

**JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION
INAUGURAL NATIONAL TRANSPORT CONFERENCE**



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16–18 March 2026 | Republic of South Africa

Adopted in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa, 18 March 2026

Theme: Transport, The Enabler for Growth, Job Creation, Inclusivity, and Sustainability

We, the representatives of national, provincial and local government, including Ministers from South Africa and from countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), ambassadors, MECs and Mayors; leaders of State-Owned Entities, representatives of the private sector, organised labour, academia, financial institutions, industry associations, transport operators, international partners, academia, civil society organisations, and communities, together with distinguished guests including international representatives, convened in Johannesburg, Republic of South Africa, from 16 to 18 March 2026, for the Inaugural National Transport Conference, hosted by the National Department of Transport of the Republic of South Africa.

This inaugural conference occurs amid rapidly evolving geopolitical developments worldwide, which have significant implications for the global transport system in South Africa; in aviation, maritime, rail, and freight. It is also a world where innovation is paramount. Transport systems are the life blood of the nation, on land, sea, and air; enabling economic growth, regional integration, trade facilitation, job creation, improved mobility, and social inclusion, connecting communities to opportunities, services, and markets. The strategic role of transport advances priorities 1 and 3 of the Medium-Term Development Plan 2024–2029.

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This Transport Conference marks a historic milestone in the democratic era by establishing a national platform that brings together the entire transport ecosystem to shape the sector's future. We adopt this Johannesburg Declaration as a shared commitment to strengthening and transforming the South African transport sector. Participants recognise that South Africa's transport system is the most extensive on the African continent. It includes rail freight and passenger services, a wide-ranging road network, non-motorised transport, critical road-based public transport services, aviation infrastructure connecting regional and global markets, and strategic maritime ports that support international trade.

Participants recognise that modern transport systems must respond to global technological and environmental developments, including digitalisation, automation, global warming and climate resilience. Sustained collaboration within the SADC region remains essential for positioning Southern Africa as a competitive, logistics hub, capable of supporting economic growth to deliver regional integration, effective and efficient transport access to goods and markets for all the residents of the region. Participants identified key themes shaping the future of the transport sector:

- **Enabler of Economic Growth:** Transport systems are essential to trade competitiveness and job creation.
- **Integrated Transport Systems:** Move towards integrated, inclusive connectivity and logistics efficiency.
- **Public Transport Reform:** Prioritise safety, accessibility, reliability, affordability and integration.
- **Infrastructure Development and Maintenance:** Sustain investment in resilient transport infrastructure.
- **Inclusivity:** Implement road safety improvements and the Action Plan for Universally Accessible Transport.
- **Sustainable and Green Transport:** Contribute low-carbon technologies, green fuels, and energy-efficiency.

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- **Skills Development and Institutional Capacity:** Develop skills and strengthen all spheres of government.
- **Investment and Financing:** mobilise diverse financing mechanisms, pension funds, and private investors.

In responding to the President's challenge; to reduce the enormous cost to the country of logistics inefficiencies, implement inclusive transport, support cross-sector collaboration, and establishing a permanent Transport Council, the Conference resolves to implement the following:

- **A Transport Forum:** guiding dialogue, collaboration, and strategic coordination in the sector.
- **A National Transport Conference:** taking place every two years, hosted by the Department of Transport.
- **Regional and International Collaboration:** strengthening cooperation of transport corridor development and facilitating trade.
- **Evidence-Based Policy and Innovation:** promoting data-driven decision-making, research collaboration and innovation.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** mobilising new investment and innovative financing mechanisms to support transport infrastructure development and modernisation.

We reaffirm our commitment to transform the transport sector, into a modern, integrated and accessible system. The country pays for an integrated transport system whether it has it or not. Our legacy will be to connect communities, support inclusive economic growth, create jobs, and advance social development.

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