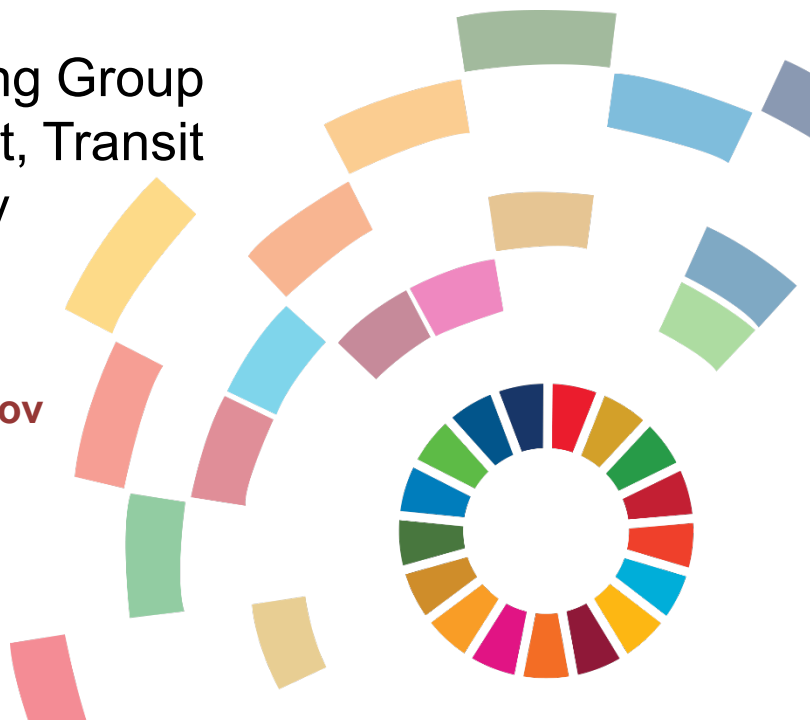


# Enhancing transport operational connectivity along international transport routes in SPECA region

SPECA Thematic Working Group  
on Sustainable Transport, Transit  
and Connectivity

25<sup>th</sup> Session  
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# Overview

Both transport infrastructure and operational connectivity issues need to be addressed

Major bottlenecks along international transport routes ought to be identified, isolated and eliminated.

Effective regional transport will require political commitment and institutionalization of the integration processes

SPECA landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) continue to face challenges in accessing regional and global markets.

# Road transport

Capacity Building Workshop on application of new technologies in transit facilitation for enhancing transport connectivity of Central Asia in November 2019 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

- Requested the secretariat to develop a guideline on electronic tracking and monitoring of goods and vehicles

Virtual Expert Group Meeting on Safe and Seamless Transport Connectivity along the Asian Highway Network during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic (25 June 2020).

# Road transport (cont'd)

Project on “Strengthening the capacity of ESCAP member States to harmonize standards on weights, dimensions and emissions of road vehicles for facilitation of transport along the Asian Highway network” completed:

- Overview of existing standards on weights, dimensions and emissions along the Asian Highway network,
- Recommended harmonized standards.
- Regional experiences, best practices and recommendations on institutional steps on the implementations of the recommended standards.

# Road transport (cont'd)

Project on “Strengthening capacity for operationalizing sustainable transport connectivity along the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor to achieve the 2030 Agenda”

- Assessment of the current operational connectivity along the Corridor
- Policy recommendations to further enhance the use of technology and common monitoring mechanisms.

# Road transport (cont'd)

Support to the implementation of Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network.

Technical and advisory services to the first meeting of the Joint Committee under the Inter-governmental Agreement of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Project on “Facilitating the deployment of highly and fully automated vehicles in road traffic along the Asian Highway Network” to develop guidelines.

Dedicated national trainings in selected countries in the region replaced the annual Regional Conference for Logistics Service Providers due to COVID-19

# Rail transport

The growth of traffic along the corridors of the Trans-Asian Railway network during COVID-19 Pandemic, underscored the great benefits of international rail transport.

- harmonized electronic exchange of information among railways.
- smart railway solutions and deepening digitalization in the railways across the region, including SPECA countries.

Sixth Working Group Meeting of the Trans-Asian Railway network – coherent initiatives on electronic exchange of information among railways.

# Rail transport (cont'd)

Draft framework on enhancing efficiency of railway border crossings along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond:

- electronic information exchange among railways and between railways and control agencies,
- harmonizing customs formalities for transit by rail,
- break of gauge and
- comprehensive indicators to measure performance of railway border crossings.



# Rail transport (cont'd)

The ESCAP – OSJD Joint Virtual Meeting on Challenges and Opportunities for international railway transport along the Trans-Asian Railway network and beyond (7-8 July 2020)

- Reaffirmed the need for a suitable modality on harmonization of electronic information exchange among railways
- Considering adding a dedicated annex to the Intergovernmental Agreement on TAR network.

A study project on the commercialization of the railway corridor among Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

# Rail transport (cont'd)

Digitalizing railways in the ESCAP region is fraught with multiple challenges

Harnessing the full potential of digitalizing railways of the region require a framework, reflecting upon:

- a regional consensus on key areas to be digitalized along with a way forward to scale them up
- a plan of action to support railways of landlocked and least developing countries in leapfrogging to digital railways, and
- a platform to share and learn from experience of digitalizing railways.

# Dry ports

Dry ports are key to the efficient international transport corridors, acting as points of convergence.

Third meeting of the Working Group on Dry Ports (November 2019) emphasized the need to include dry port development in the broader context of the international intermodal transport and economic corridors.

The Working group also recognized that upgrade of legal frameworks for international multimodal transport operations is:

- instrumental in the efficient operation of dry ports and intermodal transport corridors in the region and beyond.

# Dry ports (cont'd)

ESCAP developed a document proposing several optional approaches on harmonization of the legal framework for multimodal transport

*Ad hoc* virtual expert group meeting (26-27 August 2020) discussed the document proposing approaches on harmonization of the legal framework and agreed that:

- All options should remain under consideration, pending a detailed comparative analysis, including assessment of the level of commitment, timeline and possibilities of creating additional fragmentation and/or legal conflicts.

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