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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

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

Vienna, 4 February 2008

To: All OSCE Delegations
Partners for Co-operation
Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

Subject: Revised consolidated summary of the OSCE Conference on prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015, Dushanbe, 23-24 October 2007

Attached herewith is the revised consolidated summary of the **OSCE Conference on prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015** which took place in Dushanbe on 23-24 October 2007.



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CONSOLIDATED SUMMARY

OSCE CONFERENCE ON PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
TRANS-ASIAN AND EURASIAN TRANSIT TRANSPORTATION THROUGH
CENTRAL ASIA UNTIL THE YEAR 2015

DUSHANBE, 23-24 OCTOBER 2007

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WELCOMING ADDRESS

By H.E. Hamrokhon Zarifi
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan

Dear Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends,

First of all, let me, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, His Excellency Emomali Rahmon, the Government, and personally warmly welcome all of you - the participants of the OSCE Conference in Dushanbe - on the Tajik Land and wish you successes and fruitful work.

From ancient times, the roads, being a main factor for the development of trade and economic progress, were and still are the most important mean of strengthening multi-faceted links between the nations of the Central Asia. The bright illustration of that is the history of each of our countries, which used to be elements of the common Silk Road in the past.

Today, the Central Asia is considered to be one of the richest and dynamically developing regions of the world, in which huge deposits of raw minerals and human resources are concentrated.

Further involvement of our countries economies in the world economy, enhancing globalization and integration processes in the world and in the region make it open for investments and industrial development. Co-operation of our intra-continental landlocked countries in the sphere of transit transportation and the removal of existing barriers on the way of free movement of people and goods opens a perspective of access to totally new world markets and transportation linkages and significantly increases the economic and export-import capacities of each separately taken state.

In that perspective, the OSCE Conference in Dushanbe along with collective efforts of states of the region and international organizations, such as the UN, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Eurasian Economic Cooperation, Echo and others, is designed to give a new impetus to further development of co-operation in the sphere of transport and communications not only in the Central Asian region, but also in the Caucasus. Its very concept built on enhancing regional cooperation and integration, removal of various barriers, gradual tariffs reduction should provide us with economic progress, thus strengthening regional security and stability.

Recognizing the extreme importance of the transport and communications sphere in enhancing regional economic co-operation and national economic growth, the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan stands for multilateral development of friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all countries of the region and for the creation of a kind of trust and good neighbourhood zone along the entire perimeter of their own borders. This is greatly facilitated by its co-operation within the OSCE framework. Aims and objectives formulated in the Decision of the Brussels Ministerial Council "On future transportation dialogue in the OSCE", as well as in the Document – strategy in the field of economic and ecological dimension adopted in Maastricht in 2003, etc. envisage comprehensive development of

OSCE participating States economies and are compliant with the policy chosen by the Government of Tajikistan towards acceleration of social and economic reforms in the country.

Over the recent years, taking into account the importance of the problem of transport and communication network development in Tajikistan, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, has launched as one of the priority tasks of the Government the construction and modernizing of roads, bridges, tunnels, designed to provide not only transport communication within the country, but also to connect transport arteries of the Central Asia and Europe with the countries of the Southern Asia and seaports of the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf.

The construction of several bridges on the Pyanj River connecting Tajikistan with the neighbouring Afghanistan has a special place in this process. The last one, with the carrying capacity of up to 1000 automobiles a day, the opening ceremony of which has taken place in the late August this year, is meant to give an impetus to the development of the Afghan national economy, to play the role of a crossroad on trade ways between the West and the East, as well as become an important factor of stability and security in the region.

Tajikistan urges the international community and international financial institutions to continue providing comprehensive support for further integration processes in the region and allocate necessary funds for the completion of undergoing projects and creation of new transport corridors.

Dear participants of the Conference,

Taking advantage of the opportunity, I would like to express hope that the outputs of this Dushanbe OSCE Forum will become another stimulus for further deepening the transit transportation dialogue in the region of Central Asia and the Caucasus. I am deeply convinced that our countries do have sufficient potential and determination to achieve considerable successes in this vitally important sphere of cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

WELCOMING ADDRESS

By H.E. Abdurahim Ashur
Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan

Distinguished guests,
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
Colleagues,

Let me welcome you once more on our homeland and express our sincere gratitude to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe for the provided support and to the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for the possibility to gather here and discuss the issues of regional transportation development, to share information and views on further activities to meet our transportation needs.

It is my pleasure to note that this year the Republic of Tajikistan is not only presiding at numerous events, but also is hosting many important events. This reaffirms the interest and growing input of the country's Government to the integrated development of regional co-operation.

As the President of our country His Excellency Emomali Rahmon emphasized in one of his addresses: "Tajikistan is capable of turning into an international transport junction, which will connect the countries of the Central Asia and CIS with the rapidly developing South-Eastern Asia" (7 August 2006, Delhi, India).

With this perspective, today we have a real chance to contribute to the co-operative addressing of the pressing issues of the region and integrated search of options for their resolving. As we know, the Almaty Programme of Actions has laid a good ground for the dialogue on enhancing co-operation in the sphere of transport in the OSCE region. And OSCE has strengthened its focus on practical issues of regional co-operation closely connected with the issues of stability and security.

It is well known, no society is able to ensure its economic growth without a developed system of transportation, power engineering, production and realization of goods, since they form the basis of any economic infrastructure.

Development of state policies in the sphere of transportation on the basis of sustainable development principles aims at the economic development of the country, improving the population's life quality, enhancing security and ecology of transport.

Today, Tajikistan is a solid and consistent actor of international efforts focused at ensuring security and co-operation both in Europe and in the Asian continent.

The analysis of the recent years' activity in the transport sphere of economy visually illustrates the significant progress the Republic of Tajikistan has achieved in the transport development. The recent reforms in the country can demonstrate this. By today, for example, the former Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Communications have been merged into one Ministry of Transport and Communications. It is a positive development that all sectors of the transport network of the country - the automobile, railway and air transport - have been unified.

I would like to particularly underline the great role of such financial institutions and international organisations as the Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, European Bank of Reconstruction and Development, OPEC Fund, Kuwait Fund of Arabian Economic Development, the World Bank, the OSCE, as well as the Governments of the states of Iran, China and the USA in the development of the Tajik transport network.

We have prepared a list of investment projects on the transport infrastructure development: the construction of automobile and railroads, airports, tunnels and bridges. These projects will enable expanding the country's transit opportunities, connecting Tajikistan through international Trans-Asian roads with seaports of Pakistan and Iran and in 2008 to fully overcome the landlockedness. The issue of transport corridors development is one of our priorities and in case of facilitating the development of transit routes connecting Russia and China, Central Asia and Europe, it will become possible for us to benefit from the Central-Asian location. While creating favourable conditions for the automobile transport communication, it is also necessary to ensure the development of air and railway transport.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan plans to take steps towards improvement of railway transport functioning, enhancing the country's transport links and using the country railroads as transit lines for other states. I think in their presentations our experts will elaborate on the development, problems, and perspectives of the transport sphere in Tajikistan.

In conclusion, I would like to express my confidence that our conference will work effectively, and the decisions it will take will promote further development of transport and economic relations between states, will accelerate the process of forming a mutually beneficial system of international relations for the benefit of all states of the OSCE area.

Thank you for your attention.

WELCOMING ADDRESS

**By Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg
on behalf of Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High
Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States**

I am delighted to convey my greetings to all who have gathered for this important OSCE Conference on the prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia. I would thus like to congratulate the Government of Tajikistan for taking this important initiative and for successfully organizing this conference, in cooperation with the OSCE Secretariat. This conference is particularly crucial as it will contribute a regional perspective and assessment on the transit transport systems in Central Asia to the preparatory process for next year's midterm review meeting of the Almaty Programme of Action.

As the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, it gives me great pleasure to see that the OSCE Members and Partners are very firm in their commitment to accord special attention to the development challenges faced by landlocked countries, as many member states of this body, including partner countries, Afghanistan and Mongolia, belong to the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). It is well recognized here that the establishment of efficient transit transport systems is a powerful tool for boosting economic development and strengthening security and stability in the region.

No one can deny that being landlocked poses great challenges, but geography should not necessarily be taken as a destiny. Concrete and focused actions are required to overcome geographical realities, by developing and maintaining efficient transit transport infrastructure and simplifying border crossing procedures, in a spirit of partnership with the transit neighbours and with the support of the international community.

Central Asian landlocked States are not exceptions. The distances of the Central Asian countries from the nearest seaports are among the longest in the world. Uzbekistan is doubly landlocked. The Central Asian landlocked states face specific international transit transport situations emerged from the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The transport infrastructure and arrangements in place at that time are not appropriate in the new context which requires contact with new markets and new sources of imports. There has been little reorientation in transit routes to match this new reality. Commodities remain the major export items for these countries. Continued regional tensions further hinder the smooth movement of goods in transit. As a consequence, in all countries, transport infrastructure remains a significant impediment to expansion of trade. Development of new transport network in the new context presents a difficult challenge. It should be also taken into account that the Central Asian Region has tremendous potential as a transit region itself, linking Europe with China and the East. The fast-developing countries to the east and south are interested in promoting their trade with this vast region and use their transit corridors, as a short cut, to the European markets. Central Asia could and is emerging as an important corridor for European and Asian trade links. For the same token, the Caucasian landlocked countries, Armenia and Azerbaijan, are at the bridge of the traditional Silk Route connecting East Asia and Europe, have large potential benefits for both countries. The Eurasian transport corridors could potentially help these countries become vital transit links between East and West. Inclusive broad based regional cooperation is essential for establishing efficient transit systems in Central Asia and Caucasus.

Within the region, despite remarkable advances, much still remains to be done to reduce cross-border barriers, to facilitate better use of regional resources, and to ensure that the people of the region benefit from improved links among their countries, with their neighbours and with the rest of the world. Increased cooperation among the Central Asian republics will produce large mutual gains by reducing trade and transport costs, improved energy use and will contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for better business and greater investments. These are all prerequisites for the effective integration of Central Asian LLDCs in the international trading system and the world economy.

The United Nations family remains firmly committed to assisting the landlocked developing countries to face these transit transport challenges in their development efforts. With midterm review preparatory process well underway, actions are being taken to ensure effective progress in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, a document that has been widely acclaimed as well-focused and balanced with a clear set of priorities. My Office has already convened two thematic meetings, one on transit transport infrastructure development in Burkina Faso in June and one on international trade and trade facilitation in Mongolia in August to provide substantive inputs to the midterm review assessment. I trust that this OSCE Dushanbe Conference will also be a milestone in this preparatory process and its outcome be an important regional contribution to the review process.

In conclusion, let me reiterate the commitment of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Developing States to further strengthen our partnership with the OSCE with a view to assisting landlocked countries in addressing their special needs and concerns. In that spirit of partnership, please accept my best wishes for the success of your deliberations.

WELCOMING ADDRESS

**By Mr. Bernard Snoy,
Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished Participants,

On behalf of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the OSCE, I would also like to welcome all of you to this important conference.

Let me start by briefly explaining to you why the OSCE as a political and security Organization is active in the area of transport. As you may be aware, this conference is a follow-up to the 14th OSCE Economic Forum process. In 2006, this process focused, under Belgian OSCE Chairmanship, on transport development and cooperation and on transport security. The first preparatory conference on this theme took place here in Dushanbe on 7-8 November 2005. It was here, at that conference that, for the first time, Tajikistan proposed to organize, here in Dushanbe, a conference on trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transport development, together with relevant partner organizations.

During the Forum process, the special needs and challenges of OSCE landlocked developing countries (in Central Asia, South Caucasus and neighbouring regions) were highlighted. Finally, at the concluding session of the 2006 Forum in Prague, the five Central Asian participating States issued a joint statement in which they highlighted the “indivisible link between trade and transport” and emphasized that “the absence of territorial access to the sea and high transit costs impose serious restrictions on their socio-economic development”.

Based on this and on the recommendations of the Forum process, the 56 OSCE participating States adopted at the Ministerial Council meeting in Brussels in December 2006, a Decision on the “Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE”. This Decision provides our Organization with a strong mandate for continued activities in the field of transport and especially with regard to addressing transit and transport issues in OSCE landlocked countries.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished Participants,

Let me now, without further delay, briefly present to you the Agenda for the next two days. My Office has prepared an annotated agenda, outlining in more detail what exactly will be discussed in each of the sessions. I suggest you use this document for your reference.

Working Session I will focus on the provisions of the Almaty Programme of Action and the 2008 mid-term review to which this conference is contributing. Furthermore, the Session will feature H.E. Khudoyor Khudoyorov, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan, and H.E. Zhenis Kasymbek, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who will share with us their views on the importance of the aforementioned Programme.

Working Session II will be offering the floor to you, participating Government Officials from across the region to present your progress made regarding the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and to assess your current transit transport, border and customs policies. This session should also lead to identifying remaining gaps and needs as well as plans for future action. Furthermore it is expected to explore avenues for increased regional cooperation with regard to the issues under discussion.

Panel Discussion I to be held this afternoon will feature representatives of International Organizations and International Financial Institutions who will be providing an overview of ongoing transport infrastructure development projects in the region. When making their presentations, panel speakers are invited to respond to the gaps and challenges identified by Government officials in Working Session II. I really would like to encourage each of you to engage in a vivid dialogue with the other countries' representatives and stakeholders present here.

In Panel Discussion II, which will be held tomorrow morning, representatives of International Organizations will give brief presentations on a number of existing international conventions, that when implemented effectively, prove to be useful tools that could facilitate trade and transport in and across this region.

Finally, Panel Discussion III will be offering the floor to private sector representatives. After all it is the business community that is often and foremost affected by physical and non-physical barriers to transport operations in and through Central Asia.

Let me now briefly refer to the expected outcomes of this conference and to the possible way ahead.

The Conference first and foremost aims at strengthening political cooperation with regard to transit transportation issues across the region; it is also expected to further determine the OSCE's role, in close co-operation with partner organizations, in assisting landlocked developing countries in its region.

One of the main outcomes of the Conference could be a 'Dushanbe Declaration'. In this regard, my Office, in close co-operation with the relevant Delegations to the OSCE and representatives of partner organizations, has facilitated the drafting of a preliminary text. Both the Russian as well as the English texts have been made available to you in hard copy.

Until now, this document has been discussed at the level of Delegations to the OSCE in Vienna and been shared with relevant ministries and government agencies in your capitals. You, participants in this conference are invited now to contribute to the further elaboration of the text during the Conference deliberations and will be invited to express support for it during the Closing Session.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished participants,

I am very pleased to see such good attendance by high level officials from the broader Central Asian region and beyond as well as from representatives from various International Organizations and International Financial Institutions active in this region. Indeed, you have

lots of experience to share in this subject area. I am therefore confident that the meetings of today and tomorrow will be characterized by vivid and inter-active discussions.

Let me end by extending my warmest thanks to the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. We are honoured by the presence of H.E. Khamrokhon Zarifi, Minister of Foreign Affairs and we would like to thank particularly H.E. Abdurahim Ashur, Minister of Transport who kindly offered to host this important conference. I would also like to thank Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg who represents here the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, with the support of whom we organize this conference and last but not least, I would like to thank Ambassador Vladimir Pryakhin and the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe for their strong support and assistance.

Let me conclude by emphasizing once more the interactive character of this conference; working sessions and panels are designed in a way that allows active participation and discussion. I am looking forward to a fruitful exchange of ideas and views and to a positive outcome.

I thank you for your attention and wish you a pleasant stay in Dushanbe.

WELCOMING ADDRESS

**By Mr. Antonio Ramos Membrive,
Representative of the Spanish 2007 OSCE Chairmanship**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the OSCE Spanish Chairmanship, I would like to welcome you to this Conference. I want to take this opportunity and thank the Government of Tajikistan for its hospitality.

In the last couple of years the OSCE's economic and environmental dimension developed on an ascending path and gained a new impetus. Progress has been achieved in particular with regard to the effectiveness and the outcome of the annual Economic and Environmental Forum. The Forum is generating each year a number of follow-up activities and concrete results. This has been the merit of able Chairmanships, of the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, of the OSCE field presences, and of the OSCE participating States themselves.

I believe this conference is an excellent proof of what I just said. It is a follow up conference to the 14th Forum under the Belgian Chairmanship. It is the result of an initiative of the Government of Tajikistan, which was then supported by other countries from Central Asia and from other regions as well. It is a concrete task of a Ministerial decision adopted in Brussels last year. Last but not least it was made possible due to the excellent work and dedication of the OCEEA and the Centre in Dushanbe. I want to thank them for that.

At its turn, Spain was proud to contribute to this process of strengthening the second dimension during its Chairmanship this year. Spain will remain committed to the continuous strengthening of the effectiveness of the OSCE in the economic and environmental field. The focus of the Spanish Chairmanship was on environmental issues, but at the same time we attach great importance to the continuity of activities and we believe that follow-up to recommendations and topics discussed in the past is indeed crucial. This is an important and extremely positive aspect, as progress is reinforced if we manage to build upon existing OSCE experiences and activities.

Spain, as OSCE Chairmanship for the year 2007 hopes that the 15th Economic and Environmental forum will also generate a strong and substantial follow-up. We hope the Ministerial Council in Madrid later this year will adopt a decision on the follow-up to the 15th Forum, focusing in particular on water management in the OSCE area. An OSCE Strategy on Security and Environment is also currently being negotiated in Vienna. We will do our best to have this documents adopted in Madrid and in this process we count on the support of the participating States, in particular of the Central Asian participating States. We also believe that regional activities such as this Conference will be organized in the future, on various topics of relevance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The development of transportation is a challenge and a responsibility, but it also provides important opportunities to all of the OSCE participating States.

The OSCE offers a unique forum where we take stock of policies, opportunities and deficiencies in the field of transportation in the OSCE area.

The OSCE always valued the interaction between various stakeholders and I am looking forward to the presentations and debates over the next two days. Aspects related to the implementation of international legal instruments, best practices and standards, as well as the public-private partnership and co-operation in addressing common challenges are extremely relevant. I want to emphasize the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of existing policies and the importance of promoting good governance in the area of transport.

This Conference in Dushanbe also represent an opportunity for exchanging best practices and experiences in an intra and inter-regional context, for strengthening political commitments in this regard. It also offers the opportunity to establish and strengthen partnerships with other actors and to integrate OSCE activities into other regional or global processes.

I thank you and wish you all a successful Conference.

RAPORTEURS' REPORTS

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

Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Senior Programme Officer at the UN-OHRLLS, started his presentation by outlining the specific problems and constraints the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) are confronted with. Lacking territorial access to the sea, the LLDCs have no control over transit facilities and over their development. Their trade depends very much on the procedures and requirements set by their neighbours, with whom they must negotiate in order to obtain better access to the world market. In addition, natural disasters, civil war or economic upheavals in transit neighbours may damage or even close the transit routes used by the LLDCs. The geographical isolation and the remoteness from major world markets represent important disadvantages for LLDCs, as they result in higher transit transport costs and in cuts in trade volume. This negative situation can be overcome only through cooperation between LLDCs and their neighbours. Further on, Mr. Erdenebileg emphasized the importance of addressing the non-physical barriers, such as red tape, cumbersome procedures, excessive documentation requirements, etc.

Mr. Erdenebileg referred then to the global efforts to address the special needs of the LLDCs. In this context, he presented the main provisions and priorities of the APA. Transport is regarded as a key sector, underpinning trade, regional integration and economic development. The APA takes a balanced approach, starting from the premises that the interests of LLDCs and transit countries are mutually reinforcing and complementary. It also attempts to achieve measurable results through specific action in priority areas. UN-OHRLLS proposed four sets of indicators to measure the progress achieved, namely on economic development, transit transport and communication infrastructure, trade facilitation and transit policy issues, and international support.

One of the preconditions for the successful implementation of the APA is raising awareness of the international community and mobilizing its attention towards the special challenges faced by LLDCs. In recent years major development economists, opinion makers and institutions increasingly recognized this reality. Mr. Erdenebileg also outlined a number of focus areas where work was still needed, such as: improvement of the legal framework for transit cooperation, through the accession to and implementation of key international conventions by LLDCs and transit neighbours; enhancing good relations between LLDCs and transit neighbours; reduction of intra regional trade barriers; creation of a transparent and investor friendly environment; improved access to development assistance, etc.

At the end of his presentation, he referred to the global mandate of the UN-OHRLLS related to LLDCs, which consists in mobilization and co-ordination of international efforts, advocacy, providing assistance to LLDCs, monitoring and reporting on the APA implementation. He also mentioned the midterm review of the APA, to be completed by September 2008, and the two thematic meetings held in this framework - on transit transport infrastructure development (Burkina Faso, June 2007) and on international trade and

transport facilitation (Mongolia, August 2007). Three regional review meetings will be held in 2008.

Mr. Khudoyor Khudoyorov, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Tajikistan, pointed out that due to the fact that Tajikistan was a part of the Soviet Union; its transport network was mostly oriented towards the Russian Federation, and not well developed towards the other neighbouring countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and China). However the latter could provide faster and cheaper transportation possibilities when going to the world markets. Since the Soviet Union collapsed, Tajikistan has been trying to develop transport networks aiming these countries. This process is not fast due to the lack of financial means.

The activities that have been recently carried out in order to support the economical development of the country through development of transport and communications network include: opening of new automotive roads, tunnels and bridges; modernization of the road Dushanbe-Kulyab; continuing reconstruction of the main-road Dushanbe – Sarytash, and many others. Mr. Khudoyorov highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for improving transport potential and market accessibility.

Tajikistan has prioritized transit corridors that are important in the international context (East-West and North-South). There are still few construction works being carried out on the North-South transit corridor. Once they are finished, the corridor will be practically full-year operational.

The transport policy of Tajikistan is based on the international conventions and agreements in the fields of automotive, railways and air transport. So far, Tajikistan has ratified six conventions and is currently preparing itself for joining another one – the Convention on International Carriage of Goods by Road (1978). Moreover, the legislation of Tajikistan in the fields of transport is being developed in order to comply with the international legislation.

Taking into account the fact that transit transportation in Central Asia is constantly growing, Mr. Khudoyorov outlined the necessity to coordinate transit transportation as a whole. This could be achieved through creating a Centre for Coordination of Transit-Transport Corridors Development. The centre could be established in Dushanbe, due to its geographical location and governmental support. ABBAT could participate in its creation. Help from the OSCE and other international organizations would be needed.

Mr. Zhenis Kasymbek, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan, spoke also 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. He started by referring to the role of Kazakhstan with regard to trade and transport at regional and international level. He then gave a brief overview of the APA priorities. He continued by presenting SPECA, which aims at supporting the Central Asian Countries in developing cooperation, creating incentives for economic development and integration into the world economy. In the SPECA framework, the working group on transport and border crossing provides a mechanism for coordination of activities in these areas.

Mr. Kasymbek presented a number of maps of road and rail networks in the SPECA region as well as some activities such as the creation of a common data bank on transport systems of

the SPECA region. This data bank would include road and rail routes of international importance, projects implemented or under implementation, information about border crossing problems and inter-modal transport infrastructure. The common data bank would create a needed framework for access to information, allow national authorities to monitor and assess the efficiency of transport systems and also facilitate a flexible response to changes and demands for transport services at regional level. Other projects of common interest for the SPECA countries are those related to transport corridors development (TRACECA, the North-South corridor, the International Road Corridor West Europe-West China, etc.), and the UNECE-UNESCAP Euro-Asian Transport Links project.

At the end of his statement, Mr. Kasymbek briefly presented the comprehensive transport strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2015.

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 the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe

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

Mr. Nemat Rahmatov, First Deputy, Customs Service of Tajikistan, emphasized the need to simplify existing border-crossing and customs procedures. This would require: mutual recognition of documents (on a regional scale); reduction of the number of documents needed and the introduction of joint border controls.

The Tajik customs authorities have over the past period been optimizing existing border-crossing procedures, among others through the introduction of automated and new technical equipment, modernization of the existing infrastructure and enhanced exchange of information with other controlling authorities. Despite the efforts made, a number of problems remain: the lack of an appropriate mechanism for mutual cooperation between different controlling authorities; existing border-crossing points do not meet international standards; non-sufficiency of technical equipment and a lack of information technologies.

Ms. Nargis Khamidova, Head of ABBAT, stressed that it was her association which initiated the idea of the Conference on the occasion of the first preparatory conference to the 14th OSCE Economic Forum which took place in November 2005 in Dushanbe.

Furthermore she elaborated on the priorities of the Government of Tajikistan in the area of transport infrastructure development. Those include among others: ensuring the mobility of the Tajik population; increasing the level of security and decreasing negative impact of transport operations on the environment, in line with international standards; promoting coordination in the area of transport infrastructure development; active participation in the TRACECA project; introduction of a flexible transport tariffs system and introduction of IT applications in the road and railways industry.

In addition, Ms. Khamidova stressed the need to attract investment for the further development of two international transit routes particularly the Tursun-Zade route which

crosses the border between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and the Nijni-Pjandz route between Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Finally she said that ABBAT assumes that the output of the Conference will contribute to the fulfilment of the Almaty Programme of Action. In this regard she proposed that a new Centre could be created, with the help of the OSCE, which would contribute to the coordination and development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation activities.

Ms. Sofia Aisagalieva, Deputy Head of the Customs Control Committee of the Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan, informed participants that the customs authorities of Kazakhstan work towards the full implementation of international standards that are being developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO). She emphasized that the economic prosperity of Kazakhstan depends a lot on the effective use of its potentially high transit opportunities. One of the long-term economic priorities of the Government of Kazakhstan is to ensure the competitiveness of its transport and communications system, which is also an integrated part of the Strategy “Kazakhstan-2030”.

Furthermore, Ms. Aisagalieva mentioned that Kazakhstan is one of the countries that have ratified the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets (1975) and the Agreement on Unified Transit Conditions via the territories of the Customs Union state-members (1998). In this regard, from 2006 onwards, customs procedures have been increasingly simplified for the transit of goods, thereby contributing significantly to the development of external trade relations.

Ms. Aisagalieva also informed that, as of 2007, it is planned to introduce a mobile Checking Centre on the border between China and Kazakhstan. At this point, some border-crossing checking points already have automated control systems. This improves efficiency and contributes to the elimination of non-physical and procedural barriers. The system is flexible, can be updated and can be combined with other technical equipment. It is a part of the project “Electronic Customs” that, in its turn, is part of the Kazakh “E-Government” programme.

Finally, participants were informed about a joint border-crossing check point between Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. The implementation of this Pilot Project has led to a significant increase of transit transportation.

H.E. Erkin Isakov, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic, informed that, in the framework of the Almaty Programme of Action his country has established a working group. The Kyrgyz Republic so far has joined all the Conventions that were recommended by the UNESCAP.

The Ministry of Transport and Communications plays an active role in the development of an Intergovernmental Agreement of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states on the improvement of the road transport situation in the region. This is important for Kyrgyzstan as road transport is the main means of transportation (95%). The representative also informed about a new law that gives priority to the development of the road Osh-Sary-Tash-Irkeshtam (connecting China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Iran and Turkey).

It was also mentioned that the Kyrgyz Republic participates in eight bilateral agreements and joined eight UNECE Conventions in the field of road transport.

In 1999 an Association of International Road Transport Operators was created. It assists the Kyrgyz road transport operators in their integration into the European market. The association is also a member of the International Road Transport Union (IRU).

Regarding the railways sector, the main priority is the creation of the Eurasian transcontinental railroad that goes through Kyrgyzstan and would connect the ports of the Pacific with Europe, the Mediterranean region, as well as with the Persian Gulf. Today Kyrgyzstan has two rail lines that are not interconnected.

Mr. Abdulla Khashimov, Head of Department of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Affairs, Investment and Trade of Uzbekistan, informed that for the period 2006/2007 the expected growth of the foreign trade is 140%. Maintaining this growth requires an improved transit transportation system. In particular, in order to ensure a GDP growth of 7-8%, the growth of the transport network should be about 15-16%.

In the following years the transit growth in Uzbekistan is expected to be about 1 M t/ year in the railway sector and 15-20 M t/ year in the road transport sector. Currently, the latter is being up-graded: new trucks that satisfy Euro-3 and Euro-4 standards are being used to an increasing extent.

With regard to the air transport industry Mr. A. Khashimov informed that a flight from Europe to South-Eastern Asia is shorter through Uzbekistan than through Dubai allowing an air transport company to save about 5 M dollars/year. The Government of Uzbekistan is also working towards the modernisation of the air transport infrastructure.

Regarding the development of transport corridors, participants were informed that the Government of Uzbekistan, in the framework of its 'Road Transport Development Programme 2007-2010', is planning to build 500 km of international roads and 190 km of state roads.

Mr. Khashimov ended his presentation by stressing that customs and border-crossing check points should be modernized. In this area more progress is needed.

Mr. Elmar Farajov, Head of Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Head of TRACECA and International Projects Unit, International Relations Department of the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, reiterated that the Almaty Programme of Action (APA), adopted at the UN International Conference in 2003, is an important basis for enhancing international cooperation of UN Member States in the field of transit transport.

The Government of Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the project concerning the restoration of the Great Silk Route. Azerbaijan has a key position in creating the shortest transport corridors within the Eurasian region; it has the potential to become an important transport hub within the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport system.

The transport corridor TRACECA consists of several projects. In 2007, the construction of an 85 km long motorway Hajigabul-Kurdamir was commissioned. Reconstruction projects are ongoing along the Kurdamir-Ujar-Ganja-Gazakh and Yevlakh-Gazakh routes. In 2008, the new road from Baku towards the Russian border as well as the Alat-Astara route leading to the border with the Islamic Republic of Iran will be put into service.

Furthermore, the representative emphasized the regional importance of the implementation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project. The implementation of this project will connect Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan by means of railway. This will create a direct transport link between the Caspian Sea region and Europe. This project, in combination with the introduction of the Bosphorus tunnel, will allow the interconnection of the trans-European and trans-Asian railway networks. Overall, it would lead to improved transit transportation activities along the Silk Route which would become more reliable, safe and economically sustainable for transport carriers.

Regarding the maritime transport, the participants were informed that due to the heavy congestion of Baku downtown, the officials of Azerbaijan undertake the project of moving Baku International Sea Trade Port into the settlement of Alat, 40 km south of Baku. Besides, for strengthening the maritime connections with the Caspian littoral states, Azerbaijan plans until the year 2011 to procure 3 ferry boats with the capacity of 56 wagons each. This will be in addition to the current fleet of 7 ferry boats with the capacity of 28 wagons each. Meantime, there is on going feasibility study to construct the ship building factory in Azerbaijan.

The representative emphasized the potential and perspectives of a route linking China with the port of Aktau (Kazakhstan), the port of Baku and Georgia. In this regard, seven Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan have come to the preliminary agreement on construction of inland railways between China and Europe. This investment programme is supported by the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Islamic Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations Development Program.

Outlining the issue of removing obstacles on border crossings, the representative pointed out the importance of introducing the information technologies in a process of e-document and e-declaration of goods and vehicles. Meantime, the European Union has granted the technical assistance programme in holding training seminars and workshops to learn from the experience of European countries. The UNECE International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods is a key legal instrument to use in this respect.

Mr. Abdullah Koten, Deputy Undersecretary of the Under-Secretariat of Foreign Trade of Turkey, emphasized the fact that Turkey, throughout its history, has always been at the crossroads of major international routes from West to East and North to South: between Europe and Asia, the Middle East, the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean as well as between possible connections beyond and towards India and South East Asian countries. With a total area of 814 thousand square kilometres and 8 thousand kilometres of coastal line, Turkey lies in the main artery of traffic between Asia and Europe. The foreign trade volume of Turkey has increased to 240 billion dollars in 2007. It is expected that it will reach around 500 billion USD by 2013. Increasing trade volume and trade relations with numerous foreign countries, combined with transit transport demand and potential, require an effective domestic transport system and diverse international transport connections. For this reason, Turkey is heavily investing in transport infrastructure each year.

Subsequently, Mr. Koten provided information about ongoing and planned projects in this field:

- The Kars-Tbilisi project, in other words Turkish-Georgian railway connection, will enable the integration of Turkish transport infrastructure with TRACECA routes. The landlocked Central Asian countries will then have easier access to the Europe via Turkey.
- Mersin port on the Mediterranean Sea, İzmir Port on the Aegean Sea and İstanbul Ports are already serving to Turkish and international haulers with increasing traffic and capacity. Mersin has been one of the leading hub-ports of the Mediterranean.
- North Aegean Port Çandarlı on the Aegean Sea, Zonguldak Filyos Port on the Black Sea coastline are new port facilities planned to be realized as gateways for traffic flow axes while providing direct access for Caucasian and Asian markets.
- Marmaray Rail Tube Tunnel Project, which will provide direct connection of railway system between Asia and Europe in Marmara Sea, will also provide an uninterrupted passenger and freight transportation across the Istanbul Strait. Construction phase of the project is underway and continues as planned. So that the historical Silk road route connecting Beijing to London will be completed.

Furthermore, Mr. Koten pointed out that protectionism in road transport is the most important drawback for the further improvement of efficiency and market development and that the protectionist measures, such as transport quotas creating high transportation costs to traders, should be given up. Also Mr. Koten highlighted the importance of the common understanding that competitiveness can be achieved by the improvement of international and regional cooperation and integration.

It was also mentioned that the sector of rail transportation offers cost effective transport for the region. The railways administrations of Turkey, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan have come together under the umbrella of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and prepared a container train project named "Eurasia Block Container Train" (Almaty - Tashkent - Tehran – Istanbul) having a purpose to create a modern, fast, and secure railroad service for cargo transport. Started its regular services in 2002, the project still has some problems concerning border delays, uncertain transport costs etc. Finally, Mr. Koten invited the international financial institutions and the developed countries to provide assistance to those developing countries that have no sufficient financial means to realize large projects in the fields of transport infrastructure.

Mr. S. Kuchinsky, Head, Department on Development of Transport Activities and Logistics, Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Belarus, emphasized that the Belarusian economy is strongly oriented towards export (70% of the production is exported). 83% of export goes through the maritime ports of Latvia and Lithuania (facilitated through intergovernmental agreements). Regarding the level of transit, this consisted in 2006 of 168 million ton (14 million ton by pipeline, 46.3 million ton by railways and 7.8 million ton by road).

The Republic of Belarus has two transit corridors that are recognized to be a priority for the EU (i.e. Berlin - N. Novgorod and Kijiv – Klaipeda). The Belarusian authorities approved and started the implementation of a Programme for 2006-2010 (consisting of 60 different measures) aimed at ensuring the attractiveness and the efficient use of Belarusian transit transport opportunities. A new 2008-2015 action programme on transport and logistics is

currently being prepared. This programme would consist, among others, of the development of Transport-Logistics centres. Both of the above Programmes are in accordance with EurAsEC principles. Finally Mr. Kuchinsky stressed the importance of cooperation between different countries through both bilateral as well as multilateral agreements.

H.E. Eng. Nehmatullah Ehsan JAWID, Minister of Transport and Aviation of Afghanistan, stated that considering the importance of the transport sector, the Afghanistan Government is making all efforts to improve the necessary transport infrastructure to promote trade and to implement Almaty Programme of Action. In particular, the Government identifies and develops regional and sub-regional projects in relation to development of the SAARC regional multimodal transport system as well as develops Action plans in order to take concrete measures for harmonization of customs, insurance, standards of loading and unloading of trucks and electronic exchange of papers to enable seamless transportation of goods in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries.

Mr. Mohammad Shah Hachemi, representative of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Afghanistan, emphasized the fact that Afghanistan is a least developed, landlocked country whose international trade and transit capability was practically destroyed during 30 years of war, economic and social disruption and endemic security problems. So the strengthening and modernization of transit transport is essential for ensuring Afghanistan's development. However, apart from upgrading and modernizing the domestic physical transit transport infrastructure, including Customs and border facilities, the regional linkages need to be created. This means that governments need to have political strength and know-how as well as the required human and physical resources to translate dialogue and those agreements into workable solutions. Also he stressed the importance of adherence to international conventions, such as the TIR and other UN agreements.

Furthermore, Mr. Hachemi highlighted the role of regional cooperation in trade and transit development. In particular, almost 50 % of Afghanistan's trade is with its five neighbours (Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). In addition, Afghanistan considers an opportunity of serving as a "land bridge" between energy-rich Central Asia, energy-deficient South Asia and its high potential for manufactured exports, and the West Asian region.

Also Mr. Hachemi informed that the Afghanistan National Development Strategy until 2010 foresees the promotion of Afghanistan as centre of a regional transit network by virtue of its strategic geographic position to gain access to international markets and to link major trading powers by affording them the shortest access to the sea (through North-South and East-West Transport Corridors). These two corridors, but also reconstruction of Afghanistan's 2,237 km ring road and connecting roads to the provinces are nearing completion.

Participants were informed that TIR reactivation is in the process under the UNCTAD trade facilitation project. The freight forwarders are being trained and organized under the aegis of FIATA, and related legislation has been drafted for incorporation into the new transport law.

In conclusion, Mr. Hachemi stressed the fact that Afghanistan is committed to pursuing policies that will make it an effective partner to solving transit transport problems in its region. Its observer status in the WTO since 2004 and its efforts to reactivate TIR demonstrate its desire to integrate into the international trading system.

Mr. Seseer Gonchig, Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, emphasized the fact that there is often a lack of coherence between regional/bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and that in this respect the survey concerning the trade related agreements, proposed by the OSCE and its partners could be of particular relevance.

He reminded the participants that the International Ministerial Meeting on Transit Transport Cooperation (Almaty, 2003) aimed at forging partnerships that would address the specific needs for transit transport at the national, bilateral, regional and global levels, and that the issues of trade and transit transport facilitation have been clearly defined and agreed upon in the Almaty Declaration and Programme of Action.

As a step forward the effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, in August 2007 Mongolia hosted the Global Event for Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries on trade and trade facilitation in Ulaanbaatar that was organized in close cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDSs. In order to address the specific needs of LLDCs, Mongolia actively cooperates not only with the United Nations, but also with the World Trade Organization.

In addition, the representative from the Mongolian Delegation mentioned that in the Asia-Pacific region international organizations are actively involved in the development of integrated transport networks, inter-modal transport and logistics systems. For example, the UNESCAP successfully works on the development of the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway networks. The representative emphasized the fact that Mongolia ratified the Intergovernmental Agreement on Asian Highway in 2005 and signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway Network in November 2006.

Furthermore, the participants were informed that in 2006 Mongolia set up the National Committee for Trade and Transport Facilitation comprised of various ministerial representatives and private sector, which aims to coordinate transit transport policy and measures to improve infrastructure for rail network and missing road links connecting China and Russia. This is an important issue also due to the fact that Mongolia's transit transport is mainly handled by rail. The Mongolian railway is a joint venture with Russia and it connects the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation. Local rail network is limited and needs expansion as a demand for regional, sub-regional and international trade increase.

Also the representative mentioned that the volume of transit transport through Mongolia is constantly increasing in recent years and has a great potential to further increase. In the same moment, Mongolia faces certain difficulties in meeting this growing demand. So transit transport related investment and policy reforms are under serious consideration (including construction of second rail along the existing alignment and use of electric power). Mongolia is committed to develop the integrated and coordinated transport network in the region through its active participation in the regional projects.

Finally, participants were informed that since 1998 Mongolia is looking forward to signing a trilateral agreement on transit transport with China and Russia that, if concluded, will become an effective engine for transit traffic through the world's largest land transport corridor.

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

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

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

Mr. Rustan Jenalinov, Secretary General, EU Programme on the Development of Europe - the Caucasus – Asia Transport Corridors (IGC TRACECA), provided brief information about the role of the IGC TRACECA in the development of international transit. The main goal of the programme is to establish modern transport corridors which are safe and efficient. The programme was established in 1993 and currently has 13 participating states including 7 landlocked countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. So far 60 projects of the amount of EUR 121 million have been implemented. The projects are aimed at the harmonization of legislation, simplification of border crossing procedures, improving tariff policy, institutional strengthening, capacity building and development of transport infrastructure. IGC TRACECA has 6 ongoing projects in Central Asia including development of equipment certification centres for transportation of perishable goods; reconstruction of the Galaba-Termez railway line; construction of a navigation channel for the port of Turkmenbashi and the development of coordinated national transport strategies in Central Asia.

According to Mr. Jenalinov analyses show a great potential for transport development in Central Asia in the context of further economic development in China, particularly in the Western part of it. It was suggested that more emphasis by different international organizations have to put on, and more attention drawn to, the potential of Central Asia as an important transport link with China.

Mr. Jaromir Cekota, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE Transport Division, as several other speakers, drew attention to transport corridors. Transport corridors are a main focus of UNECE-UNESCAP project on developing Euro-Asian transport linkages with total investment of USD 43 billion. The project has several objectives – identification of main inland transport links, prioritizing investments, looking to non-physical obstacles of transit development and capacity building at national level. 15 countries are involved in the project including many CIS countries. So far within the project 9 routes have been identified, out of which 7 routes are inland. Most of the financing comes from state budgets. The phase II of the project will start next year and will last till 2011. The main tasks of the second phase will be to set up coordinating and monitoring mechanisms, promoting harmonization of transport legislation, improvement of border crossings and providing technical assistance. Mr. Cekota mentioned that the adoption of a Dushanbe Joint Statement at the conference could be another step to fulfil the overall task of the establishment of efficient transport corridors through Central Asia, but particularly such a declaration could contribute to the improvement of coordination mechanisms.

Mr. Jaromir Cekota also presented the UNECE programme on Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway Networks development. The basis for the programme is the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, which entered into force in July 2005. The agreement has 28 signatories and 20 parties and covers territory from South East Asia and Far East to Western Europe. USD 25 billion are already utilized and a further USD 18 billion are planned to be invested. The programme provides assistance in development of more efficient logistics chains and connections between international trading centres.

Mr. Gumar Kassymov, Adviser, Deputy Head of Department for Market oriented Infrastructure Development, Eurasia Economic Community (EurAsEC), underlined the main problems in regional transport development in Central Asia such as the lack of harmonization of legislation related to transport, the lack of technological solutions, the lack of a common base for market competition and the existence of physical barriers. Regarding the harmonization of legislation it is necessary to do it both ways - in the context of international agreements and among the Central Asia states. Regarding technological solutions, it was underlined that cargo volume is growing much faster than the technical capacities of transport companies. It is planned to put more emphasis on logistic centres which could partly address the problem. Regarding trade barriers several problems were identified such as too many unadjusted fees, quotas, lengthy border crossing procedures (30% of total journey time) and different technical requirements for trucks.

Within the framework of EurAsEC it is planned to work on the unification of legal environments, the introduction of equal conditions for competitiveness and the removal of barriers for transport. In order to fulfil these tasks, a special programme has been developed till 2015. The organization has also plans to develop specific transport corridors till 2020. These will be China- Kazakhstan-Russia-Belarus-Europe; Central Asia-Northwest ports of Russia; Central Asia-southern ports in Russia and Ukraine and Korea-Mongolia/China-Central Asia/Russia. The importance of cooperation between the EurAsEC and the OSCE was emphasized. Particularly it was suggested that, in relation to developing legal frameworks of transit, transport assistance of international organizations, including the OSCE, would be important.

Mr. Nazarali Ashurzod, Deputy Head of Tajik Railways, emphasized the importance of railways in Tajikistan and in Central Asia in general. The overall tendency in Tajikistan since 2001 is that volumes of cargo delivered by rail are constantly growing as well as transport volumes of passengers, which have doubled since 2001. At the same time transit remains at the same level. In order to promote transit the possibility of railroad extension to Afghanistan has been analyzed by the Tajik authorities. Low financing from the state budget (the railway is fully state owned) and a low technical capacity as a result of lack of new technologies were mentioned as main problems inhibiting the further development of rail transport.

Mr. Sodiq Haitov, Operations Officer, Sustainable Development Department, the World Bank, provided analyses of the Central Asia road transport system. Central Asia has 66 000 km of main roads, of which 29000 km carry most of the regional and international traffic. Most major roads run North-South reflecting the orientation of trade with Russia and only a few are East-West and even these have several missing links. The region still has deteriorating road conditions since there is a limited maintenance budget with a low level of engagement of the private sector. Truck fleets usually do not meet international transit standards (TIR). It is important to strengthen the institutional capacity of road organizations to adopt modern road management practices.

Mr. Haitov outlined specific challenges for Tajikistan in the context of transport development such as remote location, the limited scale of the domestic market and mountainous terrain. The World Bank is putting 280 million USD (contribution from China) into the Dushanbe-Chanak highway and introducing output and performance based maintenance.

Mr. Sodiq Haitov also touched on regional aviation mentioning that Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan should explore the benefits of liberalization. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan should

explore closer cooperation. It was suggested for international organizations to participate in the coordination of technical assistance, supporting synergies, for example through joint seminars conducted together with the OSCE, between aviation and tourism sectors and the engagement of the private sector.

Mr. Sergey Sharapov, Deputy Director, Research Institute for Railroad Design and Technical and Economic Survey, Russian Railways, mentioned the overall positive tendency that volume of goods carried by Russian Railways has increased by 23% since 2005. The strategy of Russian Railways is aimed at the integration of its railway system into the overall Eurasian transport network. The Russian side is planning to introduce modern information systems, improve the work of border stations and optimize costs of transport services. Mr. Sharapov also informed about the UN ESCAP programme on the Trans-Asia railway corridor agreed in 2006. The first step under this programme will be to do analyses on potential future cargo volumes based on overall economic tendencies.

Mr. Matthey Le Blan, Country Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) gave brief analyses on roads in Tajikistan pointing out that most of them were constructed before 1970 and that maintenance virtually ceased following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Therefore, 70% of the road network is assessed as being in “poor” condition.

The country is currently investing 500 million USD for rehabilitation and construction of its road network. At the same time, inadequate road maintenance may cause Tajikistan to lose road assets in excess of around USD 50 million. Estimated required minimum annual expenditure on road maintenance is around USD 47 million. The Tajik Government has expressed its intention to privatize road construction and related activities in the future. The Government is interested in launching tenders for maintenance of sections of the country’s road network representing a potentially fundamental change in its road management.

The EBRD Tajikistan Road Maintenance Development Project costs estimates are USD 6.6 million. The project has two main goals – promote institutions and policies that promote market functioning and to increase competition in the project sector by the introduction of a more commercial operation of the road maintenance equipment fleet.

Panel Discussion II: Trade, Transit Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation

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

Mr. Robert Nowak, Economic Affairs Officer at the UNECE Transport Division started his presentation by outlining the two main features of landlocked developing countries: many border crossings (i.e. challenges related to transit through other countries which do have access to the open sea) and often large distances to major markets. Mr. Nowak stressed that whereas it is impossible to change geography, it is possible to shorten ‘economic distances’ (i.e. the sum of all time and cost expenditures of moving goods to/from markets). He then continued by presenting a number of conditions that have to be present in order to allow economic distances to be shortened: adequate transport infrastructure (i.e. improving new and

constructing new roads, railways, airports, etc.); trade/transport facilitation (i.e. by reducing the unnecessary transport and trade impediments/expenditures and by making the necessary services more efficient).

Mr. Nowak emphasized the necessity to reduce the number of procedural requirements (i.e. number of documents, time necessary to comply with procedures, the associated cost, etc.) all needed for exporting and importing goods. In addition he emphasized the need to create more efficient border crossings as this leads to lower overall costs, greater revenue and compliance and reduced smuggling and corruption. This can be done through better inter-agency cooperation and improved cross-border cooperation. He ended his presentation by stressing that the principles contained in the **UNECE International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods** are the necessary basis for further development of Integrated Border Management.

Ms. Kristal Alley, Policy Adviser Europe and Eurasia, US Chamber of Commerce, presented on the Eurasia Business Platform (EBP). The EBP's aim, among others, is "to shape economic policy in the rapidly emerging market between the EU and China (i.e. Central Asia, the Caucasus, Turkey, Russia and Ukraine). It also aims at creating and maintaining dialogue, access and interaction with and among Eurasia's key government and business decision makers. Other EBP goals are: creating awareness of the value of Eurasian regional integration; shape perceptions and policies in the US, Europe and the region; develop cross cutting policy recommendations and strengthen the AmCham network. The EBP's overarching objective is "to foster regional cooperation and integration with the goal of creating a transparent and profitable commercial and investment climate while contributing to the positive development of a strategically important part of the world (i.e. Central Asia)". In this regard, in 2006, the US Chamber of Commerce has commissioned a Commercial Feasibility Study on Land Transport Options between Europe & Asia. The overall conclusion of this study was that road transport along Euro-Asian linkages is quite feasible. Despite the fact that costs are 3-4 times that of ocean transport, road transport seems faster and more reliable. However, in order for road transport operations to function properly, border crossing and other facilitation issues must be adequately addressed and increased regional cooperation is a necessity.

Ms. Alley continued her presentation by referring to various US Chamber initiatives undertaken in the course of 2006 and 2007. In this regard she referred to the **Istanbul Roundtable** which led to the identification of key areas where improved regional cooperation and integration are needed (i.e. transport and trade facilitation; environment and water resource management; development of human capital; rule of law issues and corporate governance programs; protection of intellectual property rights and combating trade in counterfeit and other illicit goods; energy security and diversification of the economies and finally reducing red tape, corruption and increasing transparency). As a follow-up to the Istanbul Roundtable, the US Chamber organized a **Moscow Roundtable** which aimed at addressing intellectual property protection and anti-counterfeiting as well as transport development and trade facilitation issues.

Finally Ms. Alley drew attention to a new study which has been commissioned on "Secure Trade Mechanisms". The study consists of a regional survey of international investors on trade facilitation issues. She also announced that the US Chamber of Commerce is preparing a First Annual EBP Conference titled "Between Europe & Asia – Growth Imperatives and Regional Responsibilities" scheduled to take place in 2008.

Mr. Thierry Piraux, Senior Technical Officer at the World Customs Organization outlined his Organization's instruments to promote customs legislation, procedures and activities, such as the revised the SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (June 2006), the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (as amended, 2006) and the revised Kyoto Convention. Mr. Piraux elaborated on some of the key principles of the above WCO instruments.

He informed participants about the key objectives of the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards which are: establishing standards that provide supply chain security and facilitation to goods being traded internationally; enabling integrated supply chain management for all modes of transport and promoting co-operation between the Customs and business communities. Implementation of the "Framework" should lead to enhanced Integrated Border Management through reducing the number of agencies at the border, joint controls (i.e. using common facilities and equipment), adoption of international standards, introduction of the Single Window and enhanced coordination of controls with neighbouring and trading countries.

Mr. Piraux then went on by briefly presenting the main principles of the revised Kyoto Convention including integrity, predictability, client service, and standardization issues. He added that adhering to the revised Kyoto Convention would bring a number of benefits to national economies (reduced transaction costs, increased economic competitiveness, increased foreign direct investment, and lower costs to consumers), the trade community (faster, predictable and efficient Customs clearance, transparent procedures and transparent appeals procedure, and lower business costs), and Customs administrations (enhanced Customs control, increased trade facilitation, more effective use of Customs resources, and reduced integrity problem).

Mr. Hisham Maarouf, Senior Project Officer, Islamic Development Bank, informed participants that, as for the Central Asia Republics, the IDB has approved operations totalling to about USD 850 million. Most of IDB financing has been provided on a concessional basis. IDB has also provided about 40 technical assistance grants to support institutional reorganization and capacity building or develop feasibility studies totalling about USD 10 million. The IDB portfolio in Central Asia deals with issues related to transport and communication, power, education, health, social services, public utilities, agricultural and banking sectors.

The Bank realizes that road transportation is a crucial issue for Central Asia as the region is located in the heart of trade link crossroads between China, Central Asia and Europe. The Road Strategy of Central Asian Republics proves that much improvement still needs to be made in view of the growing trade volumes going through Central Asia.

Mr. Maarouf explained that IDB finances road infrastructure projects because they contribute directly and indirectly to economic growth and poverty reduction, facilitate trade among member countries and allow private sector participation. The IDB has financed 231 road infrastructure projects, totalling USD 2,4 billion. IDB financed roads in Azerbaijan (\$48m), Kazakhstan (\$40m), Kyrgyz Republic (\$43m), Tajikistan (\$35m), Uzbekistan (\$12m), and Afghanistan (\$30m).

In its work, the IDB also tries to develop close collaboration with other International Financial Institutions. In Central Asia, IDB is co-financing road projects with the Asian Development Bank. Cooperation with sister organizations is among others taking place in the framework of the Central Asia Coordination Group. In this context, regular Round Table Meetings take place aimed at financing priority projects submitted by the Governments concerned. IDB already organized 8 Round Table Meetings in Azerbaijan (2), Tajikistan (2), Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Mr. Maarouf added that all these Round Tables were well received and that many outcomes of the outcomes were successfully implemented, especially in the Transport Sector.

Mr. Maarouf ended his presentation by explaining that IDB cooperates with Central Asian Republics on the basis of a three-year rolling work programme which is developed jointly with the relevant authorities in different priority areas. As part of the IDB medium term strategic agenda, the Bank gives priority to cooperation among member countries through trade and investment in the private sector. As far as IDB operations in the private sector are concerned, the Bank will continue to encourage the relevant stakeholders concerned to make use of the banking services provided for by the International Corporation for Development (ICD), the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investments and Export Credit and the Trade Financing Schemes of the IDB Trade Financing and Promotion Department. Mr. Maarouf ended by stressing that, in line with the countries' interests to attract more foreign investments, his Organisation stands ready (subject to the Governments request) to organize investment conferences aimed at gathering private investors from its member countries.

Ms. Elena Anfimova, Communication Officer at the International Road Transport Union (IRU) Office of the Permanent Delegate to the CIS presented on barriers to road transport operations throughout the region. She started by emphasizing the importance of the road transport sector and explained that there are no less than 55 international transport Conventions (of which 38 are UN Conventions contributing to the development of road transportation.

A study that has been carried out by experts from Associations of International Road Transport Operators contributed to a ranking of the main barriers experienced (in 2006):

- Racketeering from the part of the control service of the neighbouring states;
- Incoherence in the work of the control services at border crossings;
- Long delays for proceeding documents at border crossings;
- Lack of road signs and long delays in populated areas;
- Bad quality of road infrastructure;
- Proliferation of check points and local taxes (depending on weight, size etc.) particularly when entering the territory of certain localities along the road;
- Compulsory accompaniment of the shipment, often on a paid basis;
- Long delays for the issuance of state permissions to cross borders;
- Insufficient opportunities for technical maintenance of vehicles at border crossing points;
- A lack of opportunities for international drivers to have a good rest at border crossing (i.e. long working hours and often poor social conditions).

Ms. Anfimova stressed that this has of course serious financial consequences for the transport operators concerned. She added however that (for the period 2005-2006) there is a positive

trend in most of the CIS countries. The leading countries in 2006 were Moldova and Kyrgyzstan followed by Georgia and Uzbekistan.

Mr. Bahridin Azamatov, Regional Cooperation Officer, Tajikistan Residence (CAREC), Asian Development Bank (ADB), informed that the CAREC Programme has eight participating countries – the four Central Asian states (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) plus Afghanistan, Mongolia, Azerbaijan and China. Six multilateral institutions such as the World Bank and the EBRD are also taking part in the programme.

The overall goal of the programme is development through enhanced regional cooperation, leading to accelerating economic growth and poverty reduction. The programme's priority areas are transport, energy and trade facilitation. It is foreseen to invest 2.3 billion USD in the region between 2006 and 2008.

Research on trade policy and facilitation was done within the framework of the programme. It was acknowledged that the region is experiencing a rapid expansion of trade and has a lack of diversification in terms of export and trading partners, often high transportation costs, long and unpredictable transit times, cumbersome border crossing and customs procedures. The conclusions were that liberalization in trade policy and regional cooperation in transport and customs transit are closely interlinked.

Mr. Poul Hansen, Economic Affairs Officer, Trade Logistics Branch at UNCTAD, gave a presentation on “UNCTAD's approach towards meeting the challenges of international trade and transport facilitation”. He started by explaining that transport systems in developing and landlocked countries suffer from: poor infrastructure (i.e. insufficient linkages between national and international systems); administrative inefficiencies and managerial problems (i.e. lack of know how). He then continued by stressing that reducing the overall cost of international trade transactions requires an integrated approach to trade and transport facilitation. Moreover it requires (of the countries concerned) alignment on internationally agreed trade and transport instruments and commercial best practices.

Mr. Hansen then explained that “Trade Facilitation” consists of three main components:

- Simplification, a process of eliminating all unnecessary elements and duplications in formalities, processes and procedures;
- Harmonisation, alignment of national procedures, operations and documents with international conventions, standards and practices;
- Standardisation, a process of developing internationally agreed formats for practices and procedures, documents and information.

UNCTAD assists landlocked developing countries through offering measures to make best use of existing infrastructure and resources including: strengthening sectors through institutional capacity building and regulatory reform; sustainable technology applications through know how transfer and through providing Human Resources Development and training. In this regard, Mr. Hansen emphasized that there is a need for a more coordinated approach within the UN system and related institutions.

Subsequently he emphasized the importance of WTO trade facilitation negotiations and the need to clarify and improve relevant aspects of GATT related to Freedom of Transit (V), Fees

and Formalities connected with Importation and Exportation (VIII) and Publication and Administration of Trade Regulations (X).

He also drew attention to the Trust Fund project which consists of a number of capacity building workshops provided for by UNCTAD aimed at improving the capacity of developing countries to take advantage of new trade opportunities and to participate more effectively in WTO accession negotiations. In this process, applicant countries' national priorities are taken into consideration as proposals are usually assessed in a national context by all relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Hansen then informed about the importance of technical assistance Programmes to improve the trade facilitation environment and gave the example of ASYCUDA which is computer software that has been developed and is constantly updated by UNCTAD. It is provided for free to Customs administrations and is implemented under UNCTAD supervision (for adaptation to local conditions). He stressed that ASYCUDA as a technical facilitation Programme should be looked at as an important part of a government's commitment towards 'Customs Reform and Modernization' eventually leading to: faster clearance procedures, better evaluation of imports and exports and higher customs revenue collection and control.

He ended his presentation by explaining that addressing the needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries requires enhanced cooperation between private and public sector; landlocked and transit countries and transport service providers and users. In this regard, UNCTAD is involved in various intergovernmental activities (i.e. expert groups on trade facilitation and on transit transport), it also provides technical assistance activities aimed at improving transit operations and thereby contributes to the implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action.

Mr. Halimjon Mahmudov, Deputy Head of the Criminal Investigation Department, Drug Control Agency of the Republic of Tajikistan focused more on the security aspects of border crossings. He explained that international drug criminal groups often use transportation services which allow them to transfer drugs throughout the region.

Mr. Mahmudov expressed his concern with the current situation in the region and added that it is becoming worse. He explained that according to UN sources, in 2007, 8200 tons was gathered in Afghanistan of which 20% crosses the Central Asian countries on the way to Europe.

He added that the criminal investigation authorities of Eurasian countries cooperate together in order to stop the drugs on their way to the Central Asia and later on to Europe. Tajikistan plays the role of a 'buffer' against drugs crossing the border with Afghanistan. In 2006, 43% of opium confiscations in the CIS and 65% of opium confiscations in Central Asia were made by Tajikistan. Despite the many efforts of the criminal investigation authorities concerned to improve their capacity, criminal groups have also improved their technical capacity to traffic drugs. He then explained that 55% of the drugs is being trafficked by means of road transport (18% by air and 3% by railways). He added that unfortunately Tajikistan has no motorway checkpoints that have the technical equipment needed to detect drugs. Many of the checkpoints do not even have the basic equipment allowing them to effectively examine a vehicle. Moreover, there is a lack of service dogs. Air and railways sectors face similar problems. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Mahmudov invited the representatives of

International Organizations to provide technical assistance with regard to the above identified problems.

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

Moderator: Mr. Gumar Kassymov, Advisor, Deputy Head of Department for Market oriented Infrastructure Development, Eurasian Economic Community

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

The moderator of the panel discussion, **Mr. Gumar Kassymov**, Advisor and Deputy Head of the Department for Market Oriented Infrastructure Development at EurAsEC started by giving a short overview of the activities of his organization in the area of Public Private Partnership (PPP). In this regard, he informed about the EurAsEC legislative framework that has been designed to assist in the implementation of PPP projects in the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan.

Based on this legal framework the construction of the new railway in Kazakhstan Charsk – Ust – Kamenogorsk is being implemented. The second phase of the project foresees the construction of a railway between China and Kazakhstan.

In the Russian Federation, PPP projects include, among others, the construction of a highway between Moscow and St. Petersburg. Other EurAsEC countries are in the process of developing similar legislation.

Mr. Igor Rounov, Permanent Delegate to the CIS, International Road Transport Union (IRU), gave a short overview of IRU activity in the development of automobile transit transportation. He highlighted that the main priority for the IRU is the restoration of the Silk Road for automobile goods transportation from China to Europe. With this in mind, the IRU has initiated the NELTI Project (i.e. New Eurasian Transport Initiative) to study the potential of transit of goods from China to Europe by using the Silk Road based on existing realities/conditions. As the first results of the IRU analysis showed, there is no need to create new infrastructure rather the existing roads shall be used and where needed upgraded.

Among others, Mr. Rounov underlined the following major problems: administrative barriers, poor physical infrastructure, and what he referred to as ‘inertia of thinking’. Political situation requires finding the alternative ways for transportation.

The solution of the problem, according to Mr. Rounov, could be reached through Public Private Partnerships, i.e. involving more actively the private sector in the realization of ongoing projects, more in particular the NELTI pilot project.

Recommendations, he gave, included:

- Creation of a Transport Development Coordination Centre under the auspices of the OSCE that would facilitate and support implementation of various projects, including IRU projects;

- Raise awareness of carriers, investors and other foreign trade participants on the new possibilities and directions for the transportation of goods;
- Use of PPP for the implementation of the Eurasian initiative;
- Involvement of private sector in pilot projects for transit transportation development in the region.

Mr. Konstantin Glukhenkiy, Customs Expert at the UNECE Transport Division mostly focused on prospects, advantages, and consequences for contracting parties to the **TIR Convention**.

The convention facilitates the international carriage of goods through road transport and addresses the simplification and harmonization of administrative facilities in the field of international transport. Mr. Glukhenkiy stressed that the adoption of the convention imposes administrative and organizational commitments on the part of the governments and other major stakeholders that would likely require adequate training for customs officials.

The TIR public private partnership is implemented at three levels: the international, the national and the operational level. There is a clear distribution of functions between both sectors. The government sector is represented by: the TIR Convention Administrative Committee and the TIR Executive Council (UNECE serves as the Secretariat to the Convention); Government representatives of the states that are Party to the Convention and representatives of the Customs bodies. The private sector is represented through the International Road Transport Union (IRU), the TIR National Associations and individual cargo carriers.

Mr. Glukhenkiy then explained the general aims of the Convention:

- Simplification of international transport operations through simplification and harmonization of customs formalities;
- Reduction of delays of vehicles;
- Reduction of transport expenses and, as a consequence, costs for exporters and importers (customers);
- Protection of budget interests of parties to the convention;
- Effective customs control procedures;
- Identification and prevention of customs violations.

Mr. Georgi Pertaia, Customs Expert, American Chamber of Commerce, Tbilisi, Georgia, gave an overview of the work of the AmCham Customs Committee on improving the transit transportation situation in Georgia.

The AmCham Customs Committee works closely with the private sector and facilitates its dialogue with the government. One of the functions of the AmCham Customs Committee is to present proposals and suggestions on draft law amendments to the Government based on the consultations with the private sector. The effectiveness of the system is proven by the fact that 85 % of the suggestions made so far were taken into account by the Government.

The AmCham Customs Committee is also involved in collecting data for the Georgian Revenue Agency, publishing a Customs Guide for Businesses and conducting customs trainings for the private sector.

According to Mr. Pertaia, improvement in the Customs has led to decreased corruption and has thus facilitated trade and transit. Among the positive changes, Mr. Pertaia highlighted: reduction of importation tariffs; adoption of new customs legislation; enhanced fight against corruption and improved cooperation with private sector. Among the still existing problems he identified: poor infrastructure; problems with determination of customs value and underdeveloped secondary legislation. As an area where much progress is still needed, Mr. Pertaia underlined the importance of enhanced cooperation with neighbouring countries aimed at facilitating cross-border trade and at the creation of a more positive investment climate in the region as a whole.

Mr. Stefan Ebner, Deputy Director, Transport Division, Austrian Chamber of Commerce (also on behalf of Eurochambres) gave a presentation on economic development through upgrading infrastructure and overcoming obstacles in the transportation sector for instance through the development of the Eurasian land bridge from China to Europe.

Mr. Ebner underlined the importance of: multi-modal transport infrastructure development construction and good relations with transit neighbouring countries. Mr. Ebner identified several categories of barriers that form an impediment to the development of transit transport development: political barriers; linguistics barriers; cultural barriers; technical barriers; natural barriers; bureaucratic obstacles; lack of transparency of the licensing procedures; bribes and border-crossing delays.

In order to make the necessary progress, he identified the following three steps:

Step 1:

- upgrading of traffic systems by improving accessibility (development of strategic corridors and up-grading of secondary roads);
- reduction of formalities at border crossings (tariffs of customs, sabotage, informal financial hurdles);
- harmonization of (national) regulations;
- implementation of international agreements.

Step 2:

- safe parking places (protection against organized crime/theft);
- service areas with public facilities for international drivers;

Step 3:

- use of modern information and communication technologies (communication by mobile phones in rural areas, electronic identification systems);
- sustainable transportation (equipment renewal, modernization of truck fleet).

Mr. Odil Sangov, First Deputy Chairman, Tajik Chamber of Commerce, gave an overview of priorities and tasks of the Chamber and cited some statistics on PPP in Tajikistan. The

share of the private sector in the economy of Tajikistan is increasing, e.g. 2000 – 20 %, 2006 – 42.3% and 2007 – 49 % of the GDP.

According to Mr. Sangov, there is a growing public private sector dialogue in Tajikistan. As an example he explained that representatives of the private sector have been included in the working group on development of the Customs Code (2004). Another type of partnership is the organization of exhibitions abroad.

Mr. Sangov then explained that the tariffs for transportation of agricultural products by railway are decreasing (Kazakhstan – 50 %, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan – 40 %), which is a result of a productive dialogue of the private sector with the government. Remaining problems are: transportation of excise goods through the territories of the neighbouring countries and the lack of harmonized legislation and regulations in the region.

Interventions from the floor: Mr. Dmitris Kostianis, Financing and PPP Expert of GOPA TRADEMCO, gave a short overview of the **GOPA Project on Development of Coordinated National Transport Policies** that started 6 years ago and is funded by the European Commission. Among other issues, Mr. Kostianis underlined the importance of the development of an integrated legal environment for transportation development in the region.

Mr. Sodiq Haitov, Operations Officer (Energy & Infrastructure), World Bank, Tajikistan, made a comment on PPP in Tajikistan. According to Mr. Haitov, no PPP exists yet in transport in Tajikistan. However in infrastructure it does exist and it can be further transferred to other sectors. More than that, the legal base allows doing so.

The moderator made a summary of the points raised by each speaker and the recommendations made:

- The role of PPP shall be emphasized in realization of the Eurasian initiative;
- The role of private sector in implementation of pilot projects for transit transportation development in the region shall be strengthened;
- Regional cooperation between the countries on transit development in the region shall be further developed;
- Capacity building and raising awareness activities for foreign trade participants are to be further implemented (e.g. on new possibilities in freight flow orientation based on existing legal instruments);
- Further investment in establishing improved infrastructure for LLDCs is needed;
- An integrated legal environment for transportation development in the region shall be established;
- Further implementation of international legal instruments needs full attention of the concerned Governments.

CLOSING SESSION: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

DUSHANBE JOINT STATEMENT

We, the Delegations of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Mongolia, participating in the Conference,

Reaffirming the commitments related to transportation in the OSCE area, in particular those made in Ministerial Council Decision No. 11/06 on “Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE” adopted by the Ministerial Council in Brussels (2006), the Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted by the Ministerial Council in Maastricht (2003) and in other relevant OSCE documents;

Taking note of the Joint Statement by the delegations of the Central Asian participating States of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan at the Fourteenth Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum, held in Prague, the Czech Republic, from 22 to 24 May 2006 (EF.DEL/51/06);

Welcoming the Chairman’s recommendations and suggestions resulting from the OSCE Conference on Strengthening the Co-Operative Security between the OSCE and the Asian Partners for Co-Operation, held on June 12-13, 2007 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia;

Bearing in mind the importance of appropriate follow-up to OSCE Economic and Environmental Fora, of which this Conference is a good example as well as the Permanent Council Decision No. 798 on the Theme, Format and Organizational Modalities for the Sixteenth Economic and Environmental Forum, dedicating a special session of the Prague segment of the Forum to the challenges faced by landlocked developing countries;

Recognizing the vital importance of transport development and secure transportation networks to the enhancement of regional economic co-operation and stability in the OSCE area;

Noting furthermore the crucial role of transport in promoting trade and generating economic development in Central Asia and across the OSCE region, particularly in the case of landlocked developing countries;

Recognizing that the socio-economic development of landlocked developing countries faces unique challenges related to their lack of access to the sea, high transit costs, dependence on transit services and difficulties related to the access to markets;

Acknowledging that addressing the needs of developing landlocked countries is an immediate concern as well as requires a long term process;

Recognizing, in this regard, the importance of the Almaty Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action (APA): Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, adopted by the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation in Almaty on 28-29 August 2003;

Welcoming the United Nations General Assembly resolution on conducting in 2008 amid term review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action;

Welcoming the Chairman's Summary adopted at the Thematic Meeting on International Trade and Trade Facilitation convened as part of the preparatory process for the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action on 30-31 August 2007, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia;

Acknowledging that the main responsibility for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action lies within the landlocked developing countries themselves;

Recognizing however that efficient transit transport systems can only be established through genuine partnerships between landlocked and transit developing countries and their development partners at national, bilateral, subregional, regional and global levels and through partnership between public and private sectors;

Noting the role of the international community, including financial and development institutions and donor countries in providing financial and technical support to help landlocked developing countries;

Fundamental transit transport policy issues

The Delegations,

Noting that the development of international transport links is a complex and long-term process and that there is a need for strong political and financial commitment at the national level as well as effective international and regional mechanisms for co-operation and coordination of national strategies and approaches;

Endeavour to strengthen their dialogue on transport and transit related issues, including on the transparency of transit and border regulations and the elimination of non-physical barriers to transit transport;

Commit, therefore, to pay continued attention to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action;

Endeavour to reduce negative impact on the environment of economic activities, and in particular of transport activities.

Transport Infrastructure Development and Maintenance

The Delegations,

Express support for the work done by United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (UNSPECA) working groups, the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme, the IGC Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA) and other related initiatives, and notes that this has promoted inter-country cooperation towards the development of Euro-Asian transport links, inter alia, through identifying and prioritizing Euro-Asian routes and projects along them;

Commit to take further practical steps to facilitate the development of the priority transport links and projects that have been identified, including the routes and infrastructure investments identified by the joint UNECE-UNESCAP Project on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages, and the list of EurAsEC transport routes;

Call on International Organisations and International Financial Institutions to facilitate the ongoing regional coordination programmes and to provide the necessary resources for the development of the identified transport corridors and their infrastructure agreed upon by the Governments in the region.

Trade, Transit and Transport Facilitation

The Delegations,

Noting that the development of transport links is not only about infrastructure, but that it also requires efficient border crossings, harmonized transport regulations, greater interoperability of rail systems and other transport modes, a higher level of safety and security and greater convergence of transport policies and strategies;

Will step up their efforts to ensure accession and/or effective implementation of international legal instruments in this area, in particular the UNECE Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets, the UNECE International Convention on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, the WCO SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade and the International Convention on Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures;

Will also step up efforts to improve national legal frameworks and procedures in line with the provisions of the above mentioned international legal instruments, to facilitate enhanced inter-agency cooperation at the national, bilateral and regional levels;

These measures could include:

- enhancing bilateral and regional cooperation aimed at facilitating transit transportation;
- promoting measures to facilitate border crossings;
- providing regular training on the TIR procedure for customs officials and transport operators;

- establishing national computerized customs systems to facilitate transit operations, such as the UNCTAD ASYCUDA system;
- introducing mechanisms for monitoring the situation at border crossings;
- better coordinating border controls, both nationally and with neighbouring countries;
- facilitating the issuance of visas to professional drivers and business representatives, and eliminate, to the extent possible, bilateral transport permits;

Request the international inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations concerned, in particular the UNECE, UNCTAD, the WCO, as well as the IRU and others to support capacity-building and training activities in the region and to provide technical assistance in the implementation of international legal instruments in the area of transport and trade.

Public Private Partnership

The Delegations,

Recognize that it is important for landlocked and transit developing countries to:

Review and revise their regulatory frameworks to allow greater participation of the private sector;

Introduce reform measures to make providers of transport services more responsive to user demands;

Increase transparency of transit and border regulations;

Establish streamlined administrative procedures;

Promote the use of information technology and to strengthen training programmes in the sector;

Conduct permanent consultation with private industry on procedures and legislation, even before adoption;

Apply public private partnership principles in implementing legislation and managing in practice of certain regulatory frameworks;

Support land transport links along the Silk Road, including pilot operations (truck caravans) by the private industry;

Support established border waiting time observatory efforts (internet applications) by the private industry;

Finance particular projects jointly by public and private sectors.

The role of the OSCE

The Delegations,

Welcome the OSCE's support to the implementation of the Almaty Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action through capacity-building measures, awareness-raising and active co-operation with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States;

Take note of the proposal made by the Republic of Tajikistan on creation in Dushanbe of an international centre with a view to improve transit transport in Central Asia; the proposal of Turkey to conduct a study to identify obstacles for the development of rail transit transport systems linking Asia and Europe; also a note was taken of the proposals by the American Chamber of Commerce and the IRU to involve private sector in addressing transit needs through the implementation of transport and trade facilitation pilot projects;

Are convinced that the OSCE has a further role to play in the continued dialogue on transport in the OSCE area, inter alia in the following areas:

- in the exchange of best practices of participating States in the field of intensifying regional co-operation regarding transport between transit and landlocked countries as well as in the field of public private partnership;
- in establishing a survey of existing international transit regimes;
- in developing a virtual marketplace of knowledge and expertise;
- in providing support, upon request of the countries concerned, in compliance with the OSCE Rules of Procedure, for the creation of mechanisms of coordination of international transit transportation of goods in the region, including in the format of a specialized centre;
- in providing support, upon request of the countries concerned, in compliance with the OSCE Rules of Procedure, for the creation of logistics centres along the main transport corridors in line with best international standards;
- in raising awareness on the importance of environmentally sustainable transport;
- in assisting in implementing more effectively the existing international legal instruments in the area of transport and border crossing facilitation;
- in assisting in attracting large scale foreign investment into transport and transit capacity development in the region;

Invite the OSCE to revert to the issue of transit transportation and the challenges faced by landlocked developing countries in the framework of the Economic and Environmental Forum to be held (second segment) in Prague, the Czech Republic, from 19 to 21 May 2008 as well as at the second preparatory conference to be held in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan, on 6-7 March 2008;

Welcome active participation of the relevant international and regional organisations, such as the UNECE, UNESCAP, UNCTAD, the European Commission, the CIS Executive Committee, the EurAsEC, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, the Economic Cooperation Organization, as well as the international programmes of UNSPECA, TRACECA, CAREC and others, in the above-mentioned OSCE events.



Organization for Security
and Co-operation in Europe

In cooperation with



UN Office of the High Representative
for the Least Developed Countries,
Landlocked Developing Countries and
Small Island Developing States

Dushanbe, 24 October 2007

Conference on prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015

Dushanbe, 23-24 October 2007
State Complex “Kohi Vahdat”
107 Rudaki Avenue, Dushanbe, Tajikistan

AGENDA

Tuesday, 23 October

08.30 - 09.30 Registration of participants

09.30 - 10.30 Introductory Session

Welcoming remarks by:

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

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

This Session will focus on:

- The provisions of the Almaty Programme of Action (APA) Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries

- Indicators to measure the progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action (APA)
- The planned 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, UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)
- **H.E. Khudoyor Khudoyorov**, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communication, Republic of Tajikistan
- **H.E. Zhenis Kasymbek**, Deputy Minister of Transport and Communication, Republic of Kazakhstan also on behalf of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (UNSPECA) Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing
- **Discussion**

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**

This Session will focus on:

- Co-ordinated statements (one per country) with regard to the progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action (APA) 2003-2007
- Assessment of current Government policies and identifying needs and plans for future action

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 the region (landlocked developing as well as transit countries, including OSCE Asian Partners)
- **Discussion**

13.00 - 14.30 **Lunch break**

14.30 - 15.30 **Working Session II – continued**

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**

This Session will focus on:

- Challenges identified by International Organizations in the region with regard to the development of transport corridors and infrastructure
- Improving multi-modal transit transport infrastructure systems and facilitating cross-border trade requires financing and investment, how an International Financial Institutions contribute to this endeavour?
- Responding to the identified gaps and needs
- The Role of the OSCE

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

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

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**, the World Bank, Country Office Tajikistan
- **Mr. Sergey Sharapov**, Deputy Director, Research Institute for Railroad Design and Technical and Economic Survey, Russian Railways
- **Mr. Matthieu Le Blan**, Country Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- **Discussion**

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

This Session will focus on:

- Challenges identified by International Organizations with regard to the facilitation of trade, transit transport and border crossing facilitation in the region
- Promotion of Integrated Border Management, harmonization of customs procedures, trade facilitation measures to be put in place
- Responding to the identified gaps and needs
- The role of the OSCE

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 Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, OSCE

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. Bahriddin Azamatov**, Regional Cooperation Officer, Tajikistan Residence Office, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- **Mr. H. Mahmudov**, Deputy Head of the Criminal Investigation Department, Drug Control Agency of the Republic of Tajikistan
- **Discussion**

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

This Session will focus on:

- Potential for Public-Private Partnership in the area of trade, transit and transport facilitation

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

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
- **Mr. Odil Sangov**, First Deputy Chairman, Tajik Chamber of Commerce and **Mr. Nadjit Ashfar**, Head of KN IbaraCom Office in Tajikistan
- **Discussion**

13.00 - 14.30 **Lunch break**

14.30 - 15.30 **Panel Discussion III: continuation**

15.30 - 16.00 **Coffee Break**

16.00 - 17.00 **Closing Session: Conclusions and Recommendations**

This Session will focus on:

- The prospects for developing trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015
- Identifying ways and means to further improve the current situation in OSCE landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours
- Potential for improved cooperation in trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation to be continued into 2008 and beyond
- The role of the OSCE

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

Rapporteur: Ms. Bess Brown, Economic Officer, OSCE Centre Dushanbe

- Presentation of Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Closing remarks by:

- **H.E. Abdurahim Ashur**, Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan
- **Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg**, Senior Programme Officer, UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)
- **Mr. Bernard Snoy**, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

17.00 - 18.00 **Press Conference**



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 Kazakhstan.

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.

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)*

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 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. Sodik 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. H. Mahmudov**, 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



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

T h e S e c r e t a r i a t

**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**

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LOG OF CONTRIBUTIONS

No.	Date	Author	Title	Language
I. INTRODUCTORY SESSION				
1.	23.10.07	Tajikistan	Introductory Statement by H.E. Khamrokhon Zarifi , Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan	Russian
2.	23.10.07	Tajikistan	Introductory Statement by H.E. Abdurahim Ashur , Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan	Russian
3.	23.10.07	UN-OHRLLS	Introductory Statement by Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg , Senior Programme Officer, UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)	English
4.	23.10.07	OSCE/OCEEA	Introductory Statement by Mr. Bernard Snoy , Co-ordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities	English
5.	23.10.07	OSCE	Introductory Statement by Amb. Vladimir Pryakhin , Head of the OSCE Centre in Dushanbe	English
6.	23.10.07	Spanish OSCE Chairmanship	Introductory Statement by Mr. Antonio Ramos Membrive , Representative of the Spanish OSCE Chairmanship	English
II. WORKING SESSION I: THE ALMATY PROGRAMME OF ACTION (APA) AND THE 2008 MIDTERM REVIEW				
7.	23.10.07	Rapporteur	Report by the Rapporteur of the Working Session I: Mr. Gabriel Leonte , Economic and Environmental Adviser, OSCE	English
8.	23.10.07	UN-OHRLLS	Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg , UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) <i>Special problems and constraints confronted by Landlocked Developing Countries</i>	English
9.	23.10.07	Tajikistan	H.E. Khudoyor Khudoyorov , Deputy Minister of Transport and Communication, Republic of Tajikistan	Russian
10.	23.10.07	Kazakhstan, UNSPECA	H.E. Zhenis Kasymbek , Deputy Minister of Transport and Communication, Republic of Kazakhstan also on behalf of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (UNSPECA) Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing	English
III. 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				
11.	23.10.07	Rapporteur	Report by the Rapporteur of the Working Session II: Ms. Brigitte Waignein , Second Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Belgium to the OSCE	English

12.	23.10.07	Tajikistan	Customs of Tajikistan <i>Policy in the fields of transit transport and customs control in Tajikistan</i> Also ABBAT	Russian
13.	23.10.07	Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyzstan Delegation	Russian
14.	23.10.07	Uzbekistan	Mr. A Khashimov , Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Economic Affairs, Investments and Trade of Uzbekistan <i>Transport Strategy of Uzbekistan and prospects for the development of Trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015</i>	Russian
15.	23.10.07	Azerbaijan	Mr. Elmar Farajov , Head of International Relations Unit, IGC TRACECA <i>Azerbaijan Transit Transport: priorities and achievements in the course of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action (APA)</i>	English
16.	23.10.07	Kazakhstan	Ms. Sofia Aisagalieva , Deputy Head of the Customs Control Comity of the Ministry of Finance of Kazakhstan <i>Prospects for the development of transit transportation in the Central Asian countries until 2015</i>	Russian
17.	23.10.07	Turkey	Mr. Abdullah Koten , Deputy Undersecretary at Under secretariat of Foreign Trade of Turkey <i>Prospects for the development of Trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015</i>	English
18.	23.10.07	Mongolia	Mongolian Delegation <i>The prospects for the development of Trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia till the year 2015</i>	English
19.	23.10.07	Belarus	Ministry of Transport and Communications of Belarus. Mr. Kuchinsky <i>Transit Potential of Belorussia in the framework of the Eurasian transportation</i>	Russian
20.	23.10.07	Afghanistan		English
IV. PANEL DISCUSSION I: RESPONDING TO THE IDENTIFIED GAPS AND CHALLENGES REGARDING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE				
21.	23.10.07	Rapporteur	Report by the Rapporteur of the Panel Discussion I: Mr. Armands Pupols , Policy Support Officer, Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC), OSCE	English
22.	23.10.07	TRACECA	Mr. Rustan Jenalinov , Secretary General, IGC TRACECA <i>Role of the IGC TRACECA in the development of the international transit</i>	English
23.	23.10.07	UNECE	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) <i>The UNECE-UNESCAP Project on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages</i>	English

24.	23.10.07	EurAsEC	Mr. Serik Primbetov , Deputy Secretary General, Eurasian Economic Community <i>Development of the transit transportation capacity of the Eurasian economic community: actual situation and the prospects</i>	Russian
25.	23.10.07	Tajikistan	Mr. Nazarali Ashurzod , Deputy Head of Tajik Railways, Division of the Ministry of Transport and Communication of the Republic of Tajikistan	Russian
26.	23.10.07	World Bank	Mr. Sodiq Haiiov , the World Bank, Country Office Tajikistan <i>Central Asia & Tajikistan Transport Sector Development Challenges</i>	English
27.	23.10.07	Russian Railways	Mr. Sergey Sharapov , Deputy Director, Research Institute for Railroad Design and Technical and Economic Survey, Russian Railways <i>Integration of the Russian railways to the Eurasian transport system</i>	Russian
28.	23.10.07	EBRD	Mr. Matthieu Le Blan , Country Director, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development <i>Tajikistan Road Maintenance Development Project</i>	English
V. PANEL DISCUSSION II: TRADE, TRANSIT TRANSPORT AND BORDER CROSSING FACILITATION				
29.	24.10.07	Rapporteur	Report by the Rapporteur of the Panel Discussion II: Mr. Roel Janssens , Economic and Environmental Adviser, Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities	English
30.	24.10.07	UNECE	Mr. Robert Nowak , Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Transport Division <i>International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods: An instrument for border crossing facilitation</i>	English
31.	24.10.07	USCC	Ms. Kristal Alley , Policy Adviser Europe and Eurasia, US Chamber of Commerce <i>Eurasia Business Platform</i>	English
32.	24.10.07	World Customs Organization	Mr. Thierry Piraux , Senior Technical Officer, WCO	English
33.	24.10.07	Islamic Development Bank	Mr. Hisham Maarouf , Senior Project Officer, Islamic Development Bank (IDB)	English
34.	24.10.07	International Road Transport Union	Ms. Elena Anfimova , Communication Officer, International Road Transport Union <i>Quantitative appreciation of the barriers on the way to the development of the international auto-transportation</i>	Russian
35.	24.10.07	UNCTAD	Mr. Poul Hansen , Economic Affairs Officer, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development <i>Meeting the challenges of international trade and transport facilitation - UNCTAD's approach</i>	English
36.	24.10.07	CAREC, ADB	Mr. Bahridin Azamatov , Regional Cooperation Officer, Tajikistan Residence Office, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), Asian Development Bank (ADB) <i>Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program (CAREC)</i>	English

37.	24.10.07	Tajikistan	Mr. H. Mahmudov , Deputy Head of the Criminal Investigation Department, Drug Control Agency of the Republic of Tajikistan	Russian
VI. PANEL DISCUSSION III: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEMS OF OSCE LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES				
38.	24.10.07	Rapporteur	Report by the Rapporteur of the Panel Discussion III: Ms. Zarina Ligay , Senior Programme Assistant, OSCE Centre Astana	English
39.	24.10.07	International Road Transport Union	Mr. Igor Rounov , International Road Transport Union (IRU) Permanent Delegate to the CIS <i>New Eurasian Transport Initiative NELTI</i>	Russian
40.	24.10.07	UNECE	Mr. Konstantin Glukhenkiy , Customs Expert, UNECE Transport Division <i>The TIR Convention: an example of public-private partnership</i>	Russian
41.	24.10.07	AmCham Tbilisi	Mr. George Pertaia , Customs Expert, American Chamber of Commerce, Tbilisi, Georgia	English
42.	24.10.07	Austrian Chamber of Commerce / Eurochambres	Dr. Stefan Ebner , Deputy Director, Transport Division, Austrian Chamber of Commerce / Eurochambres <i>Economic development by upgrading infrastructure and overcoming obstacles in the transportation sector</i>	English
43.	24.10.07	Tajikistan	Mr. Odil Sangov , First Deputy Chairman, Tajik Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Nadjit Ashfar, Head of KN IbaraCom Office in Tajikistan	Russian
VII. CLOSING SESSION				
TITLE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS				
44.	24.10.07	Rapporteur	Report by the Rapporteur of the Closing Session: Ms. Bess Brown , Economic Officer, OSCE Centre Dushanbe	English
45.	24.10.07	Tajikistan	H.E. Abdurahim Ashur , Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Tajikistan	Russian
46.	24.10.07	UN-OHRLLS	Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg , Senior Programme Officer, UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)	English
47.	24.10.07	OSCE/OCEEA	Mr. Bernard Snoy , Co-ordinator of OSCE economic and environmental activities	English
48.	24.10.07	OCEEA	Agenda	English
49.	24.10.07	OCEEA	Agenda	Russian
50.	24.10.07	OCEEA	Annotated Agenda	English
51.	24.10.07	OCEEA	Annotated Agenda	Russian
52.	24.10.07	OCEEA	Dushanbe Declaration	English
53.	24.10.07	OCEEA	Dushanbe Declaration	Russian