



4.1 Transport infrastructure projects, activities and initiatives in SPECA countries

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Ministerial Declaration

- Adopted by the third Ministerial Conference on Transport (5-9 December 2016, Moscow)
- Endorsed by Resolution 73/4 (May 2017) on Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific,
- Includes the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021)

Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific

- Includes seven thematic areas, immediate objectives in each area, outputs and indicators of achievement for the period 2017-2021:
 - **Regional transport infrastructure connectivity**
 - Regional transport operational connectivity
 - **Euro-Asian transport connectivity**
 - **Transport connectivity for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States**
 - Sustainable urban transport
 - **Rural transport connectivity to wider networks**
 - Improving road safety

ESCAP regional transport activities

- New approach by member States to include an international dimension in the planning of their transport infrastructure.
- Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks, as well as the a set of dry ports of international importance
- Aggregating disparate infrastructure systems into a common regional network
- General Assembly resolution 70/197 of 22 December 2015 and the Commission resolution 72/5
- Support to General Assembly resolution 70/1 of September 2015 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

ESCAP regional transport activities (cont'd)

- Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks have been incorporated into national plans or strategies
- Agreement between the Governments of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on Creating Favourable Conditions for International Road Transport was signed in Dushanbe in September 2014
- Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network was signed by China, Mongolia and the Russian Federation in Moscow in December 2016. Once in force, it will be open for accession by the countries of the Asian Highway Network

Status of parties to ESCAP's Intergovernmental Agreements

	Intergovernmental Agreement on Asian Highway Network	Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway Network	Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports
Afghanistan	party		party
Azerbaijan	party	signatory	
Kazakhstan	party	signatory	party
Kyrgyzstan	party		
Tajikistan	party	party	party
Turkmenistan	party	party	party
Uzbekistan	party	party	

“Connecting to compete” 2016 report of the World Bank

Perception of changes in trade and transport infrastructure (%)

	Low income	Lower middle income	Upper middle income	High income
Much worsened or worsened	5	16	12	9
Improved or much improved	51	51	49	53

“Connecting to compete” 2016 report of the World Bank (cont’d)

Quality of road and rail infrastructure (%)

		Low income	Lower middle income	Upper middle income	High income
Roads	Low or very low	37	44	41	14
	High or very high	17	18	19	45
Rail	Low or very low	61	53	72	44
	High or very high	17	18	12	25

“Connecting to compete” 2016 report of the World Bank (cont’d)

Quality and competence of service (%)

		Low income	Lower middle income	Upper middle income	High income
Roads	Low or very low	37	44	41	14
	High or very high	17	18	19	45
Rail	Low or very low	61	53	72	44
	High or very high	17	18	12	25

Global Economic Forum: Rating the quality of road and rail infrastructure

15,000 business leaders across 141 countries.

The quality of road and rail infrastructure on a scale of 1 (extremely underdeveloped) to 7 (extensive and efficient)

- Azerbaijan - high score of 4 and above for both road and rail
- Tajikistan - high score of 4 and above for road
- Kazakhstan – high score of 4 and above for rail
- Kyrgyzstan - below 3.5 in both road and rail

The Asian Highway Network

1. Class I sections in SPECA States increased from 1 per cent (2004) to 8.8 per cent (2017)
2. Below Class III decreased from 29 per cent to 11.1 per cent during same period.
3. Still over 3,010 km of AH routes that need to be upgraded
4. Overall quality of Asian Highway is relatively low compared to the entire Asian Highway Network.
5. Only Azerbaijan is known to have already installed, and Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are considering the installation of the Asian Highway route signs.

The Asian Highway Network (cont'd)

Afghanistan

- Maintenance works for sections from Jalalabad to Kabul, from Kabul to Ghazni and from Ghazni to Kandahar as well as part of the Asian Highway route 1.
- New road that will open a trade link with Tajikistan and beyond.
- Preparations on CAREC Corridors 5 and 6 (AH76).

Azerbaijan

- Construction of new motorway between Jalilabad and Shorsulu (AH8)
- Rehabilitation of a 30-kilometer road section from Ganja to the Qazax region (AH5)

The Asian Highway Network (cont'd)

Kazakhstan

- East-West Roads Project is to increase transport efficiency from Almaty to Khorgos (Horgos) of the Western Europe-Western China road corridor.
- The 305-kilometre road section was being upgraded to a 4-lane highway including new alignments.
- The Corridor (AH5) is the road with the most impact on the subregional economy

Kyrgyzstan

- Rehabilitation work to join the southern areas of Batken, Jalal-Abad, and Osh with the northern regions of Chui, Issyk-Kul, Naryn and Talas (AH7)
- Improvements of Bishkek-Kara Balta (AH5) section and Bishkek- Torugart (AH61).

The Asian Highway Network (cont'd)

Tajikistan

- Rehabilitation of the Vose- Khovaling- Tavildara road (AH66)
- Improvement of Asian Highway route AH7 between Dushanbe and Kurgonteppa.

Uzbekistan

- Rehabilitation of 87-km long section near Bukhara on Asian Highway route AH63 - a crucial section of the international highway corridor connecting Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The Asian Highway Network (cont'd)

The seventh meeting of the Working Group on the Asian Highway Network

- 13 to 15 December 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand
- Receive updated information on initiatives implemented or considered on the AH routes.
- Proposals for amendments to the Agreement
- The Asian Highway Working Group and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Steering Group to hold a joint session to discuss co-deploying fibre-optic cable along the Asian Highway network.

The Trans-Asian Railway Network

- Rail has an important role in the national and international movements of goods and people.
- The main challenges in the ESCAP region are the missing links and different technical standards.
- Within SPECA countries the technical and operational standards are harmonized,
- Different from China and the Islamic Republic of Iran which:
 - operate on 1,435-mm gauge configuration
 - key for transit to important international maritime ports

The Trans-Asian Railway Network (cont'd)

- The China railways is at the centre of international landbridge container services.
- The future of rail transport in SPECA countries to be a better match between new infrastructure and emerging trade patterns.
- The new line linking Uzen (Kazakhstan) to Gorgan (Iran) via Etrek (Turkmenistan) inaugurated in late 2014 is a critical example of this new vision.

The Trans-Asian Railway Network (cont'd)

- Projects to enhance domestic connectivity of SPECA countries and broaden international transport links.
- In late 2016, an 88-km rail section opened between Atamyrat, Turkmenistan, and Aqina, Afghanistan with next stage to extend it 35 km to Adkhoy with a 420-km section from Adkhoy to Nizhniy Pyanj at the Tajik-Afghan border to be constructed in the near future.
- This line is a key element in the railway development master plan of Afghanistan and is part of a 1,300-km east-west corridor from Nizhniy Pyanj to Shamtigh at the border with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Dry Ports

- Dry ports are important for landlocked SPECA countries to facilitate their access to international markets by acting as ports away from coasts
- Key prerequisite for successful operation of intermodal corridors
- An essential part of an inland trade distribution system
- Important role in rebalancing the transport task of land transport modes
- Help reduce transportation costs and transit time

The Dry Ports (cont'd)

- “Regional Framework for the Planning, Design, Development and Operation of Dry Ports of International Importance”
- Offers practical solutions and modalities for the coordinated development of dry ports across the region.
- To be considered for adoption by the Working Group on dry ports at its second meeting due to be held in Bangkok on 14-15 November 2017

The Dry Ports (cont'd)

- ESCAP recently carried out an assessment of dry port development projects in five countries of the region
- The progress achieved in these five countries could benefit countries with more limited experience in applying best practice planning techniques and policy formulation to the development of dry ports.
- Available from www.unescap.org/resources/study-planning-development-and-operation-dry-ports-international-importance.

Thank you!

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