II. TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to ESCAP, several international organizations are active in the development of transport networks in the participating countries of the ESCAP region. They are the European Union (EU) through the Trans–European Network Programme, and Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States (Tacis); the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), UNDP with the Tumen River Area Development Programme (TRADP) and the Silk Road Regional Cooperation Programme; and ECE. The activities of these international organizations are briefly described in the following paragraphs.

A. European Union

The EU is implementing common transport policies to enhance the development of an integrated transport network to ensure economic integration and the freedom of movement within member states for goods, people and services.

Transport network development in the EU is supported through the implementation of Trans-European Network and Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States programmes.

1. Trans-European Networks

The programme for the development of the Trans-European Network was initiated in December 1992 to enable citizens to travel and business to deliver their goods without hindrance or risk from one end of the Union to the other in response to the imbalances of the European transport system as identified in the White Paper on “Future development of the common transport policy”. Later “The Community Guidelines for the Development of Trans-European Transport Network” was adopted in 1996. Currently European Union member states are implementing 14 priority projects, which are only part of the Trans-European transport network, endorsed by the European Council held in Essen in December 1994.

2. Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States

The EU launched the Tacis Programme in 1991 to provide technical assistance to the newly independent countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia to enhance the transition process in those countries. The overall aim of Tacis in the transport sector is to create a trans-European transport network, encompassing all modes of transport and encouraging environmentally friendly modes of transport. The most important transport project undertaken by Tacis is Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia, creating an east-west link and opening up new trading opportunities for all member countries.

This programme was launched in Brussels in May 1993 to develop a west-east transport corridor from Europe to Central Asia via the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. The EU funds this technical assistance programme. The member countries are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. A Multilateral Agreement on International Transport for Development of the Europe-the Caucasus-Asia Corridor was signed in Baku in September 1998. It covers all modes of transport in the defined corridor. The Intergovernmental Secretariat is located at Baku. ESCAP and ECE are mentioned in the Baku agreement as participating in the implementation. To date this programme has
financed 25 technical assistance projects and 11 investment projects for the rehabilitation of infrastructure.

B. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Before the EU member states started taking steps towards the greater integration of their transport policies, steps had already been taken on a wider scale by ECE which had started to review the standards applied in European countries and to enunciate technical and commercial criteria for integrating the existing infrastructure into a network providing increased operational speed and capacity. The work of ECE is reflected in 55 international agreements and conventions that provide the international legal and technical framework for the development of international road, rail, inland waterway and combined transport in the ECE region. Countries outside the ECE region apply some of these international legal instruments as well.

Agreements providing a framework to construct and develop a coherent international transport network for road and rail are: the European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries of 1975; the European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines of 1985, and the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations of 1991.

These agreements stipulate the adoption of a network of railway lines and major roads constituting the European road (E-road) network extending east to Moscow and south-east to Turkey. The development of trade with Central Asia requires adequate transport infrastructure with the countries of Western Europe as well as in the transit countries. The ECE programme of work for 1996-2000 includes the extension of the European network to Central Asia and Caucasian ECE member States. This programme undertakes to introduce main road links in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Caucasian ECE member States in the E-road network.

C. Commonwealth of Independent States

Newly independent states which emerged from the territory of the former Soviet Union have established CIS. Member states have very close economic relationships, common technical standards and a common road network which had been developed in the time of the former Soviet Union.

Realizing their shared interest in pursuing the adoption of common standards and in developing their road networks in a concerted way, the member states of CIS have started developing a network of intra-republic roads to facilitate international and bilateral trade and tourism within the CIS region, as well as between Asia and Europe. To implement these objectives, CIS member states have established the Interstate Council of Road Builders. CIS member states elaborated and approved the CIS international road network based on the road network of the former Soviet Union. The CIS international road network is a system of principal and intermediate routes in west-east and north-south directions. It also includes branches and connecting links.

D. Economic Cooperation Organization

ECO is an intergovernmental organization established in 1985 by the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Turkey for the purpose of promoting economic, technical and cultural cooperation. The organization was expanded in 1992, to include seven new members: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The transport and telecommunications sector, with the objective of developing transport and communications infrastructure linking the member states with each other and with the outside world, is a major sector of cooperation among member states.
The Almaty Outline Plan for the development of the transport sector in the ECO region is considered a basic blueprint for the transport development strategy of ECO. The Outline Plan aims to:

- Facilitate transportation and transit of goods and passengers within the ECO region through short-medium and long-term measures
- Develop the ECO road network plan to maximize the use of the existing infrastructure in the region and to provide access to seaports for the landlocked member countries of the region
- Develop multimodal transport through a study of the potential market and a review of the road, rail and port infrastructure in the member countries

At the ECO Extraordinary Summit held in Ashgabat in May 1997, certain rail and road routes were designated as priority routes for development. As recommended in the Outline Plan for improving transit transport and border crossing, the ECO Transit Transport Framework Agreement was concluded on 9 May 1998 at Almaty. This framework agreement covers all modes of transport: rail, road, airways, inland waterways and maritime transport.

Cooperation between ESCAP and ECO was established with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 1993, which recognized the ECO region as a major area of cooperation.

ESCAP is implementing a joint project on multimodal transport with ECO and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which is being funded by the Islamic Development Bank. The project principally aims to facilitate interregional and international multimodal transport through training and institutional development.

E. Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia

At the suggestion of the Secretary-General, ESCAP and ECE initiated SPECA in 1997 to facilitate the economic integration of the Central Asian countries into both Europe and Asia, and to strengthen economic cooperation among those countries.

The Presidents of four Central Asian countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the Executive Secretaries of ECE and ESCAP launched SPECA at Tashkent in March 1998. The Tashkent Declaration identifies four priority programme areas:

- Development of transport infrastructure and cross-border facilitation
- Rational and effective utilization of energy and water resources of Central Asia
- Organization of an international economic conference on Tajikistan and a joint strategy for regional development and the attraction of foreign direct investment
- Regional cooperation on the development of routes for pipelines for hydrocarbons

Working groups to translate SPECA into specific project activities have been established by ECE and ESCAP. The project working group on transport and border crossing mainly focuses on transport related activities. It was formed on the basis of the Tashkent Declaration and mainly works towards having a multilateral framework agreement on transport and border-crossing facilitation with particular reference to road transport. It is hoped to establish a regional road transport committee with representation from the competent authorities of all SPECA countries to ensure adequate coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the proposed memorandum of understanding. So far only three countries Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have actively participated in the activities of the working group.
F. United Nations Development Programme

1. Tumen River Area Development Programme

An agreement among five North-East Asian countries, China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, to cooperate in economic development was initiated by UNDP following discussions in 1991. It covers the following areas:

- The Rajin-Sonbong Economic and Trade Zone in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
- Eastern Mongolia
- The Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in north-east China, and the Primorsky Territory in the far east of the Russian Federation

The Republic of Korea joined the project as the fifth member of TRADP.

Collectively, these areas are referred to as the Tumen Region and connecting hinterland. The Tumen River serves as a border where China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation meet. The first phase involved extensive planning and background studies. The second phase involved investment promotion and development initiatives designed to build momentum in the region as a growth triangle. Now the third and current phase is addressing issues for regional economic cooperation in North-East Asia.

The major goals of regional economic cooperation are investment and trade, environment, tourism, transport and telecommunications, energy and human resources development.

The transport working group meeting of TRADP was held in Yanji, Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture, Jilin Province of China from 7 to 9 December 1998. The meeting endorsed an action plan consisting of six programmes, eight objectives and eleven outputs. Programmes 1 and 3 are related to the development of transport routes and facilitation in the participating countries of the present study.

Programme 1 “Joint Transport Planning” is important for improving linkages in the Tumen River Region and suggests that each country participant should prepare a transport plan for their area of the Tumen Region and that the Advisory Expert Group would then endeavour to coordinate the respective plans.

Programme 3 “Cross-border Facilitation” aims to improve the cross-border movement of people and goods as fundamental to regional economic cooperation and based on commonly accepted international norms and standards.

ESCAP and the UNDP Tumen secretariat are implementing a joint project in the Tumen Area for the identification and development of a priority road network.

2. Silk Road Area Development Project

The “Silk Road” denotes the 2000 year old east-west trade and transport routes, which stretched from the east coast of China to the Atlantic coast of Europe, northward to the Russian Federation and southward through South Asia and the Middle East, involving close to 35 countries. The Silk Road is now also referred to as the New Euro-Asian Continental Land Bridge. The Silk Road Area Development Project (SRADP) focuses on five Central Asian republics and China. This project is designed for capacity-building for regional cooperation and development. Cooperation is sought
through training, workshops, coordinating committees and forums. The project also plans to assist in the implementation of the international transport and transit agreements and also to facilitate trade and tourism.

**G. United Nations regional commissions capacity-building programme**

The project “Capacity-building through Cooperation, in Developing Interregional Land and Land-cum-Sea Transport Linkages” has been formulated by the five United Nations regional commissions for United Nations development accounts funding.

A meeting of the directors of divisions responsible for transport in the five United Nations regional commissions was convened in Beirut in January 2001. The meeting agreed on the following specific objectives and identified activities to enhance and strengthen national capacities:

- To develop and harmonize interregional transport infrastructure
- To improve transport facilitation along their interregional transport linkages
- To promote networking among experts and institutions
- To enhance the sharing of best practices

The Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and China are included in the ESCAP proposed programme of work.

**H. International financing institutions**

Multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other bilateral financing agencies are providing support to the countries in the development of transport infrastructure.

ADB has provided assistance for the rehabilitation of the 245 kilometre Almaty-Bishkek Road, Almaty-Korgas and for the improvement of road sector efficiency in Kazakhstan. The Almaty–Bishkek Road project, in addition to physically rehabilitating the road, plans to improve custom facilities at the border and facilitate a cross-border agreement and road safety initiatives in the countries. ADB has also supported the development of highways and expressways in China, some of which are the Changchun-Harbin, Shanxi-Yunnan, Guangying-Guizhon roads. ADB has provided assistance for the rehabilitation of the road network in Mongolia and is currently undertaking a socio-economic impact study for future investment.

The World Bank has provided assistance to the Russian Federation for highway rehabilitation and maintenance and urban transportation in Moscow, to China for highway projects and urban transport, to Mongolia for transport development and rehabilitation, and to Kazakhstan for road transport restructuring.

**I. Coordination**

Most of the above activities being implemented through various organizations are focusing on the development of transport corridors, and the facilitation of movement of interregional and international transport.

The programmes of UNDP (TRADP and SRADP), EU (Tacis), SPECA, ADB, the World Bank and CIS are related to the ongoing study. Coordination of the project activities with the ongoing programmes of international organizations is essential to ensure interconnectivity and to develop efficient land transport linkages between various economic regions and subregions. This will be essential to avoid duplication of efforts in the development of linkages.