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TRANSPORT AND TOURISM ISSUES

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**TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATED INTERMODAL TRANSPORT AND
LOGISTICS SYSTEM FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC***

Note by the secretariat

SUMMARY

The Ministerial Conference on Transport held in November 2006 in Busan, Republic of Korea adopted the vision of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system as the long term objective for transport development in the Asia and the Pacific region. In May 2007 the Commission endorsed this vision through resolution 63/9 on implementation of the Busan Declaration and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, Phase I (2007–2011).

This document provides a background to the step-by-step approach that led to the formulation and formalization through international agreements of the Asian Highway (AH) and the Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) networks as main building blocks of a regional transport system. The document also considers approaches envisaged in resolution 63/9 to further develop and operationalize the integrated transport system to effectively meet the increasing challenges of globalization.

The document highlights some of the implementation plans of the Regional Action Programme (RAP) during Phase I (2007–2011) in selected areas of operationalizing and promoting the Asian Highway, legal frameworks for international transport, strengthening the professionalism of the freight forwarding and logistics industry, finance and private sector participation, and operationalization of transport corridors and routes.

Noting the important guidance and commitment provided by member countries in each stage of planning and implementation of the previous Regional Action Programmes, the Committee is invited to consider the proposed measures and to provide the secretariat with further guidance in the implementation of the current RAP.

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Introduction

1. The Ministerial Conference on Transport held in November 2006 in Busan, Republic of Korea reaffirmed the long-term vision of an international integrated intermodal transport system in Asia and the Pacific with the development of logistics as an important additional element that needed to be integrated into the vision.¹ While adopting the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2007-2011, the Ministers also agreed that there was a need to comprehensively address physical and non-physical issues through the achievement of a set of objectives with clear outputs and indicators of achievement.² Subsequently, the Commission adopted resolution 63/9 of 23 May 2007 on Implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (RAP), Phase I (2007-2011).

2. This document provides a background to the development of the Busan Declaration and seeks guidance and support from the Committee with respect to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme in some selected areas.

I. BACKGROUND

3. Over the past decade, ESCAP member countries have benefited substantially from the process of globalization. Many of the successes have been achieved through improved transportation. Programmes that have assisted regional member countries improve transportation have included:

A. Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) Project

4. The long-term project on Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) comprising the Asian Highway (AH) and Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) projects as well as transport facilitation measures was approved by the Commission at its forty-eighth session (1992) and constituted the main strategy for the work of the secretariat in the transport area.³ The project was implemented from 1992 in accordance with its initial implementation strategy and its major objectives to formulate the AH and TAR networks as well as to implement the Commission resolution 48/11 on road and rail transport modes in relation to facilitation measures of 23 April 1992.

5. In 1998 the Commission noted that the implementation of the ALTID project clearly demonstrated its practical importance in facilitating international trade and tourism. The Commission endorsed the refined strategy for the implementation of the project focusing amongst others on

¹ See "Report of the Ministerial Conference on Transport" (E/ESCAP/63/13), para. 2.

² See document E/ESCAP/63/13, annex.

³ See official records of the Economic and Social Council 1992, Supplement No. 11 (E/1992/31-E/ESCAP/889), para. 599.

priority infrastructure projects and implementation of resolution 48/11 of 23 April 1992 on road and rail transport modes, in relation to facilitation measures.⁴

B. New Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific

6. The Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure was held in New Delhi, India in October 1996. The Conference adopted the New Delhi Declaration on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific. The list of operational activities/projects for phase I (1997-2001) of the Regional Action Programme for the implementation for the New Delhi Action Plan was also endorsed.⁵

7. The Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in November 2001, considered Phase II (2002-2006) of the New Delhi Action Plan and requested that the formulation, development and improvement of international integrated intermodal transport should be given priority attention. It also requested the secretariat to finalize the formulation of the AH and TAR networks as the major building blocks of the integrated intermodal transport system in the region and develop intergovernmental agreements on the networks.⁶

8. In accordance with this clear directive the Intergovernmental Agreement on the AH network⁷ was developed, adopted and came into force on 4 July 2005. A similar agreement on the TAR network⁸ was also developed and signed by 18 countries in November 2006 during the Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Busan, Republic of Korea.

C. Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific

9. The Ministerial Conference on Transport held in Busan, Republic of Koarea in November 2006 adopted the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, considering that it provided a clear framework for promoting regional cooperation in support of socio-economic development in the region and thereby meeting the growing challenges of globalization.⁹ The Conference also adopted the Regional Action Programme for phase I (2007-2011)¹⁰ aimed at materializing the vision of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system with transport logistics constituting an important additional component, taking into account the increasing demand for efficient intra- and inter-regional transport.

10. The Regional Action Programme seeks to comprehensively address a wide range of issues relating to transport infrastructure, transport facilitation and transport policy. These issues are often

⁴ See official records of the Economic and Social Council 1998, Supplement No. 20 (E/1998/40, E/ESCAP/1117), paras. 230, 231 and 235. See also document E/ESCAP/CTC(3)/2.

⁵ See Report of the Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure (E/ESCAP/1058), para. 17.

⁶ See Report of the Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure (E/ESCAP/1249), para. 2.

⁷ See Commission resolution 60/4 of 28 April 2004.

⁸ See Commission resolution 62/4 of 12 April 2006.

⁹ See Commission document E/ESCAP/63/13, para. 70.

¹⁰ See Commission document E/ESCAP/63/13, para. 5.

interlinked and will be addressed in an integrated manner with joint activities across the Transport and Tourism Division. The following sections summarize recent progress and the ongoing work undertaken by the secretariat as well as the future plans in the selected areas of the RAP.

11. At each stage of planning and implementation through a step-by-step approach the abovementioned programmes have benefited from guidance and commitment of the member countries.

II. PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR SELECTED ELEMENTS OF THE REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, PHASE I (2007-2011)

12. The Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (RAP) reflects the clear direction of countries in achieving the vision of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system for Asia and the Pacific. The RAP identifies eight areas in which the secretariat should work in consultation with member countries, namely: (1) Policy guidance at the ministerial level; (2) Transport infrastructure development; (3) Transport facilitation; (4) Transport logistics; (5) Finance and private sector participation; (6) Sustainable transport development; (7) Road safety; and (8) Transport and the Millennium Development Goals.¹¹ Specific objectives are listed in each area with outputs and indicators of achievement. The secretariat has selected five areas to highlight the approaches being adopted and the specific plans, in order for the Committee to have an insight into the implementation of the RAP and provide necessary guidance to the secretariat.

A. Operationalizing and Promoting the Asian Highway: Truck Caravan from Tokyo to Istanbul

13. The Commission through its resolution 63/9 of 23 May 2007, approved the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (RAP), Phase I (2007-2011). One of the main actions contained in the RAP is the promotion of the Asian Highway network.

14. To demonstrate the regional connectivity made possible by the Asian Highway network the secretariat, in cooperation with partners, plans to organize between March and mid-May 2008, a truck caravan along the Asian Highway routes, connecting Tokyo, Japan to Istanbul, Turkey. The proposed date and the end point of the caravan have been chosen to coincide with the opening of the 31st World Congress of the International Road Transport Union (IRU), on 15 May 2008 in Istanbul. It is proposed that the caravan will follow the main East-West AH routes and could be joined by trucks coming from other ESCAP subregions.

15. This proposal benefits from the successful experience gained by the IRU from organizing two similar events namely the Beijing-Brussels Caravan (27 September to 17 October 2005) and the Black Sea Ring Highway Caravan (19 April to 28 May 2007).

¹¹ See document E/ESCAP/63/13, annex.

16. The Beijing-Brussels Caravan was initiated by the IRU member association in Kazakhstan and was supported by Governments, international institutions as well as road transport associations from the countries along the route that included: China, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Germany and Belgium. The aim of the Beijing-Brussels Caravan project was to demonstrate that road transport is an effective means of shipping cargo by land between Europe and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

17. The Black Sea Ring Highway Caravan was initiated by the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and was organized by the IRU and supported by Governments and the private sector from the twelve BSEC member countries around the Black Sea basin. The main aim of the caravan was to collect data en route to be used for further facilitating road transport in the BSEC region.

18. A regional workshop on “Upgrading the Asian Highway priority routes” held in Bangkok from 19-21 June 2007 noted with interest the proposal to organize such a caravan. The inter-regional seminar on the “Economic assessment of international transport linkages and on transport facilitation” held in Cairo from 26 to 28 June 2007 noted with appreciation the information provided by the IRU regarding the Black Sea Ring Highway Caravan and encouraged the regional commissions to collaborate with the IRU in organizing similar events in other regions.

19. The proposed project on the Asian Highway Caravan would be implemented in collaboration with regional Governments and the IRU which has already made a preliminary approach to a number of its associations that are enthusiastically supporting the project. To the extent possible the trucks will travel without special arrangements, following the usual procedures and formalities in place in the member States.

20. The caravan will collect data relevant to the international road transport such as status of infrastructure, travel time and costs involved, non-physical barriers, facilitation measures en route and at the border crossing points. The data collected will be presented in a report containing time/cost-distance analysis of the journey along the Asian Highway with examples of good practices.

21. The success of the proposed project will depend on the support and assistance of the Asian Highway member States along with national associations/members of the IRU.

22. The Committee is invited to support this initiative, which could demonstrate the growing potential of the Asian Highway network that can effectively contribute to the economic development of the countries covered by it. The Committee may also wish to provide further guidance for improving operational efficiency of international road transport in the region.

**B. Legal Frameworks for International Transport:
Road Transport Facilitation Agreement**

23. In support of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action,¹² the secretariat conducted a feasibility study for developing an agreement among the member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)¹³ on facilitation of international road transport in 2004. Subsequently, the secretariat in cooperation with the SCO secretariat organized an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) at Urumqi, China in June 2004 to review the findings of the study and discuss a draft agreement. As recommended by the EGM and requested by the SCO member States, the secretariat together with the SCO secretariat organized the first negotiation meeting on the draft agreement at Urumqi, China in August 2004.

24. The Prime Ministers of the SCO member States, at their meetings at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in September 2004, as well as at Moscow, Russian Federation in October 2005, and at Dushanbe, Tajikistan in September 2006, stressed the importance of the agreement and called for acceleration of the negotiation of the agreement.

25. The Commission at its 60th Session in 2004 requested the secretariat to continue to provide the SCO member States with guidance and expressed the hope that this would lead to the development of a multilateral road transport facilitation agreement between member States. This subject has been accorded priority in the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2007-2011) by the Ministerial Conference on Transport held at Busan, Republic of Korea in November 2006, which includes an indicator of achievement of “Countries signing or acceding to subregional facilitation agreements”.

26. Following the initial progress, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) was invited to cooperate with SCO and ESCAP in the further negotiation and implementation of the agreement. Accordingly, SCO, ADB and ESCAP jointly organized negotiating meetings on the agreement at Beijing, China in March and June 2005, August 2006 and January 2007, and at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan in July 2007.

27. In September 2006, the ministers for transport of the SCO member States signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Accelerating Formulation of Draft Agreement among the Governments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Facilitation of International Road Transport at Dushanbe, Tajikistan, which had been prepared by the 4th negotiating meeting. The MOU addresses key issues raised in the past negotiations of the agreement. Following

¹² Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, adopted at the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in August 2003.

¹³ Member States of the SCO comprise of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

the signing of the MOU, the SCO member States have reached basic consensus to 75 per cent of the framework agreement and completion of this phase of work is expected within the near future.

28. The framework agreement will have, depending on further negotiations, between three and five annexes. The secretariat in cooperation with ADB and the SCO secretariat prepared a draft work plan to undertake a study on the annexes to the agreement that is being revised in accordance with proposals made at the 6th negotiating meeting.

29. The secretariat, with funding support from the Government of China, will organize a subregional seminar on facilitation of international road transport in Urumqi, China on 21-22 August 2007 to share information on implementation of bilateral and multilateral agreements on international road transport. It is expected that the seminar will provide the opportunity to informally discuss preparations for the study on the annexes to the SCO agreement.

30. The secretariat will closely cooperate with the SCO member States, the SCO secretariat and ADB to undertake the study on annexes to the agreement and prepare draft annexes for review and negotiation by the SCO member States.

31. Recognizing that facilitation of international road transport is an important emerging issue in the ESCAP region, the SCO member States have included an indication of opening of the agreement to other countries. Some neighbouring countries of the SCO member States, including the CAREC member countries, have expressed interest in the negotiation progress with a view to possible participation after negotiations are completed.

32. The Committee is invited to comment on the progress in the negotiation of the agreement and to advise on further development of the agreement.

C. Strengthening the Professionalism of the Freight Forwarding and Logistics Industry

33. The Regional Action Programme (RAP) for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, Phase I (2007–2011) – Section 4 requires the secretariat to create guidelines for the operation of logistics service providers, promote partnerships and exchange of experiences within the region, and assist countries to enhance national competencies and skills within the logistics industry.

34. The professionalism of the industry can be significantly enhanced through an overall improvement in the awareness and understanding of the current industry needs, issues and challenges on the part of all stakeholders involved. In this regard, Governments and the private sector need to work together to effectively manage ongoing changes and facilitate an improvement in the performance and credibility of the industry in individual countries and the region at large.

1. Guidelines for the operation of logistics service providers

35. A lack of common guidelines or standards of operation for freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers, impacts the overall level of professionalism and

competitiveness of the industry. Raising the profile of the industry and harmonizing the approaches to enhancing professionalism are thus two critical areas for possible collective action and cooperation.

36. At the recently concluded Meeting of Executives (office bearers) of National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Associations held on 20 June 2007 in Bangkok, the issue of common minimum industry standards including criteria for membership, registration requirements and codes of conduct for industry associations was discussed. Several National Associations have provided information on their existing criteria for membership, standard trading conditions and/or codes of conduct.

37. Preliminary findings indicate that Government regulations exist in some countries such as India (The Multimodal Transportation of Goods Act), Thailand (The Multimodal Transport Act), and Indonesia (decree of the Ministry of Communications regarding Transport Handling Services). Regulations are under consideration/ review in some other countries such as Malaysia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

38. The secretariat is currently preparing to collect, collate and analyze this information as well as incorporate additional inputs. The findings will be discussed at the next meeting of National Associations in 2008, with a view to develop guidelines for common industry standards at a regional level.

39. The following table illustrates preliminary information collated by the secretariat on industry self-regulation and Government monitoring/regulation in the region:

Country	Industry Self- Regulation		Government Monitoring/ Regulation	
	Registration as a Company is Required	Standard Rules, Code of Conduct and/ or Trading Conditions Exist	Government Regulations Exist	Government Regulations being Enacted/ under Review
Bangladesh	Yes	In process	No	Yes
China	Yes	Yes	No	No
India	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indonesia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lao PDR	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Malaysia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Myanmar	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Pakistan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Philippines	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Singapore	Yes	Yes	No	No
Sri Lanka	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Thailand	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Source: National Freight Forwarders/ Logistics Associations in the abovementioned countries.

2. Promoting partnerships and exchange of experiences within the region

40. As set forth in Section 4.3 of the RAP, the secretariat has initiated regular meetings of freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers to promote sharing of experiences and know-how, provide a platform for networking and dialogue, thus paving the way for enhanced professionalism and competitiveness of the industry.

41. The first Regional Forum of Freight Forwarders, Multimodal Transport Operators and Logistics Service Providers held on 22 June 2007, was attended by 100 participants from 17 countries – on a *self-funded* basis. The Forum agreed on the need for a regular industry platform which could discuss matters of common interest and have a channel of communication to Governments at a regional level. The Federation of Freight Forwarders' Associations in India (FFFAI) has offered to host the next event in Mumbai in 2008, and the Pakistan International Freight Forwarders Association (PIFFA) has offered to host the subsequent Forum in 2009.

42. The conclusions of the ESCAP Meeting of Executives of National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Associations are brought to the attention of the Committee, and are contained in Annex I.

3. Capacity-building in logistics

43. The secretariat has assisted several countries in enhancing national competencies and skills within the logistics industry through its training programme on freight forwarding, multimodal transport and logistics. Training of Trainer (TOT) workshops have been conducted in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. Some countries which had benefited from the TOT workshops have requested further assistance in delivery, and in incorporating ESCAP training material into their current programmes. In addition and pursuant to section 4.4 of the RAP, the secretariat is prepared to organize familiarization seminars on the role and development of the logistics industry for senior government officials.

44. The Committee is invited to provide comments and further guidance with respect to the measures elaborated in Section 1. Guidelines for the operation of logistics service providers, 2. Promoting partnerships and exchange of experiences within the region, and 3. Capacity-building in logistics. Such guidance may include proposals for member Governments to strengthen mechanisms to enable coordination and exchange of experiences between the Governments and the private sector in the region. The Committee is invited to support the endeavours of the National Associations to establish and sustain national training programmes and provide guidance to the secretariat on the issues to be covered in the seminars on the role and development of logistics industry for senior government officials.

D. Finance and Private Sector Participation

45. Work will be continued to identify best practices and arrangements of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) applicable in the region particularly for funding of necessary infrastructure development as well as the efficient operationalization of the System.

46. The secretariat will, in cooperation with Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and Economic Commission for Europe (ECE): establish a global PPP Alliance and networks at the regional and national levels to force cooperation between Governments, academic and training institutions and the private sector; develop training materials and make available necessary information to support capacity-building of public officials in undertaking and operating PPP projects at different levels; assess PPP-readiness and develop action plans to improve PPP-readiness in participating countries; and create an internet-based training and resource facility.

47. To this end, the Ministry of Planning and Budget of the Republic of Korea will be organizing and hosting a Ministerial Conference on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in Seoul on 5 October 2007, with ESCAP providing support to the conference. The conference will be preceded by an ESCAP convened Expert Group Meeting (2-3 October 2007) and an Asia-Pacific Business Forum on Public-Private Partnership (4 October 2007). Invitations have been sent to ESCAP members and associate members.

48. The Committee may wish to encourage participation of relevant ministries, agencies and organizations in the series of meetings and comment on the proposed PPP establishment of a Alliance/network.

E. Operationalization of Transport Corridors and Routes

49. The Almaty Programme of Action, under its Priority 1- Fundamental transit policy issues, includes in the specific actions required the establishment of regional transport corridors and the adoption of common rules and standards, where appropriate, should play a major role in transit transport facilitation. In that regard, the role of the regional commissions and subregional organizations should be further strengthened.¹⁴

50. In its Resolution 63/9 of 23 May 2007, the Commission deemed that an effective approach to the realization of an integrated transport system is through the operationalization of priority transport corridors and routes within the system. In this context the Commission requested the Executive Secretary, to undertake a study which, based upon the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks as well as major Euro-Asian and other interregional transport links, defines priority transport corridors, and good practices that could be implemented on the corridors and proposes

¹⁴ Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, adopted at the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in August 2003, para. 14(e).

specific measures, for example memoranda of understanding, that lead to the effective development of those corridors.

51. The development of international transport corridors is an approach that could expedite the achievement of an international integrated intermodal transport system. It could also contribute to attaining greater efficiency in transport development in the region, taking into account technical and interoperability aspects to facilitate movements at border crossings, and hence to contribute to economic and social welfare across the continent.

52. Moreover the corridor-based approach could facilitate the adoption and implementation at all levels of transport laws and policies based on common principles and standards, multilateral legal instruments and conventions, and thereby more closely harmonize the regulatory environment in the ESCAP region.

53. An efficient transport corridor is characterized by a sufficient volume of cargo and a full range of services. A strategy to establish such a corridor could be the promotion of and support for the development of fully-fledged transport and logistics services and the establishment of integrated freight and distribution hubs or dry ports at selected locations along the corridor.

54. Economic development will be fostered not only at opposite ends of the corridor but throughout its length. To this end, cooperation between countries along the corridor is of vital importance and there are several options in establishing the institutional framework for such cooperation.

55. There are many examples of cooperation along transport corridors in North America, in Southern Africa and in Europe. The best known and most successful examples are the ten Pan-European Transport Corridors and four Pan-European Transport Areas. They were defined during three Pan-European Transport Conferences in 1991, 1994 and 1997 respectively.

56. The first Pan-European Transport Conference was held in Prague, Czech Republic in 1991 and adopted a Declaration that stated, among others, that “An efficient all-European transport system should be developed pursuant to the principles of market economy and fair competition by means of an integrated European transport concept which is well adapted to the objectives of social, environmental and energy policies as well as to safety requirements and which is liberated from unnecessary restrictions, like certain load conditions, or certain technical and administrative barriers”.

57. The second Pan-European Transport Conference, held in Crete, Greece in 1994, endorsed a report which was largely based on the Prague Declaration and in which nine multimodal Pan-European transport links were identified as being of European interest and were considered to be a basis for future work on transport infrastructure development in Central and Eastern Europe. The work on the Crete Corridors has progressed well since 1994 over three years (until the 3rd Pan-European Conference) during which many positive developments were realised: all participants have

signed Memoranda of Understanding for the development of each of the nine Crete Corridors, and Steering Committees and technical secretariats have been established for each of them. The third Pan-European Transport Conference, held in Helsinki, Finland in 1997, adopted the establishment of a tenth corridor. The same conference, building on the corridor developments adopted a more comprehensive approach, reflecting the complex structure of transport requirements. This approach resulted in the adoption of the complementary concept of Pan-European Transport Areas (PETrA) and the definition of four PETrAs.

58. In ESCAP region, the operationalization of the Northern corridor of the Trans-Asian Railway has been effectively promoted through a Memorandum of Understanding, signed by China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Belarus and Poland and two international organizations; International Union of Railways (UIC) and the Organization for Railways Cooperation (OSJD), in which principles of cooperation have been included.

59. As requested by the Commission in Resolution 63/9, the secretariat is planning to undertake a study of priority transport corridors and good practices that could be implemented on those corridors, covering the following:

- Defining priority regional transport corridors, in collaboration with member countries and based on achievements to date including Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks, the Special Programme for the Economies in Central Asia (SPECA) etc.;
- Undertaking an inventory of the conditions of these corridors: status of infrastructure, degree of facilitation etc. based on inputs from member countries;
- Formulating proposals for institutional arrangements on each of the corridors taking into account the specific needs and capacities of the countries concerned.

60. The study will be submitted for analysis at an Expert Group Meeting and then submitted for consideration of the Committee on Managing Globalization.

61. Countries that are promoting a corridor approach or have defined priority routes for cooperation amongst neighbouring countries are invited to share information with the Committee.

62. The Committee is also invited to provide guidance to the secretariat on issues and approaches that may be covered in the study.

III. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE

63. As requested in paragraph 22 (Operationalizing and Promoting the Asian Highway: Truck Caravan from Tokyo to Istanbul), paragraph 32 (Legal Frameworks for International Transport: SCO Road Transport Facilitation Agreement), paragraph 44 (Strengthening the Professionalism of the Freight Forwarding and Logistics Industry), paragraph 48 (Finance and Private Sector Participation), paragraphs 61 and 62 (Operationalization of Transport Corridors and Routes), the Committee is

invited to share experiences at a national level and advise the secretariat in the implementation of the RAP in these selected areas of work.

Annex I

ESCAP Meeting of Executives of National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Associations

20 June 2007, Bangkok

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Meeting agreed that examples of Government regulation and industry self-regulation exist in the ESCAP region. The participants also agreed that common minimum standards can lead to enhanced professionalism and create a trustworthy service environment. The participants agreed that in a first phase a regional approach could be appropriate and requested the secretariat to collate and share the information gathered with respect to National Associations.
2. The Meeting noted with appreciation the information shared by several countries on the initiatives taken by the National Associations to assist its membership. The Meeting requested the ESCAP secretariat to collate information on specific and successful initiatives undertaken by the National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Associations and disseminate it to the countries in the ESCAP region.
3. The Meeting reported and acknowledged a more positive and inclusive attitude of Governments in their relationship with the private sector and the industry.
4. The Meeting supported the ESCAP initiative to encourage Governments to set up and/or strengthen formal mechanisms that would institutionalize and enable an enhanced coordination between key stakeholders, and encourage increased participation from the private sector and the various Government Ministries of Trade, Transport, Commerce and Finance.
5. The Meeting unanimously agreed on the need for Executives of National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Associations to meet on a regular basis and commended the initiative of the ESCAP secretariat in organizing the subject event. It was also agreed that sub-regional dialogue could take place on the sidelines of the Meeting.
6. It was agreed that the 2008 Meeting should be organized in coordination with FIATA.
7. The Meeting welcomed an offer from the Federation of Freight Forwarders' Associations in India (FFFAI) to host the Meeting of Executives of National Freight Forwarders and Logistics Associations in 2008, and the offer from Pakistan International Freight Forwarders Association (PIFFA) to host the Meeting in 2009.

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