and railways.

Eliminating the shortage of active personnel in the units of the Ministry, especially in the Turkish State Railways and the Post Organization, appears to be imperative. Railway departments should be created in universities in order to meet the need for technicians and other qualified personnel.

When different transportation systems are bound to become substitutes for each other, conditions of fair competition between those systems should be ensured. To do that, the main criteria in investment priorities should be economic benefits. One should pay particular attention to the balance of benefits/drawbacks.

Restructuring efforts, which are currently being conducted in a dispersed manner in the sector, should be coordinated and supported. This matter should be left to the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Transport.

The number of domestic flight destinations should be increased and airliners other than the Turkish Airlines that are willing to have regular flights should be given a chance so that the number of regular flights increases. The process of putting into service of aircrafts that are capable of landing on existing small military and civilian airports should be accelerated.

In order to be able to control the state of affairs that will result from privatization, independent and strong regulatory authorities should be created.

Activities of international institutions in the world related to transportation industry should be watched closely. Our country should have a "Transportation Representative" in the United Nations, in the European Economic Commission and in the Asia-Pacific Economic and Social Commission.

We should focus our attention on the possibility of our country's transportation system getting integrated with the Trans-European networks of the European Union. To achieve this goal, political and technical works should start without delay to facilitate the inclusion of our defined transit routes in the 4th corridor of the Pan-European Corridors.

The works for the creation of a ring corridor linking the countries that have a shoreline on the Black Sea and are included in the Organization for the Black Sea Economic Collaboration created on the initiative of Turkey should be completed without delay.

Works on the liberalization of the transportation sector should be kept in the agenda of the opinion through applications to international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation (OEC), Organization for the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (OBSEC), Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport.

More free zones should be created.

Construction of pipelines should continue, for pipelines are very important regarding national economy and the current political situation. They are important as a safe means of oil transportation as well.

In urban transportation, public transport should be encouraged and railway systems prioritized. The central government should undertake legal arrangements to implement policies favouring pedestrians. The Ministry of Transport should become the sole competent legislating authority on such matters.

Infrastructure arrangements should be undertaken for children, senior citizens and the disabled.

Measures should be taken in the transportation-communication sector to improve the conditions of the disabled.

In order not to fall behind in the field of space operations in the 21st century, organisations should be created such as Aviation and Space Council and National Space Agency.

REGARDING LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS

Law no. 4046 should be amended so as to increase the powers of the organizations that are active in sub-systems in the process of privatization.

The Bill for a Road Transportation Law that is intended to solve the problems of the passenger and cargo road transportation and to support the development of the sector should be passed upon consent of actors in the industry.

Amendments should be made to the current bylaws in order to encourage the creation of controllable road passenger and cargo transportation companies having a high capital potential, competitive power and professional knowledge and experience.

A legal structure should be created in order to ensure creation of transportation master plans that comply with land development plans.

In urban centres, public transportation should be encouraged and rail systems promoted instead of highways and multi-storied crossroad solutions, in order to create an environment-friendly traffic. Pedestrians and bikers should be privileged and an infrastructure created for a park-and-ride system.

A Railway Law should be passed allowing for a new organizational and operational structure in order to overcome the financial bottleneck in the railway system.

Wherever the railway route allows it, measures should be taken to direct long distance cargoes over a given weight limit to railroads.

The legislation on shipping should be brought to a contemporary level.

Customs regulations should be simplified and re-organized to harmonize it with the EU and with international treaties, taking into account the interests of the transportation sector.

Laws should be passed to improve wages in the sector.

A law should be passed for a new independent telecommunication agency covering all telecommunication services including radio-communication, along with new law on telecommunication.

The status of and the operating legislation for the post organization should be re-arranged to allow the post organization to indulge in new fields of operation such as banking, brokerage etc.

A civil aviation authority, which would be administratively and economically independent, should be created to organize activities relating to international civilian air transport organisations.

All military and civilian airports should become able to be used jointly in emergency situations.

Legal barriers should be eliminated for radio, television and similar broadcasting used by universities and other educational institutions for distance information purposes.

Arrangements should be made relating to ILO agreements regarding safety at sea and seamen's minimum working conditions.

In legal arrangements regarding privatization, particular attention should be paid to matters relating to national security and defence.

REGARDING FINANCE

The VAT exemptions granted to ship-owners should be extended to shipyards.

Sources of low-cost and long-term international loans should be created for the transportation and communication industry.

Those fields and aspects of the industry eligible for subsidies should be reviewed. Delays in payments of subsidies should be eliminated.

Quay duties should be re-introduced.

Full privatization should be gradually achieved in the industry.

A specialized bank should be established specifically for shipping. Low-cost and long-term financing should be provided for the industry.

REGARDING INVESTMENTS

A road infrastructure complying with international standards should be created.

We should continue our efforts with commitment for the integration of Turkey in the Common Transit System of the European Union as a natural implication of the Customs Union.

The rehabilitation of the existing railway infrastructure should be completed. New lines should be put into service without delay to make the system more functional (lines such as the Kars-Tiflis, Polatlı-Afyon, Balışih-Yıldızeli, Ankara-Konya, Bandırma-Bursa-Osmaneli, Nizip-Şanlıurfa, Çan-Bandırma, Isparta-Antalya, Trabzon-Erzincan, Diyarbakır-Adapazarı-K.Ereğli lines and the Ankara-Istanbul high-speed line).

Infrastructure for modern multi-modal ports should be constructed.

The Bosphorus tube passage project should be functionalized.

Modern monitoring and control systems should be created to ensure the safety of marine traffic in the Straits and Marmara passage.

Institutions that are involved in transportation infrastructures should be interconnected with state-of-the-art computer technology both within the system and vis-à-vis third parties as a whole.

An information and communication infrastructure should be created to generate the highest national benefits for Turkey in the 21st century in public administration, private sector and public service areas such as health, education and communication of our citizens. The most advanced technology should be preferred even if it costs more. No obsolete technologies should be brought to Turkey.

Turkey should increase her efforts towards becoming an information society with a modern postal administration and telecommunication infrastructure, a modern domestic industry and qualified labour force.

Standards in information and communication technologies should be followed meticulously since now we produce not only for local markets but also for global markets. Investments should be made in research and development.

Investments should be made for better quality digital radio and TV broadcasting.

Investments should be made in technical infrastructure and in activities to develop and promote the postal cheque system. In that context, the process of automation of the postal service should be completed without delay.

More investments should be made in the “Electronic Public Services” given by the government in the 21st century.

Access to global information networks should be facilitated and encouraged.

We should actively participate in the Low Earth Orbit satellite systems (LEO) that are expected to provide all individual means of communication. A National LEO Program should be created considering that low earth orbit satellites are also able to render services relating to geographic information purposes, meteorological studies and similar services.

Private sector should be encouraged to make investments in transportation and communication. National companies should be rendered more active in international markets.

Air transportation should be developed in accordance with international standards in order to enable it to deal with the passenger load of the 21st century. New airports should be built in order to increase the number of domestic destinations.

REGARDING HUMAN RESOURCES

The current economic structure based on flexible production, which can be considered as the new world order, has rendered intermediate level managers functionless while reshaping the role of senior executives. Now, for senior executives, what matters is to manage in a coordinated manner

the personnel that are highly specialized in financing and production, capable of dealing with change, able to anticipate and to produce new ideas and have teamwork skills.

Efforts should be quickened to create this kind of a human resources profile. Legal barriers to creating personnel equipped with the skills required by the industry should be eliminated. Wage policies for the related public personnel should be improved.

The personnel to be employed in transportation should receive an organized and widespread education.

In addition to other current practices, measures should be taken to ensure that the personnel working in the sector benefit fully from social security and labour organization rights.

Public servants of all levels should receive continuous training on the basis of “in-house training” and become innovative, research-oriented, modern, productive, open-minded and compatible people.

CONCLUSION

The following should be carried out without delay as high-priority issues:

In order to make Turkey an “information society”, arrangements should be made and directed as required relating to the technical infrastructure for the e-commerce that is expected to constitute the infrastructure of an information society. It should be ensured that the young generation, students and all our people are able to fully benefit from the Internet and other similar means of communication.

Transportation polices should privilege pedestrians and not motor vehicles.

Travel, communication and public transport should be made feasible, accessible and safe for everyone.

High-speed trains in passenger transportation and “multi-modal transportation” with railway predominance should be developed.

The shipping industry, which by nature has the character of international business, should be improved and encouraged for the development of our country.

To improve the aircraft industry, attention should be paid to such national institutions as TAI and TEI. The number of domestic flight destinations should be increased and such flights should be made profitable for passengers.

Individual communication systems through Low Earth Orbit Satellites and broadband communication broadcasting systems should be promoted.

Power network, railway lines and cable TV networks should be used in communication.

Infrastructure for a Virtual Education System should be promoted.

The quality of digital Radio/TV broadcasting should be improved.

Labour-saving electro-mechanical systems should be introduced in the postal services without delay.

Environmental consciousness should be improved to avoid creating a polluted world and to protect our national heritage.

Large-scale communication services should be rendered in a competitive environment with low costs and high qualities. Unfair competition and monopolistic structures that can harm such a liberal environment should be prevented through legal arrangements.

We should encourage national operators to provide all kinds of communication services in a competitive international market and increase the importance of the role played by national operators in international markets. Controls should be conducted on operating, investment and pricing policies by means of measuring customer satisfaction and other similar factors.

A restructuring should be undertaken in all sub-units of the transportation and communication industry. New laws should be passed to satisfy the needs of the new century, privileging national defence requirements.

The “National Information Infrastructure Master Plan” commissioned by the Ministry of Transport to support such efforts in all aspects should be actualized.

Past experience shows that no country has ever achieved development without giving priority to the transportation sector. And this will be so in the future as well. The 21st century shall be remembered, as with the previous centuries, with the developments in the transportation and communication technology. This is why a “Forum Follow-up Committee” should be created within the Ministry of Transportation to follow up the conclusions of the forum and to conduct preparations for the next one.

The present statement of conclusion is hereby submitted to the attention of public opinion with all our respect.