



***MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT (MOT)***

***CAREY & WARREN STREETS***

***MONROVIA, LIBERIA***



***REPORT***

***SUB-SAHARA AFRICA TRANSPORT PROGRAM  
(SSATP)***

***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
HELD IN BENEIN/CONTONU***

***FROM MARCH 24-27, 2025***

***PREPARED***

***Hon. James Karpu Momo  
Assistant Minister For Administration and  
Insurance***

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REPORT ON THE SSATP SUMMIT HELD IN BENIN: THE ROLE OF LIBERIA AND CONTRIBUTIONS AT MINISTERIAL MEETING AND OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

## NAMES OF DELEGATION TO BENIN

- I. Hon. James Karpu Momo/Assistant Minister for Administration and Insurance
- II. Mr. Wilmot B Cherue / **Director**/Planning Policy and Program
- III. Mr. Aaron S. Subah /**Acting Coordinator**, Road Safety Secretariat

### **Executive Summary**

#### **SSATP Summit Background**

The recent SSATP (Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Program) Summit held in Cotonou, Benin, was a pivotal gathering focused on enhancing transport and mobility across Africa. The summit aimed to address key challenges in the transportation sector, including infrastructure development, policy harmonization, and sustainable transport solutions. This year's event garnered significant interest from various stakeholders, including government officials, regional organizations, and transport experts from multiple countries.

- ❖ **Liberia's Involvement:** Liberia played a crucial role at the summit, reflecting its commitment to improving transportation infrastructure and policy in alignment with regional goals. Key highlights of Liberia's participation included:
- ❖ **Leadership Contribution:** Liberia's delegation, led by the Assistant Minister of Transport, showcased the nation's transportation strategy, emphasizing ongoing projects and initiatives aimed at enhancing road safety, accessibility, and efficiency. During the Ministerial discussion, the assistant minister outlined Liberia's strategic priorities in the transport sector.
- ❖ **Regional Collaboration:** Liberia actively engaged in discussions with other regional leaders about fostering collaboration on cross-border transport frameworks. The nation advocated for policy reforms that would facilitate smoother trade routes and reduce barriers to regional mobility, particularly for landlocked neighboring nations.
- ❖ **Commitment to Sustainability:** Liberia demonstrated its commitment to sustainable transport solutions by endorsing the summit's resolutions promoting green transport practices. The country is focusing on integrating climate resilience into transport planning, which is vital for addressing the impacts of climate change on infrastructure.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Program (SSATP) Annual General Meeting is held every four (4) years and brings together Government

Transport Institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations, International Organizations, Urban Developers, and Road Safety Agencies. This year Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Program (SSATP) Annual General Meeting, in collaboration with the Government of Benin's Ministry of Transport hosted in Benin/ Cotonou from March 24-27, 2025 in focusing on strategies to enhance transport systems, improve connectivity, and promote sustainability. This summit gathered 10 transport ministers, policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders from various nations to discuss key transport issues in the region, including three hundred participants from different professional backgrounds to discuss "Strengthening Convenience for Safe, Sustainable and Decarbonized Transport in Africa" and Enhancing Institutional Capacity Through Regional Collaboration.

Given the critical importance of transport in economic development, the summit aimed to foster collaboration, share best practices, and outline a coordinated approach to addressing transport challenges across sub-Saharan Africa to review progress under the Fourth Development Plan (DP4) and shape the future of Africa's Transport Sector. This report highlights Liberia's role during the summit, findings derived from the event, and recommendations for improving Liberia's transport sector moving forward.

The widely recognized SSATP's flagship event, the 2025 AGM, was the first to be held since the launch of the Fourth Development Plan (DP4, 2022-2026) in July 2022. The AGM comes at a critical juncture as the SSATP DP4 nears its mid-term review, providing an opportunity to assess progress and shape the future direction of the program.

During the SSATP Summit, Liberia played a proactive role as an emerging voice in transport policy discussions. The key contributions of Liberia included:

1. **Active Participation:** Liberia's delegation, composed of government officials from the Ministry of Transport, headed by the Assistant Minister for Administration and Insurance, including the Director of Planning and Policy and other representative experts from the Liberia road safety secretariat, actively engaged in discussions, workshops, and plenary sessions. This demonstrated the country's commitment to improving its transport sector and aligning with regional goals.

2. **Showcasing National Initiatives:** The Liberian delegation presented several key initiatives aimed at improving transport infrastructure, including ongoing projects focused on road rehabilitation and public transportation improvements. Sharing our initiatives helped highlight Liberia's dedication to enhancing its transport systems and its openness to collaborating with regional partners.

**3. Building Partnerships:** Liberia sought to establish partnerships with other countries and organizations present at the summit. Discussions focused on sharing resources, expertise, and technology to develop more efficient transport systems across African nations.

**4. Leveraging Digital and Data Solutions for Sustainable Transport:** This session basically explored approaches and key conditions for unlocking the benefits of digital technologies, which have become critical enablers of sustainable transport. Discussions also focused on governance and regulatory challenges, the role of data in policy development, and lessons learned from successful applications of data and digital solutions in the transport sector. Participants successfully gained insights into how digital technologies can transform transport systems, along with actionable strategies to inform policy and decision-making.

#### **5. REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION (RCEI):**

Regional integration remains a key priority for SSATP since it is a critical element for supporting inter-country connectivity, trade, tourism, and economic integration. Furthermore, to establish a continental free trade area, transit and trade facilitation measures will need to be fully and consistently implemented together with the provision of adequate infrastructure and efficient logistics services. The African Union Commission has requested SSATP's assistance to achieve its high-level objectives of delivering a sustainable transport system that is safe, secure, efficient, and environmentally sound through improved regional and continental integration and seamless multimodal connectivity.

Within this context, the planned activities of the DP4 are designed to address some of the key issues that continue to negatively impact transport connectivity in Africa, including: (a) significant higher transport costs than the rest of the world; (b) persistent NTBs along all the major transport corridors; (c) time consuming and changing customs procedures at borders; (d) inadequate and in some cases obsolete logistics and transport infrastructure; (e) surging emissions and climate impacts; (f) weak sector governance and institutional capacity of key stakeholders; and (g) inadequate political support and appreciation of the socio-economic benefits of greater regional integration were highlighted in the Panel discussion.

#### **6. SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY (SUMA):**

- Policy recommendations developed under the Fourth Development Plan (DP4) and an analysis conducted by the various experts proposed direct focus on: (a) supporting stronger and more holistic integration of urban and transport planning; (b) developing efficient mass transport systems; (c) promoting non-motorized transport and

infrastructure; (d) modernizing paratransit systems, using digital solutions; and (e) maintaining social inclusion and gender equity.

- The DP4 will also support smart mobility by working with digital innovation practitioners to leverage opportunities for introducing disruptive technologies adapted to the African context, addressing policy and regulation gaps, and transforming urban mobility systems.
- Improve fare collection systems, private sector participation, and the financial sustainability of Bus Rapid Transport (BRTs) systems to accelerate the reform of paratransit transport organizations through the adoption of digital technologies.

#### 4. ROAD SAFETY (RS):

- The DP4 will continue to focus on building capacity to stabilize and reduce road fatalities and serious injuries across the continent. In Africa, road crashes continue to be a major public health crisis based on the increasing number of road deaths and injuries. Although road safety will have its own clearly defined work program and is considered a separate, standalone thematic area, by its nature, it also cuts across other thematic areas. The DP4 will ensure that road safety is fully mainstreamed across all SSATP's policy work.
- It will build on SSATP's strength in facilitating, coordinating, and organizing the multi-sectoral road safety stakeholder meetings at the country level, and connecting them to African and global stakeholders. Partners such as the AUC, RECs, the UN, and the European Commission will be mobilized to support member states with adhering to the Africa Road Safety Charter and meet the global targets set out in the UN SDGs. A more systematic and structured focus on the Safe System Approach (SSA) will be followed to achieve effective road safety outcomes. SSATP will also work with the AUC to ensure the strategic alignment and complementarity of all road safety initiatives across the continent. Also, SSATP will coordinate and pursue stronger collaboration between the AUC, UNECA, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Road Safety, and the UN Road Safety Trust Fund. SSATP will also continue to closely collaborate with other multi-national groups, such as the Global Road Safety Facility (GRSF), the Global Road Safety Partnership, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), and the International Transport Forum (ITF).
- In the urban environment, it will continue to collaborate with the Bloomberg Initiative for Global Road Safety (BIGRS), currently covering the cities of Accra and Addis Ababa, which is expected to

expand to three other cities in Africa. Finally, SSATP will continue to work with development partners to better leverage funding for road safety activities developed under transport sector projects. The DP4's priority areas of support for Road Safety are as follows:

- Supporting the operationalization of the African Road Safety Observatory (ARSO) as a platform for networking, monitoring road safety performance, and capacity building amongst road safety lead agencies in Africa;
- Strengthening and improving the quality of data collection and management in African countries;
- Strengthening road safety institutional arrangements for road safety management;
- Mainstreaming efficient road safety policies and good practices in line with the SSA;
- Collaborating on road safety research and working with key stakeholders to disseminate knowledge on the benefits and incentives for achieving a safer road network;
- Supporting countries in harmonizing their road safety regulations and practices in line with the UN conventions and recommendations;
- Collaborating with governments, international organizations, and the private sector on an initiative for vehicle safety; and
- Scaling up and strengthening the local content of the Road Safety Leadership Program to build leadership capacity on the continent.
- An agreement to establish the Africa Association of Road Safety Lead Agencies was tentatively endorsed by Member Countries, including Liberia, pending approval.

#### 5. **Resilient Road Asset Management (RRAM):**

- In Africa, the effective and efficient management of the road sector remains a major challenge. Some of the challenges that were identified by stakeholders of the Conference are:
  - weak planning and governance capacity of road sector organizations;
  - weak maintenance culture;
  - inadequate and erratic funding flows for maintenance;
  - inefficient and ineffective spending of scarce maintenance funds;
  - political economy factors affecting the allocation of road maintenance funds; and
  - inadequate technical and engineering capacity of road sector organizations.
- Although numerous challenges remain, some institutions in Africa are pursuing more sustainable approaches to road asset management,



such as the ‘whole life’ costing of transport infrastructure, programmed regular maintenance, and performance-based maintenance contracts.

- Possible engagement areas in SSATP member states include:
  - Adopting sustainable maintenance programs for existing transport infrastructure;
  - Developing and implementing policies to ensure fair competition among transport modes (taxation and regulatory policies) and liberalizing tariffs/fares for transport services; and
  - Reducing uncompetitive/discriminatory practices such as ‘tour de role’ for freight trucking, harmonizing the conditions of entry for transport sector operators, enforcing existing traffic laws, and reducing vehicle overloading.

## **MANAGEMENT OF ROAD SECTOR AGENCIES:**

The performance of road sector agencies will be assessed to ensure their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. To address some of the issues affecting the performance of road agencies and road funds, SSATP will benchmark their performance by identifying existing issues and providing institutional development support. Other areas that could be supported under the SSAPT (DP4) are as follows:

- Upgrading the managerial and technical capacity of staff involved in road management;
- Developing the enabling legal and regulatory frameworks that support the creation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to finance, manage, and operate major transport infrastructure projects; and
- Disseminating models/ways for efficient procurement and financing of routine and periodic maintenance activities.

**5. Emphasizing Sustainability:** Liberia underscored the importance of sustainable transport practices, aligning with the summit's objective of addressing climate change impacts through environmentally friendly policies.

## **Findings**

**1. Transport Infrastructure Challenges:** The summit identified significant challenges affecting transport infrastructure across sub-Saharan Africa, including aging road networks, inadequate public transport systems, and limited access to remote areas. These issues impede economic growth and regional integration.

**2. Policy Coordination:** There is a pressing need for stronger policy coordination among countries to create seamless transport corridors and

improve overall connectivity. Improved inter-governmental collaboration can enhance the effectiveness of regional and continental transport policies.

**3. Sustainability and Innovation:** The summit emphasized the need for innovative solutions to enhance the sustainability of transport systems. The adoption of smart transportation technologies and eco-friendly practices was recognized as crucial for reducing the carbon footprint of transport operations throughout the region.

**4. Funding and Investments:** Limited funding remains a significant barrier to advancing transport initiatives. MOT Participants discussed the importance of leveraging public-private partnerships and attracting foreign direct investment to finance transport infrastructure projects.

**5. Capacity Building:** Improved human capacity in transport planning, maintenance, and management was identified as essential. Nations in the region need to invest in training and education programs to ensure that local experts can effectively address transport challenges.

## **Recommendations**

**1. Strengthening Policy Frameworks:** Liberia should develop and implement a national transport policy that aligns with regional strategies discussed at the summit. This policy should prioritize the sustainability of transport systems and facilitate regional integration.

**2. Enhancing Infrastructure Investment:** Engage with international development partners to attract funding for critical transport infrastructure projects, focusing on road rehabilitation, public transport systems, and logistics hubs to improve economic connectivity.

**3. Fostering Regional Collaboration:** Liberia should intensify its efforts to collaborate with neighboring countries on cross-border transport projects. This includes participating in joint initiatives and sharing best practices to enhance regional transport networks.

**4. Promoting Sustainable Practices:** Liberia needs to implement policies that encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly transport solutions, such as electric vehicles and alternative fuel sources. This will help mitigate the environmental impacts of the transport sector.

**5. Investing in Capacity Building:** Establish training programs and partnerships with visiting experts to increase local capacity in transport

planning, project management, and sustainable practices. Strengthening human resources in the transport sector will enable Liberia to address its challenges effectively.

6. All the sectors in Liberia directly connected to the SSATP program shall be represented at the future Annual General Meeting to make our case for the four pillars

## **Conclusion**

The SSATP Summit in Benin provided an invaluable platform for discussing transport challenges and emerging solutions in sub-Saharan Africa. Liberia's active participation underscored its commitment to improving its transport systems and collaborating with regional partners. By adopting the recommendations outlined in this report, the Honorable Minister, Liberia can enhance its transport sector, promote sustainability, and contribute to economic development. Continued engagement in regional forums and initiatives will be crucial for Liberia to benefit from shared knowledge and resources, ultimately leading to improved transport connectivity and growth.

During the summit, Liberia also participated in the establishment of interim leadership for the African Association of Road Safety Lead Agencies pending internal confirmation by the Honorable Minister of Transport.

The Interim Committee was elected by 18 countries as follows:

- President: Kenya
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Benin
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Nigeria
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President: Cape Verde.

The SSATP Annual General Meeting provided us with a new direction in addressing existing activities with a new approach and meeting professionals of different backgrounds.

**ACTIVITIES PHOTOS AT SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA TRANSPORT PROGRAM  
(SSATP) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**



**The SSATP 2025 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Cotonou, Benin, on March 24-27, 2025, included an official lunch as part of its programmatic events. The meeting, hosted by Benin's Ministry of Living Environment and Transport brought together over 250**



**Liberia Delegations to Benin/Mr. Subah and Mr. Cherue**



**Panel Discussions**



**Countries Ministerial Representative  
photoshoot at the SSATP**