

# NEWS LETTER



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## NRF Manager Calls for Private Sector Investment in Transport at World Bank Conference Washington, D. C., March 10–11, 2026

The Manager of the National Road Fund of Liberia, Mrs. Joseta Neufville-Wento, is participating in the 23rd Annual Transforming Transportation Conference, hosted by the World Bank Group and the WRI Ross Center for Sustainable Cities at the headquarters of the World Bank in Washington, D.C. Held under the theme “Powering Jobs and Growth,” the high-level conference brings together over 1,000 participants, including policymakers, transport sector leaders, development partners, academics, and private sector representatives from around the world to discuss innovative approaches to building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable transport systems that stimulate economic growth and employment. Speaking during a panel discussion, Mrs. Neufville-Wento emphasized the critical role of inclusive planning and private sector engagement in the development of transportation infrastructure. She noted that while transportation investments can create new opportunities and jobs, governments must also carefully manage the potential disruptions such investments may cause to certain communities and livelihoods. Government alone cannot mobilize all the resources required to finance modern transportation systems. Private sector participation through Public-Private Partnerships and other innovative financing mechanisms is essential to expanding infrastructure and stimulating economic growth,” Mrs. Neufville-Wento said. “However, as we pursue these investments, governments must also engage civil society and affected communities in the decision-making process to ensure that the benefits are shared and that those who may be displaced or affected are provided alternatives.” She further highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing and institutional learning in strengthening the transport sector. According to her, platforms such as digital knowledge libraries and collaborative learning networks can help countries exchange experiences, preserve critical information, and develop solutions to common challenges facing infrastructure development. Mrs. Neufville-Wento also underscored the need for governments to balance infrastructure investments across multiple areas of the transport sector, including links between transport systems, cross-border connectivity, and national infrastructure. While countries often prioritize domestic infrastructure projects, she noted that cross-border transport corridors can significantly enhance trade, regional integration, and economic opportunities. Strategic investments in cross-border infrastructure can generate far-reaching economic impacts by facilitating trade and movement across regions,” she said, adding that development partners should also consider regional



connectivity when supporting infrastructure projects. Another critical issue highlighted during the conference discussions was the quality and sustainability of infrastructure development. Mrs. Neufville-Wento stressed that governments must incorporate comprehensive analyses when planning major infrastructure investments. These include fiscal analysis, economic analysis, social impact assessments, environmental impact studies, risk evaluation, and institutional capacity assessments. According to her, strengthening these evaluation frameworks will help countries improve their logistics performance and ensure that transport investments deliver long-term economic value. She also pointed to what she described as a persistent gap between infrastructure investment and maintenance, cautioning that many governments invest heavily in building new infrastructure without adequately planning for long-term upkeep. Infrastructure development must incorporate maintenance at every stage of planning,” she noted. “If we fail to properly manage and maintain what we build, the cost of rehabilitation becomes far greater in the future. Mrs. Neufville-Wento further highlighted the importance of developing a skilled workforce capable of supporting modern infrastructure systems. She referenced innovative approaches where universities collaborate with industry and research institutions to ensure that graduates possess the skills required by the labor market. In some countries, she explained, universities are partnering with doctoral and graduate programs to develop training-of-trainers’ initiatives, enabling students to transition directly into employment within months of graduation. Such initiatives, she said, help ensure that education systems produce graduates who are prepared to meet the evolving demands of the infrastructure and transport sectors.

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