The International Transport Forum held in Leipzig on 28-30 May saw a series of challenges and expectations set to the transport sector by leading scientists and policy-makers in a context of soaring energy prices and renewed consensus on the causes and effects of global warming.

IPCC Chair and joint recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize Dr. Rajendra Pachauri recalled that temperature levels had increased beyond predicted patterns in the 20th century and that continued emissions at this rate would cause further warming in the order of 1.8 - 4 degrees Celsius. Already, Dr. Pachauri noted, are the effects being felt under the form of prolonged droughts, more frequent floods and cyclonic activity.

These views were echoed by UNFCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer who stressed the political breakthrough achieved in Bali last year as a starting point for discussions on ways and means to catalyse cooperative action across stakeholders. “You have a choice”, Yvo de Boer concluded addressing transport stakeholders. “The question is whether you are willing to proactively shape the future climate change deal at Copenhagen or to have your policies shaped by it”.

According to Chancellor Merkel, “the fight against climate change needs more than one-off solutions to individual problems”.

The three-day Forum was attended by over 800 representatives from 53 countries.
FORUM MINISTERS CALL FOR STRATEGIC APPROACH

Meeting at a dedicated session in Leipzig, the Forum’s Transport Ministers agreed on an indicative framework for political action in the field of climate change.

▶ Political commitment is now urgent
The broad objective for all countries should be to reduce transport’s dependence on oil and move towards a low-carbon transport system as soon as possible.

▶ A strategic approach is required
This approach needs to be built on packages of policies and technological measures that are supported by strengthened research programmes and consistent with economy-wide plans.

▶ Transport policies and measures are indispensable
Transport policy measures that encourage behaviour change are essential parts of the packages needed to combat climate change and simultaneously meet other objectives of transport policy.

▶ Support for technological development is crucial
Reaching a low-carbon goal for transport requires increased support for research development, demonstration and innovation. Examples include sharing technology and good practice, as well as setting examples in government procurement.

▶ Action must be taken at all levels of authority
A variety of actions locally, regionally, nationally and among countries to mitigate transport CO₂ emissions are needed. These include systematic consideration of the CO₂ emissions impacts of transport policy and investment decisions, a focus on transport policy measures that generate the highest returns in terms of CO₂ emissions and improvements to national data quality.

The full set of Key Messages can be found on the Forum web site.

Highlights of the Forum

German Transport Minister Wolfgang Tiefensee and Professor Gerd-Axel Ahrens, Dresden University, take questions from 8-12 year olds at the Children’s University on Transport & Climate Change.

Three Minister-Industry panels were organized on Day 2 of the Forum with the objective of identifying prospects for a low-carbon future for transport through a combination of technology and policy.

Field visits organized with BMW, DHL and Deutsche Bahn gave delegates a sense of energy efficiency and CO₂ mitigation solutions developed by transport sector actors.

Forum prizes were awarded for innovative research (pictured) and corporate mobility management plans.

Lord Mayor Burkhard Jung and ITF Secretary General Jack Short are given a hands-on introduction to ecodriving techniques at the Forum’s exhibition held alongside the main sessions.

For further information www.internationaltransportforum.org/forum2008.html
Discussions between Ministers and industry leaders were preceded by four preparatory workshops involving transport stakeholders and the scientific community on 28 May.

The first workshop looked at reducing emissions from passenger vehicles, as the chief challenge for the sector, in light of the key issues arising from the recent “King Review” on low-carbon cars. Its main aim was to achieve a consensus on realistic fuel efficiency improvements in the short to medium term and the conditions needed to bring these technologies to the market. It concluded that improvements of 30% are achievable through advances in mainstream automotive technologies but that going much beyond this figure will require hybridization and all-electric vehicles. The cost of improvements to mainstream technology was found to be small, in the sense that any increase in the purchase price is compensated by savings on fuel within two to three years, although government intervention is often necessary. The cost of improving fuel economy by 50% is expected to be higher on account of the costs of high power density battery technologies – a key research priority requiring funding from industry and government.

The second workshop addressed the issue of inducing changes to user travel patterns. Changing demand for transport is viewed as an essential complement to technological innovation, but harder to trigger on account of powerful economic and regulatory constraints. The workshop focused on the evidence of behavioural change with a view to drawing conclusions on the costs, feasibility and potential for measures to reduce CO₂ emissions from passenger traffic. It found that governments have several levers to help guide travel decision-making in a way that produces the largest benefits. These include investment choices for road and public transport networks, enforcement of traffic rules, policy appraisal processes and above all pricing strategies to manage road and parking space.

A third workshop dealt with the potential for mitigation of CO₂ emissions from freight transport, particularly road haulage. Freight logistics companies aim to limit their fuel costs, and consequently CO₂ emissions, in their business planning. Many have internal CO₂ emissions reductions strategies based on rationalizing their activities and training drivers to consume less fuel. Governments have successfully spread these practices to a wider range of companies by providing information and training. The electronic truck kilometer charges introduced in a number of countries have had a significant impact on reshaping road haulage logistics for efficiency. A number of long term strategies for freight transport were discussed, including the introduction of a global CO₂ emissions trading system, particularly for maritime shipping.

A fourth workshop tackled the potential for and constraints on reducing CO₂ emissions in transition economies. The importance of urban land use planning policies backed by parking and ultimately road pricing mechanisms to shape the way rapidly urbanizing cities develop were the starting points for the discussion. The design of standards and incentives for vehicle fuel economy in countries where motorisation is increasing at very high rates was also addressed. While the fuel economy of new cars sold in emerging economies is relatively high, driving in heavily congested traffic and on poor roads increases fuel consumption greatly. Simple stop-start vehicle technology could greatly cut emissions from congested urban traffic but current regulatory standards give insufficient incentives for this low cost technology. Overall the workshop concluded that adequate transport infrastructure and services are essential for economic development. As developing countries grow, transport activity will also grow. This growth should be welcomed but steered to take a more sustainable path than would be the case without intervention from government.

Available online
Session summaries, speaker biographies, photographs of all the main events and audiovisual recordings of the discussions are now available from the Forum web site.
EU-US Open Sky talks
Talks between the European Union and the United States have begun on a second stage agreement which promises a new perspective on how aviation is structured in the future, potentially removing restrictions on the foreign ownership of airlines, exchanging access to domestic markets and introducing a more consensual approach to the regulation of the industry. An earlier agreement has already opened up services between the EU and the United States, removing all caps on routes, prices, or the number of weekly flights between the two markets.

FIA launches green campaign
On 5 June, the body representing motoring clubs worldwide launched Make Cars Green, an international environmental campaign, aimed at reducing the impact of motoring on our planet. The “Make Cars Green” campaign is based on the FIA’s declaration on air quality, climate change, and automotive fuels economy adopted in 2007. The declaration calls for action by automotive stakeholders, industry, policy makers and consumers to act to reduce the impact of motoring on the environment.

IEA calls for energy technology “revolution”
As current levels of carbon emissions approach “unsustainable levels”, the International Energy Agency (IEA) has released a report urging governments to implement a “global energy technology revolution”. The report, entitled “Energy Technology Perspectives 2008” indicates that if countries continue with policies in place to date, global carbon emissions will increase by 130% and oil demand will increase by 70% by 2050.

FORTHCOMING ITF/JTRC EVENTS
- **24 September 2008, Paris**
  Transport Management Board
- **25-26 September 2008, Paris**
  High Level Safety Seminar
- **2-3 October 2008, Paris**
  Round Table on Airline Competition, Systems of Airports and Intermodal Connections
- **13-14 October 2008, Paris**
  Joint Transport Research Committee
- **SAVE THE DATE - 27-29 May 2009, Leipzig**
  2nd International Transport Forum - Transport & Globalisation