

GC24 Parallel / Side Events Reporting Format

- 1. Title of the Event:** Traffic Congestion in Cities
- 2. Date:** 15 April 2013
- 3. Time:** 13.30 – 14.30
- 4. Venue:** Conference Room 11
- 5. Name of the Organizing Branch/Unit:** Urban Basic Services
- 6. Name, Country and Category of Partners:** The TomTom Traffic Foundation, The Netherlands, Non-profit International Foundation
- 7. Speakers/presenters details (where relevant):**
 - Mr. Edwin Kools (Dutch) TomTom Company, and Dr. Johanna Tzanidaki (Greek), The TomTom Traffic Foundation
 - Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schuster (German), President of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions and Vice-President, United Cities and Local Governments.
 - Dr. Peter Choong-Yeol Ye (Korean), Vice President for Planning and Administration, The Korea Transport Institute.
 - Dr. Chang Woon Lee, (Korean), The Korea Transport Institute.
- 8. Organization: Summary Report (not more than 300 words in English) including:**
 - **Background of the event (indicate GC/UN GA resolutions, Work programme and Budget and other MoUs as well as achievements since last GC where applicable)**

The Side Event was aimed at bringing to the attention of policy makers, transport authorities and urban planners, the problem of traffic congestion and the impact it has on cities. Ever increasing traffic congestion has become a major problem in rapidly growing cities. The health effects of urban air pollution alone are estimated to cost more than 5% of the GDP in developing countries.

The Event complements Subprogramme 4 of UN-Habitat's Work Programme which promotes sustainable urban mobility options to ensure better access to goods and services and to reduce traffic accidents and air pollution through improved urban planning, better public transport and facilities for non-motorized transport including walking and cycling.

It is also relevant to the Governing Council resolution 23/17 of 15 April 2011 called on Governments and Habitat Agenda partners to promote public transport and mass transit systems, non-motorized transport and the provision of equitable space for pedestrians and cyclists, along with improvements in road systems and urban connectivity.
 - **Discussion including Key messages covering the following areas (as relevant)**
 - The TomTom Company presented its work on the "Traffic Congestion Index" for cities, a methodology that generates real-time traffic information from advanced GPS systems and connected navigation devices.
 - The "Traffic Congestion Index" for cities is an important first step in addressing the problem of traffic congestion. The traffic information generated by the Index, including bottleneck analysis, volume of traffic on specific routes, areas and regions and traffic trends over time can be shared or custom-made to help local/road authorities and city planners to address traffic congestion.

- The “Traffic Congestion Index” is not an end in itself. It should be complemented by integrated and sustainable mobility solutions, including effective public transport (affordable, clean, safe, convenient and attractive to private car owners), urban planning (better street design and public spaces) safe cycling and walking, car sharing, bike sharing, limitation of parking spots, parking fees, taxes on road users, among others.
- Sustainable mobility solutions should address the ecological, economic and social aspects of mobility, including the needs of women, youth, the elderly, the disabled, among others. Attitudes and cultural issues also need to be addressed.
- UN-Habitat, through its Urban Mobility Unit committed to provide a partnership platform where various partner organizations working on urban mobility can share experiences and find best solutions to the problem of traffic congestion in cities.