

Summary statement by J. Tomczyk

Impressed with the number and range of ECO initiatives and professional commitment to improve transport and trade facilitation. All the challenges are complex but as a speaker from ECO pointed out, they are not insurmountable while another speaker reminded us all that to solve the challenges needs political willingness.

We were reminded that the method to get change includes using comprehensive and integrated transport and trade facilitation policies. Using this method, plus good relations in organizations such as ECO and good neighbourly cooperation, we will complete the missing links in transport networks. I thought it was stimulating to learn about the initiative to use a consolidated consignment note that will help get improved railway corridors. These transport corridors might eventually realize the vision, which we all share of Central Asia and neighbouring countries serving as trade and transport land bridges, which will have several routes.

I am glad to learn the UNECE and others have identified several projects along the routes, which I hope will translate good intentions into new facilities and international best practice management procedures. The good intentions implemented are the demonstration trains and demonstration caravans and they prove that problems become opportunities. However, to get transport networks with a sustainable business plan needs cargo and therefore Central Asian countries need to help their export orientated small and medium sized enterprises who might have export cargo for return rail and road routes.

Behind the border actions include, as we were told several times, implementing at least 16 of the United Nations legal instruments. Mr. Mirzaie's excellent presentation brought our attention to the need for better donor and country cooperation because there are some overlapping transport and trade projects and programmes.

I am pleased to learn about the new plan for Baku seaport, the Afghanistan railway strategy, and the Turkish railway projects and the Uzbekistan railway plans. The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan presentation told us about their "AFPRO", the one-step-shop and the effort for better trade, transport and transit cooperation with its neighbours.

We heard a lot about inadequate transport infrastructure from the Kyrgyz Republic and Mongolia delegations and from other delegations and they showed how they are trying to improve transport links. To improve transport links they need extra investment. Countries might consider focusing expensive investment on priority projects such as transport corridors because transport corridors will help reduce travel times, lower delays at border crossing points (BCPs), help develop national supply chains, and help develop national logistics service providers.

I hope the ECO Region will see freight villages get started located at economic areas and industrial centres. Getting freight village investment needs in multimodal transport links, warehouses, handling equipment, export and import cargo to transport and handle and sustainable business plans. Railways usually used for long distance transport but from the case studies shown road transport beats rail on travel time.

We heard from Kazakhstan that poor management skills are reducing the efforts to realize transport and trade facilitation programmes. Management skills need improving with training but the better methods need to become part of a different approach using pro-active Customs risk management, post audit inspections, combined border management and Authorised Economic Operators (AEO). Public sector and private industry employees and managers need extra visits to see international best practice transport and border infrastructure and to see international best practice management procedures. Central Asia public sector and private industry employees and managers need to see there is a different way to handle rail, road and border crossing points. The Kazakhstan presentation was a valuable market observation proving that not all transport and trade challenges need an infrastructure solution. A study in South East Asia showed that existing transport infrastructure not used to full capacity because public and private management procedures were giving problems. As several speakers told us better procedures could give Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increases, help increase economic development, increase employment and help reduce poverty.

The International Road Union's New Eurasia Land Transport Initiative (IRU NELTI) programme gives new stimulus realizing the land bridge concept and might help reduce unjustified payments and get rid of road route bottlenecks.

I explained the need for better-designed border crossing points (BCPs) the need for trade facilitation strategies that must become part of a countries trade competitive strategy, which must distinguish legitimate and illegitimate traders using partnership between Customs administrations and private industry. Better design includes using multi-lane border crossing points, 'herringbone' vehicle parking and Customs inspection areas located away from BCP exit and access lanes. BCP need locating about half of one kilometre or kilometre bridge choke points. Customs strategies, trade logistics, border performance indicators, logistics performance indexes, inventory indexes and other trade and Customs indexes must become part of a countries trade competitive strategy. Where countries dispute the results of international indexes countries should prepare their own indexes.

We were shown the excellent progress made modernizing Turkish border crossing points reducing delays and giving Customs and other border agencies new buildings and equipment to help them do a better job. We were shown the Turkish "Build Operate and Transfer" (BoT) method so that other countries might use it as a model.

The OSCE mentioned the preparation of a new Border Crossing Practice Handbook and a new Senior Officers Training Centre in Dushanbe. Getting a Border Crossing Practice Handbook accepted as a training tool might be a challenge because national Customs Codes and Customs Rules govern Custom officer's actions.

FIATA gave us a picture of the freight forwarding problems and described the benefits when solutions carried out. Getting solutions implementation needs Government support. In addition, Government support needed to develop a number of transport corridors.

Concluding, the ECO Region workshop reminded us all that the transport and trade facilitation challenges need Regional and sub-regional cooperation between countries because land locked countries cannot develop supply chains and transport corridors without the close cooperation and willingness of their neighbours. We are all reliant upon others.

The ECO Workshop was a platform and a showcase that proved ECO and its members have tremendous professional experts with a vast depth of knowledge and experience who have researched and studied the challenges and have the ability to describe usable

recommendations. The recommendations when placed together give interesting and often comprehensive solutions.

The ECO Region, indeed all regions need predictable, scheduled, consistent and transparent supply chain logistics operated by professional logistics service companies and therefore Customs and Ministries of Transport and Ministries of Trade must create official public and private industry partnership. Without private industry partnership, government cannot absorb the experience to maximize new infrastructure benefits. If, government allow private industry to build new BCP's and other rail and road transport infrastructure then the future is bright. Rail and road travel time delays might get reduces using public private partnership (PPP). At the workshop, the UNECE told us that transport mobility should not mean death on the roads.

Jan Tomczyk, FCILT

The Workshop highly appreciated the presentation by the expert Jan Tomczyk, FCILT and by TOBB-GTI* on border crossing infrastructure design model for facilitating border crossing point performance and efficiency and the relevant experience in Turkey on public-private partnership (PPP) modernization of land border crossing points.

Taking into account the importance of these issues for the efficient performance of the EATL linkages as well as the related major objectives of the TTFA, the participants welcomed a project proposal on coordinated promotion of similar projects in the ECO Member based on the Turkish experience to be considered by ECO, UNECE and IRU.