

Distinguished Delegates,

It gives me great pleasure to join you in this virtual dialogue and share with you China's latest development in terms of Euro-Asian transport connectivity.

China has long been a supporter of Regional Connectivity, and has recently deepened transport cooperation with other countries under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Over the past seven years since the BRI was proposed, on the basis of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, China has been strengthening "hardware connectivity" of infrastructure like railway, highway, port, shipping line, airport as well as oil and gas pipelines network with B&R countries.

Here I'd like to give an example of the China-Europe Express Railway, which is a part of the BRI initiative. The Express Railway has now connected China to 21 European countries, namely Germany, Russia, Poland, Czech Republic, Spain, Netherlands, Belarus, France, Latvia, Belgium, United Kingdom, Hungary, Finland, Austria, Italy, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Turkey, Lithuania, Serbia, and Ukraine. Since 2011, more than 29,000 freight trains have transported goods between China and Europe, of these, 12,271 made the return trip to China. We have cooperated with B&R countries in customs clearance to make it more convenient and efficient for the operation of the trains. With our combined efforts, the average inspection rate and customs clearance turnover time have both decreased by 50 percent.

This year, when the world suffers from COVID-19 pandemic, China-Europe Express Railway helped to provide support to other countries in purchasing protective materials. From January to April, the number of China-Europe freight trains and the volume of goods delivered increased by 24 percent and 27 percent compared with the same period last year, and a total of 660,000 packages were transported. We're glad to play a part in maintaining a smooth flow of international industrial and supply chains, and in ensuring the delivery of protective supplies to other countries.

Apart from physical interconnectivity of infrastructure, China has also been strengthening "software connectivity" with B&R countries on transport policies, rules and standards. We have signed intergovernmental agreements on air transport with 126 countries and regions, 38 bilateral and regional shipping

agreements with 47 B&R countries, 18 bilateral and multilateral international agreements on transport facilitation with 15 B&R countries, including the “Intergovernmental Agreement of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on the Facilitation of International Road Transport”, and the agreement on deeper cooperation in China-Europe rail service signed by railway companies of China, Belarus, Germany, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Poland, and Russia.

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Transport connectivity is critical to economic prosperity, social stability and regional integration. Infrastructure is the cornerstone of connectivity. Building quality, sustainable, resilient, affordable, inclusive and accessible infrastructure can help countries fully play their advantages, so as to get better integrated with global supply, industrial and value chains, and achieve interconnected development.

China stands ready to work with all parties to improve transport facilitation, cut logistics cost and provide convenience for economic growth, goods flow and personnel exchanges in the Euro-Asian region. We are willing to make joint efforts with all stakeholders to reinforce the "hardware connectivity" as well as the "software connectivity" in the Euro-Asian network to fully support the integrated development of all countries.

We will continue to support the UNECE and OSCE’s coordinating role in improving Euro-Asian connectivity and deepen our cooperation with EATL countries for a bright future of this region.

Thank you.