



Under the Patronage of His Excellency

Prime Minister Dr. Jafar Hasan

High Level Regional Conference

**Transport Integrity in the Arab Region:
Risks, Solutions and the Roles of Stakeholders**

23-24 April 2025

Amman, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Programme

Supported by



Overview

The transport sector, encompassing its infrastructure, networks, and diverse services across land, air, and sea, is the backbone of both the economy and society in every country, whether wealthy or impoverished, developed or developing. This sector is essential for connecting markets, facilitating trade, and providing people with access to critical public services, including education and healthcare. As such, the achievement of sustainable development hinges on having an efficient, safe, sustainable, and universally accessible transport system. This is clearly emphasized by the 2030 Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the transport sector playing a pivotal role in advancing at least eight of its goals. It is integral to achieving goals such as zero hunger (Goal 2), promoting good health and well-being (Goal 3), ensuring access to safe water and sanitation (Goal 6), providing affordable and clean energy (Goal 7), building resilient infrastructure, fostering sustainable industrialization, and driving innovation (Goal 9), making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (Goal 11), ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (Goal 12), and addressing climate change (Goal 13).

In the Arab region, which is distinguished by its unique geographic location, the importance of the transport sector grows due to the countries' efforts to stimulate investments, diversify their economies, and increase trade volumes, particularly intra-regional trade. Moreover, there are additional development objectives, such as promoting tourism, reducing pollution, combating unemployment, and improving people's access to essential services, especially for those living in rural and remote areas.

The importance of the transport sector in this context underscores the need for robust governance that aligns with the principles of good governance. This ensures the optimal use of often limited resources and helps attract the necessary funding for the sector's continued development in alignment with the goals of sustainable and inclusive economic and social growth. In this regard, corruption risks emerge as one of the most significant threats to the governance of the transport sector, which already grapples with multiple structural, material, logistical, and technological challenges in the Arab region. The sector is inherently complex, characterized by the intricate nature of its components, the technical demands of its policies and processes, and the substantial financial resources needed for its management and development.

Corruption in the transport sector manifests in various forms, including, for instance, undue influence in the awarding of contracts, whether through public procurement processes or public-private partnerships. It also encompasses the embezzlement of equipment and fuel, the manipulation of influence in the granting of licenses, and the payment of bribes to bypass the enforcement of regulatory standards. Ultimately, corruption drives up the costs of building, maintaining, and managing essential infrastructure. It undermines the competitiveness of companies that supply related equipment and services, diminishes the quality and inclusiveness of public transportation services, heightens the risks of pollution from land, air, and sea transport

systems, and jeopardizes public safety. In some cases, it may even lead to the distortion of sector policies, diverting them away from the public interest to benefit select companies and individuals.

For this reason, governments, regional and international organizations, and non-governmental entities are making efforts to tackle these challenges and improve the governance of the transport sector. However, these efforts are often viewed as limited and have not received the attention they require. Furthermore, they do not appear to have fully addressed the impact of corruption on this sector or the role of integrity in enhancing its ability to confront the challenges it faces. At the same time, anti-corruption and integrity strategies and programmes have typically been broad in scope in most countries, with insufficient focus on the sectoral level. Even in instances where sector-specific efforts have emerged, they have not directly addressed the unique challenges of the transport sector, despite its strategic importance for sustainable development and its pressing need for both public and private support and investment, both domestically and internationally.

Accordingly, and as part of its regional partnership with the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET) and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission and the Ministry of Transport in Jordan, is organizing a High-Level Regional Conference under the Patronage of His Excellency Prime Minister Dr. Jafar Hassan, titled **"Transport Integrity in the Arab Region: Risks, Solutions, and the Roles of Stakeholders"**, held in Amman on 23-24 April 2025.

The regional conference is expected to be attended by high-level delegations from approximately eighteen Arab and partner countries, including ministers and representatives from ministries relevant to the transport sector, heads and officials from anti-corruption commissions and oversight bodies, as well as representatives from financial institutions, regional and international organizations, experts from research centers, private sector institutions, and specialized civil society organizations.

The conference provides participants with an opportunity to explore the concepts and practices of integrity in the transport sector and its strategic significance in empowering this sector to fulfil its role in achieving sustainable development in the Arab region. Moreover, it offers a platform for exchanging expertise and experiences; deepening the understanding of effective approaches to assess and mitigate corruption risks in the transport sector; and exploring potential areas of cooperation and financing, to support transport integrity, involving the public and the private sectors, civil society, international financial institutions, and development partners.

The conference is expected to produce a series of regional recommendations aimed at enhancing integrity within the transport sector, formulated in consultation with participants. Follow-up on these recommendations will be carried out in the framework of bilateral and

multilateral cooperation initiatives with the UNDP and other international financial institutions and development partners.

The conference will be conducted in Arabic and English with simultaneous interpretation available. The detailed agenda is provided below, and outcome documents will be made available on the website www.undp-aciad.org within a month of the conclusion of the conference. For inquiries and suggestions, please contact us via email at aciad@undp.org.

Agenda

Day 1 (Wednesday, 23/04/2025)

08:30 – 09:00 Welcome and Registration

09:00 – 10:00 Opening session

Objective: Enable the organizers to welcome the participants and provide an integrated overview of the importance of this regional conference and their vision on its expected outcomes, while confirming their commitment to supporting the emerging pathways.

Official Opening Statements

- H.E Minister Wissam Al Tahtamouni, Minister of Transport, Jordan
- H.E Dr. Muhannad Hijazi, Chairperson, Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (JIACC)
- H.E Ms. Mary Kwar, Director, Regional Hub for the Arab states

Overview of the agenda

10:00 – 10:30 Break

10:30 – 11:45 Session 1: Transport Integrity from a Sustainable Development Perspective

Objective: Enable participants hailing from the transport sector on one hand, and the field of integrity and anti-corruption on the other, to formulate a common understanding of two fundamental areas that constitute the basis for the rest of the conference. The first is the status of this sector for the Arab region compared to its sustainable development needs under Agenda 2030.

The second is the concept of corruption and how it manifests in the transport sector, in addition to the social and economic costs resulting from it, and thus the role of integrity in enhancing this sector's capacity to address the challenges it faces.

Chair

Panelists

- Ms. Chhavi Dhingra, International Expert on Transport Sector Governance
- Mr. Arkan El Seblani, Regional Chief Advisor and Programme Manager on Anti-Corruption and Integrity, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab states
- Mr. Majid Al Mutairi, Chair of the Kuwait Transparency Society and Coordinator of the ACINET Non-Governmental Group

Discussion

11:45 – 12:00 Break

12:00 – 13:30 Second Session: Challenges and Opportunities for Enhancing Integrity in the Governance of the Transport Sector in the Arab Region

Objective: Provide senior officials of transport ministries with the opportunity to highlight key areas that should be prioritized in the pursuit of good governance in the transport sector, including through transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, and commitment to anti-corruption — thereby improving effectiveness and contributing to the sector's development. Discussions will draw upon the insights and experiences of their respective countries, with view to informing strategic directions in promoting transport integrity across the region.

Chair

- H.E Dr. Muhannad Hijazi, Chairperson, Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (JIACC)

Panelists

- H.E Faes Abou Dayya, Secretary General, Ministry of Transport, Jordan
- Mr. Issam AlBarghouthi, Director General, Ministry of Transport, Palestine
- Mr. Ziad Nasr, Director-General and Chairperson of the Railway and Public Transport Authority, Lebanon

- Mr. Mohamad Rahhal, Assistant Minister of Transport, Syria

Additional interventions

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 16:30 Session 3: The Role of Oversight, Integrity, and Anti-Corruption Commissions in Supporting the Governance of the Transport sector in Arab countries

Objective: Provide senior officials from oversight, integrity, and anti-corruption commissions with the opportunity to highlight key areas that should be prioritized in the pursuit of good governance in the transport sector, including enhancing the sector's transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, and commitment to anti-corruption — linking to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). Discussions will draw upon the insights and experiences of their respective countries, with view to informing strategic directions in promoting transport integrity across the region.

Chair

Panelists

- H.E Dr. Raed Radwan, President of the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission
- Dr. Radi Al Hamadin, President of the Audit Bureau, Jordan
- Mr. Jalal Obeid, Director General, Commission of Integrity, Iraq
- General Maged Khalifah, Member of the Administrative Control Authority, Egypt

Discussion

16:30 – 17:30 Session for Members of the Transport Integrity Regional Working Group

Objective: Review the outcomes of the preparatory sessions and discuss the key directions proposed by speakers during the sessions of the first day, in preparation for drafting the regional recommendations of the conference.

19:00 Dinner kindly hosted by the Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (Bourj Al Hamam, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dead Sea)

Day 2 (Thursday, 24/04/2025)

15:00 – 16:30 Session 4: Corruption Risk Management in the Transport sector

Objective: This session will further explore the requirements to establish coordinated, participatory, and effective approaches for enhancing transport integrity. It will examine successful experiences and lessons learned in identifying, assessing, and addressing corruption risks, both at the sectoral level and within specific areas. These include, but are not limited to, public procurement systems, the management of relevant state institutions, revenue collection from public transportation, license issuance, fuel supply chains, the privatization of related public enterprises, and public-private partnerships.

Chair

- Anouar Ben Khelifa, Senior Anti-Corruption and Integrity Specialist, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab states

Panelists

- Ms. Najoua Ghrissi, Regional Expert on Transport Governance
- Mr. Lotfi Gaied, Chief of Staff to the Minister of Transport, Tunisia
- Dr. Wolfgang Köhling, Senior Expert, World Bank
- Ms. Jana Chazbeck, Representative of the Youth4Governance Initiative, Lebanon

Discussion

10:30 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:30 Session 5: Innovative Approaches to Enhance Transport Integrity

Objective: Expanding the scope of dialogue to shed light on innovative approaches that contribute to enhancing transport integrity on one hand and advancing regional priorities in the Arab region on the other. These include attracting investment, developing the private sector, protecting the environment, promoting climate action, and supporting gender equality — all from the perspectives of the public and private sectors, research institutions, and specialized civil society organizations.

Chair

Panelists

- H.E Dr. Lina Shbeeb, Former Minister of Transport and Member of the Jordan Transparency Center
- Mr. Nabil Nehme, Engineer and Professor, American University of Beirut
- Mr. Bassam Shanwany, Chairperson, Egyptian Junior Business Association
- Ms. Mira Abu Moghli, Regional Gender Expert

Discussion

12:30 – 13:00 Break

13:00 – 14:00 Closing session

Objective: Announce the recommendations of the regional conference and enable participants to comment on them and propose specific means for their follow-up and practical implementation, followed by the closing of the conference.

Regional recommendations for transport sector integrity in the Arab Region

- Arkan El Seblani, Regional Chief Advisor and Programme Manager on Anti-Corruption and Integrity, UNDP Regional Hub for the Arab states

Comments and Suggestions

Closing Statement

- H.E Dr. Muhannad Hijazi, Chairperson, Jordanian Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission (JIACC)

14:00 Lunch