

SEMINAR ON RAILWAY NETWORK CONNECTIVITY AND INTEROPERABILITY CHALLENGES

Dushanbe, 5-6 September 2018

Tentative programme

Subject to confirmation of speakers

5 September 2018

08:30 – 09:00

Registration

09:00 – 09:20

Opening and welcome remarks

Representative of the Government of Tajikistan

Representative of ESCAP Transport Division

09:20 – 10:40

Challenges and prospects of rail infrastructure connectivity

Discussions during this segment will consider specific infrastructure gaps and missing links to be addressed for improving connectivity between the countries represented at the seminar (Afghanistan, China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey). Representatives of the countries concerned will be invited to make short presentations and share their experience and insights.



10:40 – 11:00

Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30

Rail-based intermodal corridors

Presentation by ESCAP secretariat of the 2017 study on potential corridors connecting Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Presentation of the best practice example of the Baku – Tbilisi – Kars corridor from the Caspian Sea to Europe via Turkey, which became operational in October 2017.

Presentation by the representative of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) on the north-south railway corridor connecting the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.



12:30 – 14:00

Lunch Break

14:00 – 15:00

Infrastructure investment priorities and financing options: requirements for project bankability

During this segment, an expert from the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme of the Asian Development Bank will present CAREC on-going and planned activities and technical assistance possibilities as well as provide an overview of considerations on infrastructure financing and project bankability.

Country representatives will be invited to share best practice examples and national experiences, as well as raise questions to the expert.

15:00 – 15:30

Open discussion

Following the presentations, participants will be invited to a discussion moderated by the ESCAP secretariat. Participants will be invited to raise questions, concerns and proposals emanating from the information provided in the presentations.



15:30 – 16:00

Coffee Break

16:00 – 17:00

Institutional mechanism(s) and policy directions for effective operationalization of corridors

The ESCAP secretariat will present the ESCAP institutional framework for railway transport notably the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network (TAR) and the Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport.

Participants will be invited to discuss the benefits of (i) accession to the TAR Agreement by those countries that have not yet done so and (ii) including new routes in the network and (iii) how the institutional framework of ESCAP could assist in making progress towards the realization of rail connectivity. Potential benefits of formalizing corridor cooperation in a new agreement(s) and or framework(s) could be explored.

6 September 2018

09:00 – 10:00

Institutional mechanism(s) and policy directions for effective operationalization of corridors (cont'd)

This segment will briefly recapitulate the discussions of the previous afternoon and continue the discussion with particular focus on the role of railway connectivity for landlocked countries and access to sea-ports.



10:00 – 10:30

Coffee Break

10:30 – 12:00

International cooperation and regional initiatives

Presentation by the representative of the International Union of Railways (UIC) on industry perspectives of connectivity and interoperability, as well as on planned and on-going UIC projects.

Presentation by the ESCAP secretariat of the 2018 studies on border crossing practices in international railway transport and on enhancing interoperability for the facilitation of international railway transport.



12:00 – 13:30

Lunch Break

13:30 – 15:30

Summary and formulation of conclusions and recommendations

During this segment, the ESCAP secretariat will present a summary of the main points of the seminar and moderate the discussion for formulating conclusions and actionable recommendations for follow-up by the ESCAP secretariat.

15:30 – 16:00

Closing remarks

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