



**Conclusion of the Regional seminar on urban transport, Skhirat, Morocco  
January 22-23, 2008**

The main conclusions presented by the Moroccan Ministry of Interior, through the voice of the wali, director general for local authorities (DGCL) and KNA-MNA were as follows. They received a broad agreement from the audience:

1. Urban transport is a multidimensional subject. It covers in particular: urban public transport systems, construction and improvement street networks and major urban roads, traffic management, transport demand management, parking, taxis and informal urban transport, passenger and goods transport, and issues related to pedestrian and other non-motorized means of transport;
2. Urban transport is a tool for a balanced urbanization process;
3. Urban transport is best managed at the scale of the metropolitan area, generally covering a group of municipalities;
4. At this efficient scale, sound management is promoted if there is a special authority in charge of all aspects of urban transport, with full commitment and participation of the elected municipal councils and strong support from the central government;
5. Urban transport management needs to be guided by a global planning process, in good coordination with the urban planning process;
6. To build a heavy urban transport infrastructure is the easiest but not the best way to address urban transport issues: attention should be brought first to urban transport networks and systems within a multimodal framework;
7. "The best is the enemy of the good": indeed, the first step to improve any urban transport system is to optimize the use of existing assets, and generally, this means a major effort to support and improve bus networks;
8. The unit cost of investment of various transport modes is a good reference: 1 km metro = 5 km tramway = 25 km BRT. As a result, the majority of participants in the seminar were convinced, following the example of Bogota, of the need to support BRT projects in MENA countries; these provide a well adapted solution in the race against cars and urban growth;
9. There is a huge need for funding, estimated at around 1% of the local "PIB" annually, and a major gap exists today in MENA countries between investment needs and the public resources allocated for them;
10. It is possible to be optimistic! Solutions can generally be found and implemented, first with a real political will, second with the optimization of the existing urban transport systems (see BRT example), and third by generating new sources of funds;
11. Urban transport is the responsibility of all public authorities, national as well as local authorities, central governments as well as locally elected administrations; public funding is necessary and has to be shared fairly taking account of the means available to all public authorities;
12. New taxes or resources should generally be levied from those who create negative externalities ("polluters pay" principle) or the direct and indirect beneficiaries of public expenditures in the sector
13. The public urban space has to be shared fairly and efficiently between all different users, first pedestrians (who account for the largest share of the mobility), second, other none motorized transport modes (two wheels), third, buses, and, fourth, cars: this is an eminently political decision to be taken.
14. Effective traffic management, with bus priorities, is essential for sound mobility management;
15. Better managing transport demand (and especially automobile transport demand) will also be essential in the future; parking policy, congestion pricing, traffic restrictions, and coordination between land use and urban transport are essential tools for managing transport demand.
16. Road safety should be a priority for decision makers in urban areas (pedestrians are the largest group among those injured and killed in traffic accidents).