



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Secretariat

Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic
and Environmental Activities

Dushanbe, 24 October 2007

OSCE Conference on the prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia till the year 2015 Dushanbe, 23-24 October 2007

ANNOTATED AGENDA

In accordance with Ministerial Council Decision No. 11/06 on the “Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE”, the OSCE Secretariat together with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) and with the support of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe, is organizing on 23-24 October 2007 in Dushanbe an OSCE *Conference on the prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia till the year 2015*.

The Conference aims at strengthening political co-operation with regard to transit transportation issues across the region. To achieve this objective, the Conference will bring together High Level representatives of the relevant Ministries and Government Agencies (i.e. customs, transport and trade) from landlocked developing countries in Central Asia and South Caucasus, as well as elsewhere in the OSCE region. It will also involve representatives of landlocked and transit developing neighbours, in particular OSCE Asian Partners for Cooperation, relevant UN system organizations, International Financial Institutions, development partners as well as other international, regional and sub-regional organizations. In addition, the Conference should promote increased co-operation between the public and private sectors in managing transit transport related issues and will also involve the academic community and the civil society.

The Conference concept builds on the assumption that regional integration and collaboration will allow the dismantling of trade barriers, cut transaction costs and encourage economies of scale; all contributing to mutual economic growth of both landlocked and transit developing countries and thereby bringing about increased regional stability and security. This is fully in line with the 2003 *Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Co-operation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries*, which emphasizes that efficient transit transport systems can only be established through genuine partnerships between all relevant actors.

TUESDAY, 23 OCTOBER

09.30 - 10.30 Introductory Session

The Introductory Session consists of the formal opening of the Conference.

As host, **H.E. Khamrokhon Zarifi**, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, will address the Conference and declare it opened, followed by **H.E. Abdurahim Ashur**, the Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan, **Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg**, Senior Programme Officer at the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), **Mr. Bernard Snoy**, the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, **Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin**, the Head of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe and the representative of the Spanish OSCE Chairmanship, **Mr. Antonio Ramos Membrive**.

10.30 - 11.30 Working Session I: The Almaty Programme of Action (APA) and the 2008 midterm review

Moderator: Mr. Bernard Snoy, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, OSCE

Rapporteur: Mr. Gabriel Leonte, Economic and Environmental Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), OSCE

Speakers: Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Senior Programme Officer at the UN-OHRLLS, **H.E. Khudoyor Khudoyorov**, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Tajikistan, **H.E. Zhenis Kasymbek**, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan.

As the Conference, among others, aims at contributing to a regional mid-term review of the *Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Co-operation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries* in Central Asia, the representative of the UN-OHRLLS will make a presentation on the provisions of the aforementioned *Programme of Action* and provide more details on the recently developed indicators to measure progress made in its implementation.

H.E. Zhenis Kasymbek, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan, will speak in his capacity as chairperson of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (UNSPECA) Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing. The member countries of the Programme are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) provide overall support to the Programme.

Topics and questions for discussion may include *inter-alia*:

- Specific problems faced by landlocked developing countries in the region and how an effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action may assist them in overcoming the challenges at hand.
- Various indicators developed to measure progress made in the aforementioned *Programme of Action*.
- The role of UN-SPECA in overcoming problems related to landlockedness.
- The importance of improved regional co-operation and co-ordination between the countries concerned as well as between the latter and International Organizations and International Financial Institutions active on the ground.
- How can the OSCE executive structures and field presences provide support to OSCE participating States in implementing their commitments regarding the Almaty Programme of Action?

11.30 - 12.00 **Coffee break**

12.00 - 13.00 **Working Session II: Presentations by Government representatives on their transit transport, border and customs policies – progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action – identification of gaps and priorities**

Moderator: Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin, Head of OSCE Centre in Dushanbe

Rapporteur: Ms. Brigitte Waignein, Second Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Belgium to the OSCE

Speakers: High-Level Government representatives from across the region, i.e. from landlocked developing as well as transit developing countries, including OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation.

Based on a number of preparatory meetings organized by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)¹ in co-operation with OSCE field presences, it can be concluded that landlocked developing countries in Central Asia have made some progress regarding the implementation of the 2003 UN-endorsed Almaty Programme of Action (APA). At the same time it has been noted that the road to full implementation of the plan is still long and requires enhanced commitments, as well as improved regional co-ordination efforts.

At the aforementioned meetings, it was concluded that the OSCE, with its broad number of participating States, could contribute to the creation of partnerships between landlocked developing countries and their transit developing neighbours, as well as among countries and competent international organizations, international financial institutions and donor

¹ 14-15 May 2007, Tbilisi, Georgia: *OSCE Regional Conference on Promoting Good Governance in the Customs Sector in the South Caucasus*; 17-18 May 2007, Poti/Batumi, Georgia: *joint OSCE/IRU roundtable on Public Private Partnership in addressing transit transport issues in landlocked countries and their neighbours*; 25-26 July 2007, Almaty, Kazakhstan: *OSCE regional conference on Promoting Good Governance in Customs in Central Asia* and 27 July 2007, Almaty, Kazakhstan: *Expert Meeting on Progress made with regard to the Implementation of the 2003 Almaty Programme of Action (APA)*

organizations. However it was noted that, whereas the international community can provide technical and financial support to help landlocked developing countries, the main responsibility for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action appears to lie within the landlocked developing countries themselves.

In this respect, the Session will be featuring Government officials who will deliver co-ordinated statements – one per country – with regard to the progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action 2003-2007. It is expected to contribute to an overall assessment of current transit transport, border and customs policies in Central Asia and adjacent regions to identify remaining gaps and plans for future action. It should also explore avenues for increased regional co-operation with regard to the issues under discussion.

Topics and questions for discussion may include *inter-alia*:

- Government prioritization of transport axes and corridors, both at the national and regional levels.
- The need for improved regional co-operation and coordination efforts regarding the development of intra-regional and cross-regional transport infrastructure development.
- Border crossing facilitation issues: recent activities undertaken by the Governments concerned to enhance inter-agency co-operation both at the national as well as at the bilateral and regional levels. Identification of areas where more progress needs to be made.
- How can International Organizations and International Financial Institutions active in the region contribute to the work already undertaken by the Governments? How can co-operation be improved?
- How can the OSCE executive structures and field presences provide support to OSCE participating States in the region regarding the implementation of APA provisions?

13.00 - 14.30 Luncheon

14.30 - 15.30 Working Session II - continued

Continuation of speeches and presentations, time for discussion

15.30 - 16.00 Coffee Break

16.00 - 18.00 Panel Discussion I: Responding to the Identified Gaps and Challenges regarding Transport Infrastructure Development and Maintenance

Moderator: Mr. Alexey Stukalo, Deputy Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities, OSCE

Rapporteur: Mr. Armands Pupols, Policy Support Officer, Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), OSCE

Panel Speakers: Mr. Rustan Jenalinov, Secretary General, IGC TRACECA; **Mr. Jaromir Cekota**, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE Transport Division also on behalf of the Transport and Tourism Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP); **Mr. Serik Primbetov**, Deputy Secretary General, Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC); **Mr. Nazarali Ashurzod**, Deputy Head of Tajik Railways, Division of the Ministry of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Tajikistan; **Mr. Sodiq Haiov**, World Bank, Country Office in Tajikistan; **Mr. Sergey Sharapov**, Deputy Director, Research Institute on Transport, Department for Railway Transport, Russian Federation **and Mr. Matthieu Le Blan**, Country Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

Globalization is leading to a sharp increase in trade and transport between Asia and Europe. The development of efficient Eurasian and Trans-Asian inland transport routes provides an opportunity for even greater participation in the globalization process by landlocked developing countries and areas that lie along the routes. At the same time, it also provides a major, strategic tool for the development and integration of countries in the Euro-Asian region. As such, various *International Organizations* as well as *International Financial Institutions* are developing and financing multi-modal transport corridors through Central Asia and adjacent regions.

This session will provide an overview of ongoing projects, *inter alia*, the UNECE-UNESCAP Euro-Asian transport linkages project, the UNESCAP Asian Highway and Asian Railroad projects, IGC TRACECA etc.

When making presentations, key note speakers are expected to respond to the gaps and challenges identified by the Government Officials in Working Session II. Presentations should NOT exceed the time limit of 7-10 minutes per speaker, thereby allowing one hour for discussion and exchange of views with the Government Officials.

Topics and questions for discussion may include *inter-alia*:

- Economic benefits of and positive effects on the overall investment climate of well-functioning and efficient transit transportation systems.
- Prioritization of transport axes and corridors as proposed by International Organizations, both at the national and regional levels.
- The need for improved regional co-ordination and co-operation efforts.
- Availability of funds to support the creation of Eurasian and Trans-Asian transit transportation routes.
- Role of the OSCE regarding the development of transit transportation in the region.

18.00 - End of Day 1 of the Conference

18.30 - Reception hosted by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan - Rohat Restaurant

WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER

09.30 - 11.30 Panel Discussion II: Trade, Transit Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation issues in Central Asia

Moderator: Mr. Henry Bolton, Senior Border Issues Adviser, OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) Borders Unit

Rapporteur: Mr. Roel Janssens, Economic and Environmental Adviser, Office of the Coordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, OSCE

Panel Speakers: Mr. Robert Nowak, Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Transport Division; **Ms. Kristal Alley**, Policy Adviser Europe and Eurasia, US Chamber of Commerce; **Mr. Thierry Piraux**, Senior Technical Officer, World Customs Organization (WCO); **Mr. Hisham Maarouf**, Senior Project Officer, Islamic Development Bank (IDB); **Ms. Elena Anfimova**, Communication Officer, International Road Transport Union; **Mr. Poul Hansen**, Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); **Mr. Bahriiddin Azamatov**, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and **Mr. Kh. Makhmudov**, Deputy Head of the Criminal Investigation Department, Drug Control Agency of the Republic of Tajikistan.

This session will focus, *inter alia*, on a number of existing international conventions such as the UNECE TIR and the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, the WCO revised Kyoto Convention and the SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade.

When implemented properly, the aforementioned international legal instruments prove to be a useful tool for trade facilitation.

The session is also expected to discuss harmonization of customs and border-crossing procedures and the introduction of Integrated Border Management measures. Considering the many commercial sectors, ministries and government agencies involved, it is recommendable that appropriate institutional arrangements be put in place thereby assuring sustainability of common efforts. Also the difficult balance, the achievement of an optimal combination between ‘securitization’ and ‘facilitation’ of border crossings of goods – often referred to as the dilemma for governments – will be elaborated upon.

When making presentations, key note speakers are expected to respond to the gaps and challenges identified by the Government Officials in Working Session II. Presentations should NOT exceed the time limit of 7-10 minutes per speaker, thereby allowing one hour for discussion and exchange of views with the Government Officials.

Topics and questions for discussion may include *inter-alia*:

- Discussion of the general provisions of the aforementioned international legal instruments and their positive effects on trade facilitation and economic growth.

- Countries often lack the necessary capacity to fully implement the provisions of international legal instruments they have signed. Would there be a need for enhanced capacity-building and training programmes?
- Availability of funds to support the accession and proper implementation of international legal instruments in the area of transport and trade facilitation.
- The role of the OSCE in promoting accession to and proper implementation of the aforementioned international legal instruments.

11.30 - 12.00 Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.00 Panel Discussion III: Public-Private Partnerships in addressing the problems of OSCE landlocked developing countries

Moderator: Mr. Gumar Kassymov, Adviser, Deputy Head of Department for Market-oriented Infrastructure Development, Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC)

Rapporteur: Ms. Zarina Ligay, Senior Programme Assistant, OSCE Centre Astana

Panel Speakers: Mr. Igor Rounov, International Road Transport Union (IRU) Permanent Delegate to the CIS; **Mr. Konstantin Glukhenkiy**, Customs Expert, UNECE Transport Division; **Mr. George Pertaia**, Customs Expert, American Chamber of Commerce, Tbilisi, Georgia, **Mr. Stefan Ebner**, Deputy Director, Transport Division, Austrian Chamber of Commerce / Eurochambres and **Mr. Odil Sangov**, First Deputy Chairman, Tajik Chamber of Commerce and **Mr. Nadjit Ashfar**, Head of KN IbaraCom Office in Tajikistan.

The private sector and business community are often and foremost affected by physical and non-physical barriers to transport operations in and through Central Asia. Businesses are often confronted with time-consuming and costly visa procedures, high transit charges and tariffs, long waiting times at borders, deficient customs infrastructure, corruption and inadequacy and insufficiency of transport permits.

In this regard, Governments should strive to address the concerns and needs of the private sector. The private sector in turn can play a significant role in addressing and finding solutions to transit transport problems, among others, through financing particular projects jointly with the public sector.

Topics and questions for discussion may include *inter-alia*:

- Which solutions could the private sector offer to some of the most significant sources of road transport and border crossing delays? What could be the role of the private sector in developing integrated, inter-modal transport and logistics systems?
- The need to conduct permanent consultation with private industry on procedures and legislation, even before adoption. Are there appropriate consultation mechanisms in place and if yes, how could those be improved?
- The need to support privately conducted pilot operations and truck caravans, including existing border waiting time observatory efforts.

- What support could the OSCE provide to promote Public Private Partnership in addressing the problems of landlocked developing countries in Central Asia?
- What could/should be the role of other international organisations (with a more technical expertise) active in the field? (*IRU, UNECE, UNESCAP, CAREC, World Bank, WCO, IGC TRACECA, EurAsEC and others*).

13.00 - 14.30 Luncheon

14.30 - 15.30 Panel Discussion III: continuation

Continuation of speeches and presentations, time for discussion

15.30 - 16.00 Coffee Break

16.00 - 17.00 Closing Session: Conclusions and Recommendations

The Conference is expected to further determine the OSCE's role, in close co-operation with partner organizations, in addressing the transit transport problems of landlocked developing countries in its region.

One of the main outcomes of the Conference could be a 'Dushanbe Declaration'. The Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities in close co-operation with the relevant Delegations to the OSCE and partner organizations has facilitated the drafting of a preliminary text. It has been discussed at the level of Delegations to the OSCE in Vienna and been shared with relevant ministries and government agencies in the respective capitals. Delegations of Central Asian participating States as well as OSCE Asian Partners and other OSCE participating States, in particular those bordering the region, are invited to contribute to the further elaboration of the text during the Conference deliberations and to express support for it in the Closing Session.

17.00 End of Conference

17.00 - 18.00 Press Conference

18.00 - Reception hosted by the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe - Vastan Restaurant