

Speech of the Deputy Minister of Transport of the Republic of Tajikistan in the work of the Regional Dialogue on Strengthening Transport Connectivity in the SPECA Region and beyond during COVID-19

*Dear ladies and gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,*

Let me express my sincere gratitude to the organizers for inviting to participate in the Regional Dialogue on Strengthening Transport Connectivity in the SPECA region and beyond during COVID-19.

It is important to note that landlocked developing countries face special problems caused by the lack of direct territorial access to the sea, remoteness from world markets.

Their lack of direct access to the sea makes them dependent on transit countries to maintain effective links with global markets. In addition, their geographic distance from the nearest seaports puts them at a disadvantaged position in terms of the time and financial costs of transporting goods, since overland transport is more expensive than sea transport.

The Vienna Program of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for 2014–2024 decade reflects pressing development issues and the challenges of being landlocked, remoteness and geographic constraints.

Tajikistan, like other Central Asian countries, is landlocked.

During the period of its independence, the Republic of Tajikistan continues to develop its transport infrastructure, which has a special character in economic development along with an increase in living standards and poverty reduction.

In this direction, with the direct initiative of the Founder of Peace and National Unity - the Leader of the Nation, the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, with the financial support of international financial institutions, 53 investment projects have been implemented to date totaling \$ 1.8 billion.

The implementation of investment projects resulted in the commissioning and efficient use of 2,183 km of international roads and 237 large and small bridges, of which 6 units connect the Republic of Tajikistan with Afghanistan, as well as 31 km of tunnels and avalanche galleries.

At the moment, 10 investment projects are being implemented in the industry for a total amount of more than 623 mm. US dollars.

One of the goals of sustainable development of the Republic of Tajikistan, defined by the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2030, is to bring the country out of the communication deadlock and turn it into a transit state.

To achieve this goal, a number of tasks have been identified, the main ones of which are:

First is the construction of an integrated transport network in the country and its further adjoining to international transport corridors.

Second is accession and ratification by the Republic of Tajikistan of international conventions and agreements on regulating transportation.

As a result of the construction of international highways and the accession of Tajikistan to the corridors of the People's Republic of China, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the functioning of 16 border points with Uzbekistan, our country has come out of the communication deadlock.

And also in the transport industry, the State Target Program for the Development of the Transport Complex for the period up to 2025 is being implemented.

In order to improve the country's transport infrastructure, the Republic of Tajikistan is currently working closely with development partners.

Dear colleagues,

Along with the implementation of the Vienna Program and other actions, decent work has been done up to date, but a number of issues that require solutions still remain.

Therefore, special attention should be paid to the development and expansion of efficient transit systems, facilitation of border crossing and transport development including infrastructure, increasing competitiveness, expanding trade, regional cooperation and promoting economic growth and sustainable development.

That said, it is necessary to develop and implement, with the involvement of donors, regional projects that promote:

- ensuring free, efficient and economical access to the sea;
- reduction of transport and trade and operating costs:
- development of transport and transit corridors, providing relations with developing countries that do not have access to the sea, including reducing the time spent in corridors at the borders;
- development of multimodal transport, providing efficient transshipment from one mode of transport to another.

Information on the temporary procedure introduced to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Tajikistan

Dear colleagues,

At the moment, the problem of the spread of the new coronavirus infection COVID-19 is an urgent issue for the whole world. During this period, any country in the world felt the negative impact of this infection on the development of the economy as a whole.

Taking into account neighboring countries, in order to implement emergency measures to prevent the entry and transmission of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19) in the territory of the Republic of Tajikistan, a temporary procedure has been introduced to regulate the transportation of goods by road.

According to the adopted temporary procedure for international freight vehicles and their drivers, entry is allowed before the operation of border terminals, in the absence of such terminals - before customs control zone at border posts of the state border, where

customs clearance is carried out. And if there is a test that confirms the absence of the virus, the driver is allowed to continue to freight destination.

This procedure is temporary and will be canceled as the epidemiological situation normalizes.

In conclusion, I would like to once again thank the organizers for the excellent organization of this event. Indeed, the platform is a good opportunity to discuss the main questions that till now required to be addressed.

I wish to all participants a good health. Take care.

Thank you for your attention!

Sh. Saidmurodzoda
Deputy Minister of Transport of the Republic of Tajikistan