

MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT STATEMENT – MAY 2003

1. This statement commits SSATP member countries to adherence to a number of policy principles, and likewise commits member regional economic communities to promotion of the policy principles amongst member states. SSATP members recognize the processes proposed in the SSATP Long Term Development Plan as the framework within which policy development will be promoted, and that the program is a transport policy development instrument of the African Union (AU), and will play its part in the initiatives of the AU's NEPAD.
2. There is a basic commitment for participating countries to ensure access to services and mobility at affordable prices, as well as to bring down freight transport costs to enhance trade competitiveness, while safeguarding the environment and improving safety. Transport, infrastructure and services, is seen as an imperious necessity for economic development and poverty reduction.
3. To this effect, countries will put in place and sustain:
 - A conducive policy framework
 - A suitable financing strategy
 - Appropriate institutional arrangements
 - Robust monitoring and evaluation arrangements
4. The SSATP countries adhere to the following principles:
 - Poverty reduction is the overarching development objective
 - Transport sector policies, in all modes, will take into account not only infrastructure design but also transport services and the use of transport infrastructure
 - Policies will be comprehensive – will cover all networks, community, rural, urban and main – with due regard to their sustainability
 - Planning will be multi-level and participatory, using a multi-modal approach, based on the most cost-effective modal combination, and will involve users communities, shippers, carriers, and every level of government
 - Modal transport programs will be designed and carried out with regard to cost effectiveness and value for money for end users
 - Maintenance of existing transport infrastructure assets in maintainable condition will always been given priority in programs
 - Institutional arrangements will ensure efficiency and business-orientation as well as provide for decisions to be made at the most appropriate level – stakeholders will be involved in decision making at all levels and institutions will benefit from adequate funding for operations.

- Policy and programs will be adopted and carried out in a transparent manner, with a presumption always in favor of disclosure of information with particular regard to policy statements, program documents, institution audited accounts etc.
 - Transport infrastructure standards, and road standards in particular, will be exhaustively reviewed and appropriate approaches adopted with regard to design, technology, local capacity and implementation of works—with the optimal use of labor based approaches—and with due consideration to road users needs.
 - Financing strategies will be constructed on the notion that: (a) direct and/or indirect user charges should fund at least the routine and periodic maintenance of the maintainable network including, in the case of roads, rural roads. (b) budgetary resources and available external resources should cover economically viable rehabilitation, upgrading and new construction; (c) local governments and communities should contribute to both the maintenance and rehabilitation of their networks.
5. To this end SSATP will continue to develop as a partnership of like-minded countries, regional economic communities, sectoral and sub-regional organizations, multilateral and bilateral development partners, and international organizations. The partnership will support a wide range of appropriate policy development and implementation interventions, including those in the three basic areas of: *advocacy, capacity building and dissemination*.
6. The SSATP partnership is committed to working out and consistently implementing joint programs which are supportive of the aforementioned principles and interventions, and to this end will always seek to involve other stakeholders, and will particularly seek to fully engage the private sector in the policy development and implementation process.

This commitment statement may be revised from time to time so as to sharpen the focus and to reflect the dynamic nature of policy development and implementation environment.