

Regional Conference for Logistics Service Providers: *Policy Dialogue on Transforming the Logistics Sector*

Delhi, India 15 July 2022

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The 2022 edition of the ESCAP Regional Conference for Logistics Services Providers was organized in cooperation with the Asian Institute of Transport Development in New Delhi, India, on 15 July 2022 under the title of Regional Policy Dialogue on Transforming the Logistics Sector. The event was organized in a hybrid manner, hosted physically at the Asian Institute of Transport Development, India and virtually through ZOOM platform.
2. The participants of the regional dialogue recognized the importance of active participation of both public and private sectors, including national freight forwarding associations as a way to promote dialogue and share knowledge on issues and developments pertaining to transport and logistics sector and supported the continuation of the regional conference for logistics services providers as a platform for such discussions.
3. The discussions underlined that many countries in the ESCAP region were in the process of adopting reform measures to enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of their logistics sectors, including through developing and implementing “national strategic logistics policy” to address infrastructural and technological gaps which adversely affect the overall functional efficiency of its logistics sector. Within this context, the participants were informed of various initiatives undertaken by the governments of India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka within the frame of national strategic development plans to lower logistics cost and enhance the seamless transport and logistics connectivity of respective countries, notably emphasizing the importance of infrastructure development, streamline operational process and human resource development.
4. Some examples of national strategic initiatives highlighted include “PM GatiShakti National Master Plan” (India), Indonesia National Logistics System Development – SISLOGNAS (Indonesia), “Nurly Zhol” National Infrastructure Development Plan for 2020 – 2025 (Kazakhstan) and Logistics - National Export Strategy (Sri Lanka). In addition, the importance of data availability, multimodal transport and “transport corridor development approach” were also elements highlighted as important way forward measures to achieve sustainable, efficient and social inclusive transport mechanisms.

5. The participants welcomed the progress in the use of modern digital technologies, including through the application of information and communication technology (ICT) and smart solutions as a mechanism to increase the efficiency of transport and logistics services and recognized its importance in supporting the post-pandemic recovery, strengthening the sustainability and resilience of the transport and logistic sector. As such, participants were informed of the national experiences in digitalizing the logistics sector of Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.
6. The discussions reviewed at length challenges pertaining to operational connectivity, including inadequate infrastructure, high logistics cost, complicated border crossings requirements and difficulties access to data/information etc. It was noted that these challenges could be mitigated by undertaking capacity building initiatives to improve human resource development, increasing the use of digital technologies and developing/implementing policies of relevance in a coherent and holistic approach to ensure sustainability and seamlessness in the logistics and supply chain network.
7. The meeting acknowledged gender imbalance notably pertaining to employment within the transport and logistics sector and encouraged stakeholders to implement necessary initiatives to support gender mainstreaming and social inclusive development.
8. The participants also stressed the importance of human resource development and requested the secretariat to continue support such endeavor through organizing capacity building workshops / seminars, including under the prevue of the “training-of-trainers” (TOT) program. Continuous co-operation between ESCAP and the Asian Institute of Transport Development should be further strengthened, drawing synergies to advance the development of transport and logistics sector in the ESCAP region, notably South and Southwest Asia subregion.
9. The participants expressed their gratitude to ESCAP for organizing the Conference and to Asian Institute of Transport Development for hosting. The participants agreed that the next Conference meeting will be held again next year, with details including venue to be decided at a later stage. Participants also expressed their preference for a physical meeting during post-pandemic time since physical meetings allow for better and more impactful exchanges.
10. The conclusions and recommendations were agreed on 15 July 2022 in Delhi, India.