

**Virtual Regional Meeting on Sustainable Transport Connectivity
between Asia and Europe
Bangkok, 25-26 November 2020**

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COMCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Virtual Regional Meeting on Sustainable Transport connectivity between Asia and Europe (hereinafter referred to as “the Meeting”) was organized by the UNESCAP secretariat, in cooperation with the International Coordinating Council on Trans-Eurasian Transportation (CCTT), under the project on “Connecting transport infrastructure networks in Asia and Europe in support of interregional sustainable transport connectivity” and held, in the virtual format, on 25-26 November 2020.
2. The Meeting was attended by the representatives of the following ESCAP member States: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Russian Federation, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Meeting was also attended by representatives of international organizations, research institutes, transport and logistics industry companies and professional associations, as well as by invited resource persons. The list of participants is attached in Annex 1. The programme of the Meeting is attached in Annex 2.
3. Representatives of ESCAP member States, transport industry companies, international organizations and research institutes participating in the Meeting shared their experiences in inter-regional transportation operations, expressed views and opinions on priorities and directions of further enhancing sustainable transport connectivity between Asia and Europe
4. The UNESCAP secretariat presented the main highlights of the updated study report on the progress in enhancing transport connectivity between Asia and Europe reflecting the latest trends in inter-regional transportation, including the impact of COVID-19, which has been prepared earlier this year and is to be made public within December 2020.
5. The UNESCAP secretariat also informed the Meeting on the relevant recommendations of the ESCAP Committee on Transport adopted at its 6th session held in Bangkok on 12-13 November 2020. The secretariat particularly informed the meeting that the Committee on Transport had:

- noted the continuing growth of transport operations between Asia and Europe, despite the pandemic crisis, due to collaborative efforts at both national and international levels;
- expressed support to the secretariat's efforts to discuss matters related to inter-regional transport taking into account the current practicalities;
- reaffirmed the importance of continuing to consider issues related to Euro-Asian transport connectivity by the secretariat in accordance with its mandate;
- requested the secretariat to explore, in a cost-effective manner, the possibility of involving additional stakeholders from governments, transport industry and academia, from Asia and the Pacific, as well as from other regions, in the discussions on Euro-Asian connectivity.

6. The secretariat shared with the meeting its plan, in accordance with the above request and along the key recommendation of the study report, to continue organizing periodical inter-regional fora on sustainable transport connectivity between Asia and Europe with the purposes of::

- bringing together, on a regular basis, all concerned governments, international (regional, sub-regional, corridor-based) organizations, transport industry representatives and academia and exchange relevant information/share experiences in a comprehensive manner
- establishing an inclusive, inter-regional cooperation and partnership platform for the governments to inform the business sector of their policies and corridor specific work plans, and at the same time take stock of the needs and concerns of the private sector
- providing opportunities for the business sector to be connected to governments and foreign counterparts and to expand their business networks on Euro-Asian transport corridors
- further providing opportunities for all concerned organizations and financial institutions organizations to coordinate among themselves and align their programmes and projects with the common needs of both governments and the business community

7. In terms of practical approaches to organizing future forums on sustainable inter-regional transport connectivity, the secretariat proposed that:

- inter-regional fora could be organized and held in a manner utilizing synergies with existing ESCAP's and interested partners' platforms and cooperation mechanisms;
- future for could be held annually under a dedicated theme topic related to Euro-Asian sustainable transport connectivity;

- Member States and other stakeholders involved could consider designation of dedicated experts for informal exchange of information/discussion of particular topics/sharing updates on latest trends, etc. between the fora.

8. The Meeting agreed on the direction and practical steps as proposed by the secretariat.

9. The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed the opinion that, in terms of utilizing the existing platforms for the fora on transport connectivity between Asia and Europe, using meetings of the Working Group on Dry Ports for that purpose could be explored by the secretariat.

10. The delegation of Mongolia suggested that the next forum could be dedicated to the role of dry ports and inland logistics facilities in strengthening transport connectivity between Asia and Europe.

11. The Meeting thanked the representatives of the participating countries, transport companies, organizations, experts and resource persons for their valuable contribution to the deliberations of the Meeting. The Meeting also thanked the CCTT secretariat for excellent technical arrangements and efficient virtual hosting of the Meeting.

12. These conclusions and recommendations have been agreed upon on 26 November 2020.

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