

Update from Maruxa Cardama, Secretary General, SLOCAT Partnership

UN Climate Change Conference COP25, December 2019 - UN Secretary-General and Commander Luca Parmitano, on board the International Space Station, [speaking](#) about the fragility of humanity and the need for climate action to protect our one and only Planet. Full conversation [here](#).

@antonioguterres: Can you give us what you find more beautiful and more fragile when you look at our Planet from there?

@astro_luca: It would be really unfair to pick one thing of beauty over another (...) And as for the most fragile thing. I think we are the most fragile thing, Sir. We the humans. Because life on Earth will continue well beyond after we are gone. But we have to decide whether our fragile lives are worth investing on and make it so that we continue being good stewards of Earth. We are the fragile loop. We are the weak link in the chain. And I hope that the message is strong and loud.

Dear colleagues and friends of the SLOCAT Partnership,

I sincerely hope this note finds you healthy and positive. I'm writing to update you about how our work to serve the sustainable, low carbon transport movement is going on (line) in these difficult times. I'm doing so while, like all of you, I adapt to this routine of lockdown and self-confinement that has dramatically changed our lives overnight. I'm doing it sadly conscious that for many of us, the shocking numbers of fatalities and illness caused by this pandemic are not anonymous but carry the names of loved ones, friends, colleagues, members of our communities... My thoughts are with all of you.

I hope you will forgive me for practising a bit of virtual "social proximity" in these times of forced "physical distancing" before I enter into our work programme. I'm as glad as ever to report that the Secretariat team so far is ok - no minor miracle given the extraordinary intensity of intercontinental travel we had in the first quarter of the year. We are pros at tele-working. As many of you may remember, our team is spread across the Globe, from L.A. to Seoul, and practices daily working from home. But it is also true that some of us are experiencing the impact of COVID-19 directly on our close family circles and that everyone in the team is dealing with the new patterns of having young kids at home, home-schooling, taking care of parents and other dependents, and keeping at bay the storm of thoughts constantly in the back of our minds, like open applications eating up battery in an electronic device. And yet, once more, I'm in awe at my colleagues in the Secretariat for their professionalism, flexibility and unbeatable team spirit as we work to

re-program, within a mere few days, the work we had programmed long ago. A very big special thanks goes as well to our donors, supporters and partners for their flexibility and support as we go through this re-programming.

From this Secretariat, we support the decisions to postpone international events in the transport, climate and sustainability arenas, including key milestone United Nations dates such as COP26, the Regional Climate Weeks, the regional sustainable development fora and the Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference. Countries and the UN system are rightly focusing all their efforts on saving lives and we look forward to resuming preparatory tasks with them once the public health emergency is behind us and new dates are identified.

I want to reassure you that the challenges to the international calendar are not slowing our efforts to serve the Partnership across our three work streams, namely: knowledge and policy analysis, advocacy and engagement, and dialogue and networking. Over the past days, we have taken the time to re-calibrate some key dossiers, release new information-gathering services and fast-track the introduction of planned online activities, while ensuring that existing bilateral agreements to serve our partners and contribute to their international initiatives are honoured.

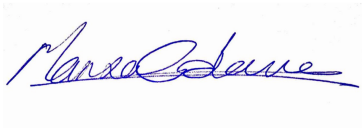
Allow me please to put on your radar a few dossiers that are currently keeping us busy - do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like more details on these or on our full work programme.

Today more than ever, SLOCAT's mission as the international multi-stakeholder partnership that enables collective knowledge and action towards sustainable, low carbon transport and brings the voice of the movement into international climate and sustainability processes is highly relevant. Transport is essential to empowering livelihoods, moving people and goods, and is the veritable engine of our global economy. Once the current health crisis is stabilised, ensuring the economic viability of, affordable access to, and the right investments in sustainable, low carbon transport and mobility services, will be vital to worldwide equitable socio-economic recovery. In the coming weeks and months, economic recovery decisions by world leaders and the UN system must not derail us from the goals of transport and mobility for an equitable 1.5°C Planet.

This global health emergency is shining a light on the inextricably linked social, economic and environmental issues our societies must crucially address, as well as on our poor emergency management and preparedness. The recovery path from this global crisis must be one of bold and courageous sustainability and climate change action for present and future generations. Personally, in these days of lockdown reflections, I tell myself that I may have the privilege of living through an historic moment that, amidst the acute suffering brought to so many and the havoc wreaked at an unprecedented scale, gives

humankind the possibility of reinventing the way we live, move, consume, take care of each other and our communities, protect the Planet and uphold science.

I am proud to represent this secretariat and speak for all us on the team in saying that you can count on us to capitalise on the nerve struck by this emergency. We are committed to supporting your efforts towards evolving narratives, advocacy efforts, and interaction within and beyond our community in ways that champion mobility systems that serve all people, most especially those who are most vulnerable, while protecting our Planet. My secretariat colleagues and I are eager to work alongside all of you in the coming weeks and months; and while we look forward to seeing you in-person again, we are sending you our warmest wishes of health and optimism.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Maruxa Cardama'.

Maruxa Cardama

Secretary General - SLOCAT Partnership

A few dossiers keeping the SLOCAT Secretariat team busy at the moment - do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like more details on these or on our full work programme.

Information services

- [Info Hub](#) on COVID-19-related resources, webinars and reflections by the sustainable, low carbon transport community.
- Updated [calendar](#) of international events.

Knowledge & policy analysis and advocacy

- The next generation of science-based, actionable Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs) in the framework of the Paris Agreement must include specific transport targets and policies. We are building a publicly accessible **NDC Transport Database** to provide a comprehensive overview of the transport dimension of NDCs. Initiated by this Secretariat, the GIZ, ITDP and WRI, and crafted through wide consultation with our partners, we are also soon launching

a **Transport NDC Advocacy Campaign** with policy recommendations and NDCs highlights.

- **National Voluntary Reviews (VNRs) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are critical to unleashing the potential of transport as a sustainable human development driver. Building on our [report](#) of the first cycle of VNRs, we are resuming our **detailed analysis and focused advocacy**, with our eyes set on the 2020 round.
- Our work towards the second edition of the [Transport and Climate Change Global Status Report](#) continues. Supported by the expertise of the Strategy Group and the lead authors release is planned for the first quarter of 2021.

Thought leadership and dialogue

- The transport sector is grappling with tough questions interconnecting socio-economic and environmental challenges which require smart answers and beg for amplifying cost-effective solutions. We have launched “**Tough Questions, for Smart Answers**”, a new programme featuring experts from within and beyond our Partnership through online activities in different formats - from fireside chats, one-on-one interviews, knowledge pills, blogs or showcase platforms. We are kicking off on 3rd April with a [Fireside Chat](#).
- This programme includes a **COVID-19-related stream to assess critical lessons being learnt and shape advocacy messages** focused on: **(i)** championing sustainable, low carbon transport as vital for green socio-economic recovery; **(ii)** urging for industry bailouts and stimulus packages that do not regress decarbonisation objectives and unleash the right type of transport investment; **(iii)** overcoming public transport stigmatisation; **(iv)** harnessing the lessons from temporary active mobility and tactical urbanism measures; **(v)** voicing the impact on those who depend on informal transport to access their livelihoods and **(vi)** calling for intergenerational solidarity.
- We are establishing a **task force** to collect inputs for the [consultation](#) of the **European Investment Bank (EIB) towards its Climate Bank Roadmap 2021-2025**, an unprecedented opportunity to contribute to shaping long-term lending objectives and approaches with decarbonisation impact.

Engagement opportunities in climate and sustainability processes

- Because we believe in the long-lasting benefits of empowering the generation who can help foster far-reaching and unprecedented change, building upon [last year's edition](#) we have opened the [call for applications](#) for the second edition of

the **Young Leaders in Sustainable Transport Programme**, a joint initiative by SLOCAT and VREF.

- We keep our focus on **shedding light on the cost-efficient solutions that many [Transport Initiatives](#)** across our movement are delivering on the ground. We are exploring with the UNFCCC Secretariat, the UK COP26 Presidency and colleagues involved in the UN Regional Commissions how to best re-orient online the technical support and events with Global South focus we were planning for the 2020 Regional Climate Weeks and the Regional Sustainable Development Fora.
- We continue fulfilling our **mandate as transport co-focal point in the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action ([MPGCA](#))** and are taking part in the consultation to define improvement areas for the engagement of so-called Non-Party actors in the UNFCCC process.

SLOCAT Foundation Board of Directors

Chair

Bronwen Thornton
Chief Executive Officer, Walk21

Treasurer

Mohamed Mezghani
Secretary General, International
Association of Public Transport (UITP)

Board Members

Rana Adib
Executive Secretary, REN21

Mohammed Alsayed
Manager, Economic Infrastructure
Islamic Development Bank

Sergio Avelleda
Director of Urban Mobility,
WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities

François Davenne
Director General,
International Union of Railways

Aimée Gauthier
Chief Knowledge Officer, Institute for
Transportation and Development Policy

Gino Van Begin
Secretary General,
ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

Armin Wagner
Head of Sector, Project “Sustainable Mobility”,
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Independent Board Members

Glynda Bathan
Deputy Executive Director, Clean Air
Asia

Winnie Mitullah
Director of Institute for Development
Studies, Nairobi University

Shipra Narang-Suri
Coordinator of Urban Planning, and Design
Branch,
UN-Habitat

Kalpana Viswanath
Co-Founder and CEO, Safetipin