UN Development Account Capacity Building Project on Interregional Transport Linkages

National Workshop and Advisory Services on the Facilitation of Interregional Transport along the Euro-Asian Transport Links
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 19 - 20 December 2006

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Jointly organised and sponsored by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and kindly hosted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic, a National Workshop on the Facilitation of Interregional Transport along the Euro-Asian Transport Links was held on 19 and 20 December 2006 in Bishkek.

2. Mr. Temir Niyazbekov, Head of the Department of International Relations and Foreign Investment at the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic, opened the Workshop that was attended by 30 experts from the public and private sector. The participants included representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Health Industry, Transport and the Interior, Customs Administration, Transport Companies and the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ).

3. The aim of the Workshop was to assist Kyrgyzstan to develop favourable transit environment on its territory for facilitating international transport and trade along the Euro-Asian transport links, support the ongoing national efforts to accede to and implement relevant UN agreements and conventions as well as to foster cooperation among major national stakeholders involved transit and border-crossing operations.

4. The intensive two-day Workshop has allowed the participants to get a deeper insight into the major UN legal instruments and initiatives on transport facilitation, exchange views with the UN experts on the main issues of transport facilitation and establishing a comprehensive national coordination mechanism for trade and transport facilitation.
5. The Workshop participants recognized the importance of legal instruments for efficient transport along the Euro-Asian transport links and recommended the following measures to progress towards the development of a national action plan:

- Harmonization of national standards and norms according to the requirements stipulated in international conventions, including those developed under the auspices of UNECE and the World Customs Organization (WCO);

- Kyrgyzstan is a party to six major UNECE transport conventions and should consider accession to the following further UNECE conventions: European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR, 1975), European Agreement on Main International Railway Lines (AGC, 1985), European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations (AGTC, 1991), European Agreement concerning the Work of Crews of Vehicles engaged in International Road Transport (AETR, 1970), Touring Facilities (1954), Temporary Importation of Private Road Vehicles (1954), Customs Treatment of Pool Containers (1994), European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR, 1957) and Agreement on the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs and on the Special Equipment to be Used for such Carriage (ATP, 1970);

- Kyrgyzstan should also examine the possibility of accession to:
  - World Customs Organization Revised Kyoto Convention; and
  - World Customs Organization Istanbul Convention.

- The workshop was of the view that implementation of international conventions was as important as accession, and it was thus necessary to assess the implications of accession to international conventions and understand how to implement them effectively;

- Assistance of UNECE and UNESCAP was valuable in progressing facilitation measures through accession and implementation of international conventions, and the workshop welcomed the offer of assistance from the two secretariats.
6. The Workshop recognized the central role of a national coordination mechanism in trade and transport facilitation. The Workshop recommended to establish a national trade and transport facilitation committee (NTTFC) with its purpose, structure, membership, chair (vice chairs), office, functions, work programme, meetings and financing arrangements as shown in Annex I.

7. The Workshop further recommended that the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism (MITT) and the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MOTC) consult with relevant agencies and submit final documents to the Government for approval. Furthermore, the Workshop recommended MITT and MOTC to help initiate functioning of the committee.

8. The Workshop welcomed the generous offer of GTZ of technical and financial assistance to initial arrangements of the committee and possible support to some activities of the NTTFC.

9. The Workshop also welcomed the offer of further assistance in the establishment and operation of the NTTFC from the UNESCAP secretariat in cooperation with the UNECE secretariat.
RECOMMENDATIONS ON NATIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM FOR TRADE AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION IN KYRGYZSTAN
As adopted at the Workshop

Name of Mechanism
☐ Name of the national facilitation coordinating body (NTTFC):
  • National trade and transport facilitation committee

Purpose of NTTFC
☐ To improve effectiveness and efficiency of international trade and transport through cooperation and coordination of all concerned Government agencies and the business sector and the implementation of appropriate facilitation measures

Structure of NTTFC:

Membership of NTTFC:
• Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism
• Ministry of Transport and Communications
• Ministry of Economy and Finance
• Ministry of Foreign Affairs
• Ministry of Internal Affairs
• Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Extreme Situations
- State Customs Inspectorate
- Border control services
- Drug control agency
- State Tax Inspectorate
- National institute on standardization and meteorology
- Central Bank
- Chamber of commerce and industry
- Association of Customs brokers
- Association of exporters
- Association of freight forwarders
- Kyrgyz ASMAP
- Kyrgyz Railways
- International Business Council (observer)
- Representatives of international donors community (observer)

- Transport facilitation sub-committee
  - Ministry of Transport and Communications
  - Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  - Ministry of Economy and Finance
  - Ministry of Internal Affairs
  - Ministry of Health
  - Ministry of Agriculture
  - State Customs Inspectorate
  - Border control services
  - State Tax Inspectorate
  - Drug control agency
  - Kyrgyz ASMAP
  - Kyrgyz Railways
  - Association of Customs brokers
  - Association of freight forwarders

- Sub-committee on coordination at border crossings
  - State Customs Inspectorate
  - Ministry of Transport and Communications
  - Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
  - Ministry of Economy and Finance
  - Ministry of Internal Affairs
  - Ministry of Health
  - Ministry of Agriculture
  - Border control services
• Drug control agency
• Chamber of commerce and industry
• Association of exporters
• Kyrgyz ASMAP
• Kyrgyz Railways
• Association of Customs brokers
• Association of freight forwarders

Heads of NTTFC:
- Chair of main body:
  • Deputy Prime Minister
- Vice Chairs of main body:
  • Deputy Ministers
  • MITT, MOTC, Customs
- Chair and vice chairs of sub-body:
  • MITT, MOTC, Customs
- Offices
  • Offices: within lead agencies
  • Head of main body office: (Deputy) Director General
  • Head of sub-body office: Director

Functions of NTTFC:
- Review and propose policy on facilitation of international trade and transport
- Monitor and assess flows of international trade and transport
- Identify bottlenecks in the entire process of international trade and transport
- Review and assess the adequacy of international trade and transport related infrastructure
- Study and propose measures on improvement of the efficiency of international trade and transport for decisions of the Government
- Coordinate to establish harmonized documentation and procedures for international trade and transport
- Identify, propose and follow through changes to border control procedures and documentation
- Coordinate and cooperate for implementation of Single Window clearances and Single Stop inspections at border crossings
- Promote application of ICT for trade/transport facilitation
- Monitor dissemination of information to trading and transport communities on documentation and procedures
- Review and propose policy on facilitation of international trade and transport
- Monitor and assess flows of international trade and transport
- Identify bottlenecks in the entire process of international trade and transport
- Review and assess the adequacy of international trade and transport related infrastructure
Study and propose measures on improvement of the efficiency of international trade and transport for decisions of the Government

Coordinate to establish harmonized documentation and procedures for international trade and transport

Identify, propose and follow through changes to border control procedures and documentation

Coordinate and cooperate for implementation of Single Window clearances and Single Stop inspections at border crossings

Promote application of ICT for trade/transport facilitation

Monitor dissemination of information to trading and transport communities on documentation and procedures

Office of NTTFC:

Terms of reference of the Office of NTTFC:

• Prepare the meetings of NTTFC
• Coordinate implementation of decisions and proposals of NTTFC
• Organize reviews and studies on facilitation issues as approved by NTTFC
• Coordinate and follow-up the preparatory work of the concerned member institutions
• Coordinate preparation of annual programmes, reports and budgets of NTTFC
• Coordinate and liaise for financial support to NTTFC’s activities
• Assist the concerned member institutions in organizing workshops/seminars/training courses
• Liaise with international organizations and financial institutions for facilitation programmes/projects in Kyrgyzstan

Work programme of NTTFC:

Work programme in 2007 (timeframe)

• Coordinate for WTO negotiation on trade facilitation
• Review and coordinate implementation of the ECO Transit Transport Agreement
• Review and coordinate implementation of the TRACECA programme
• Coordinate for negotiation of the SCO agreement on facilitation of international road transport
• Coordinate implementation of CAREC programme
• Review and propose accession to international facilitation conventions (list of conventions to be reviewed in 2007)
• Coordinate for implementation of joint clearances and inspections at border crossings (border crossing names)
• Review other key issues in international trade and transport (list of issues), and propose remedial measures to address the issues
• Organize workshops/seminars/training courses on trade/transport facilitation
• Prepare annual report for submission to the Government and distribution to all the members

Meetings of NTTFC:
Meeting frequency
- Regular meetings:
  - Main body: semi-annually
  - Sub body: quarterly
- Special meetings: at request

Meeting rules
- Chairing (chair, vice chairs or their representative)
- Secretary (office of NTTFC)
- Principle: consensus
- Regular meetings and special meetings
- Agenda
- Meeting documents (preparation and circulation) and new proposal for discussion (2 weeks)
- Decisions and proposals
- Meeting records (with office of NTTFC)
- Meeting reports (adoption)

Financing:
- Staff
  - Existing officials, part-time
- Administrative expenses
  - Existing office facilities/equipment
- Studies
  - Government, international, business sector
- Facilitation measures
  - Government, international, business sector
- Workshops/seminars/training courses
  - Government, international, business sector

Budget of NTTFC:
- Budget in 2007
  - Based on annual programme
  - Consultancy for specific tasks, such as reviews and studies (unit cost per work-month)
  - Workshops/seminars/training courses (unit cost per activity for Kyrgyz only)
  - Travel costs (domestic travel to border areas and international travel)
  - Other costs (included in departmental budgets of different agencies)

Government Support:
- Constitutional document: Government resolution
  - Objectives
  - Functions
  - Role (consultative/executive)
• Appointment of chair and vice chairs
• Rules of meetings (draft for adoption by 1st meeting)
• Decisions and proposals of NTTFC

Financial:
• No additional budgetary requirement for regular operations
• Facilitation projects through the facilitation body
• Workshops/seminars/training courses through the facilitation body

Next steps in establishing NTTFC:
• MITT and MOTC consult with relevant agencies
• MITT and MOTC submit final documents to the Government for approval
• MITT and MOTC help initiate functioning of NTTFC
• If necessary, further assistance from UNESCAP secretariat in cooperation with UNECE secretariat