



UNECE

**The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
84th session of the Inland Transport Committee**

**Roundtable on Euro-Asian Transport Links
24 February 2022, Palais des Nations, room XIX**

Concept note

Background

Globalization of trade as well as formation and development of sustainable inter-regional supply chains have increased the importance of high-quality, reliable and accessible transport links, which are a prerequisite for stable functioning of international trade and the economy.

The steadily growing traffic volume between Asia and Europe urges us to improve the operation capacity and resilience of multimodal international transport corridors.. Their development includes both the modernization of roads and railways, as well as the construction of logistics centers, modern border crossing points, seaports and intermodal hubs.

At the same time, the physical infrastructure alone would not address all the challenges. It should be accompanied with the coordination of legal regimes, transit and trade arrangements, as well as well-functioning logistics services, planning, modelling and cargo flow management.

.The combination of these physical and non-physical measures would provide favourable conditions to reduce the time spent at border crossings and in intermodal goods transshipment, and would allow transport operators to offer a reliable service that would serve international trade needs.

The development of sustainable international transport links is of key importance for the emerging economies and landlocked countries, providing them with easier access to the world markets and empowering them to improve their products' competitiveness through reduced export and import costs of goods and services.

The current situation calls for the effective and practice-oriented coordination between transport, economic operators and customs authorities at the regional level.

For more than 15 years the Inland Transport Committee of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe has been working on improving the efficiency of transport connectivity across the continent.

An impressive analytical work has been carried out under the long-term project on the Euro-Asian transport links. Participants have identified 9 key rail routes and 9 road routes, 17 inland water transport routes, 52 river ports and 70 sea ports serving as a backbone of the interregional transport network. More than 300 priority transport infrastructure investment projects have been identified, and a geographic information system (GIS) aimed at visualizing the collected database on the corridors has been developed. An analysis of institutional barriers to the sustainable operation of cross-border transport routes has been carried out, as well as evaluation of maritime and land transport efficiency for different cargo types.

The next stage could be a coordinated transition to the implementation of practical measures identified in the analysis, in order to ensure resilient and seamless transport corridors.

Such measures may include the creation of a transport and economy correlation charts for the most efficient use of existing infrastructure, and the subsequent formation of corridor management mechanisms.

The Russian Federation and other Governments in the region are actively working on this task.

For the integrated management of international transport corridors, dedicated interdepartmental cooperation bodies have been set up to provide analytical and information support for coordinated decision-making by the authorities and private sector operators for the development and efficient management of corridors.

Pilot models of transport and economy correlation charts for various corridor routes have been introduced. They allow for assessing and forecasting the transport and trade connections between the countries along the corridor considering the quality of corridor infrastructure. In the future, these pilots may serve as a model for the analysis and forecasting of corridor opportunities. Target models (roadmaps) to improve logistical chains along the specific routes would also serve as a template for monitoring and corridor management.

At the same time, the Russian Federation partnered with EAEU countries to form a list of routes, establish common target benchmarks and introduce digital services.

During the roundtable, the participating countries and international organizations are invited to present their experience, share best practices and practical measures on monitoring and managing transport corridors.

Objectives

- consideration of countries' and international organizations' experience in deployment and operationalization of corridor monitoring and management mechanisms;
- exchange of views on further activities for the practical implementation of international transport corridors on the Eurasian Continent.