

**1st ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Transport Issues
in North-East Asia**
*Transport Corridors:
Challenges and Opportunities for North-East Asia*
10 October 2019, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Discussion Highlights

1. The 1st ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Transport Issues in North-East Asia was held on 10 October 2019 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, co-organized by the ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office and GTI Secretariat and hosted by the Ministry of Road and Transport Development of Mongolia.

2. The Meeting was attended by transport government officials from GTI member countries (i.e. China, Mongolia, Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation) and representatives from key stakeholders such as multilateral institutions, international organizations, policy think tanks from the North-East Asia, and academe as well as officials from other government units of Mongolia.

3. The overall theme for the Seminar's inaugural year was **"Transport Corridors: Challenges and Opportunities in North-East Asia"**. The Seminar consisted of three sessions. Session 1 focused on issues in line with the overall theme, including use of technology in transport corridors; cross-border information exchange; trade and transport facilitation issues related to transit; and railway initiatives. Session 2 was country-focused with information sharing from some GTI member countries. Session 3 served as a platform to discuss the GTI joint research study on "Evolution of Regional Value Chains and Logistics Networks in Greater Tumen Region (GTR)". All presentations are available on the following ESCAP and GTI links:

- a. <https://www.unescap.org/events/1st-escap-gti-seminar-transport-issues-north-east-asia>
- b. <http://www.tumenprogramme.org/content/show.asp?m=114&d=145>

4. Several points were raised during the interactive discussions among the Seminar participants, including:

- a. cooperation activities among multilateral institutions (e.g. World Customs Organization (WCO) and the World Road Transport Organisation (IRU))

- b. productivity analysis of railways (e.g. use of key performance indicators and benchmarking exercise)
- c. concept of community in transport initiatives and the envisaged roles of various countries
- d. expansion of information exchanges beyond ports to include inland cross-border points as well as inclusion of other countries
- e. role of private sector (e.g. in logistics)
- f. importance of the GTI study in providing recommendations for the GTI Medium Term Transport Action Plan

5. Going forward, the ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Transport Issues in North-East Asia aims to establish itself as a relevant and strategic platform to engage on issues that could deepen understanding, influence thinking, and generate concrete actions in developing policies and practices that advances transport connectivity in the North-East Asia subregion.

To this end, the following approaches may be considered in the conduct of the Seminar in the years ahead:

- a. Align the thematic focus along the issues/policy areas covered in the GTI Medium Term Transport Action Plan, including specific GTI project proposals.
- b. Close coordination and consultation with the GTI member country chairing the GTI Transport Board to utilize the Seminar as a means to deliver envisaged outputs/activities under the country's Chairmanship.
- c. Use the Seminar as a platform to support more synergies between transport and other cooperation areas towards a well-coordinated and integrated approach where issues of common interest across different policy areas can be discussed, for instance, between transport and trade. ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office is working on strengthening institutional coordination in the North-East Asia subregion in support of further strengthening regional connectivity through establishing an institutionalized platform for regular policy dialogues between trade and transport.