

Following the conclusion of the second Global Sustainable Transport Conference, held from 14 to 16 October 2021 in Beijing, China, a [report on sustainable transport](#) has been issued by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UN) in close collaboration with other UN agencies.

The report highlights how important is to achieve a higher level of harmonization of the various regulatory frameworks and among the legal entities governing transport, in order to create an enabling environment for development, transport, trade, and economic growth and attract more foreign investments in LDC economies.

This objective, to be pursued at both regional and multi-regional level (an example of multi-regional approach to harmonization of cross-border transport regulation in Africa is the [M CBRTA](#)), a multilateral Agreement launched by the Tripartite that should replace all bilateral regulations on transport adopted in the EAC, COMESA and SADC regions, by harmonising rules governing cross-border transport), should include initiatives aimed at streamlining regulatory frameworks relating to customs and border crossing by increasing regulatory and policy coordination among governments and through ratification and effective implementation of international Conventions and regional and multilateral agreements on trade, transport, and transit. Where possible, digital solutions should be adopted to automate some operations, such as international transit of goods, vehicles or containers, on the example of the [eTIR system](#) implemented by the International Road transport Union (IRU).

With regards to Africa, the report notes that remote rural areas are the most disadvantaged, being characterized by poor links to regional and national transport networks. In the Continent, 450 million people (representing more than 70 percent of the total rural population), still remain unconnected to transport infrastructure and systems, while only 33% of inhabitants have convenient access to public transport.