



Statement
By
H.E .Mr. Bokharaie
Deputy Minister and Head of Road Maintenance
And Transport Organization
at
UNECE-Euro-Asian Transport Links Ministerial Meeting
Geneva- 19 Feb.2008

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Your Excellency, Mr. Chairman, Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Ministry of Road and Transportation of Islamic Republic of Iran , I would like to take the opportunity to extend my gratitude toward His Excellency “ Marek Belka” distinguished UN Under – Secretary General and Executive Secretary of UNECE and Mrs. Dr. Molnar, Director of the UNECE Transport division to hold this important meeting.

There is no doubt that holding such inter-continent meetings between Europe/Asia and subsequently holding expert sessions, which provide the possibility to study issues and give solutions to expand international transport and trade cooperation, is an inevitable option.

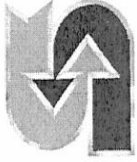
Surely, honorable ministers, deputy ministers and high level representatives of participating countries will confirm that any expansion in trade and transport fields between the two continents of Asia and Europe will depend on common and mutual benefits of the countries on the region.

Rational, synchronized and organized development of rail, road, river and air transport infrastructures of the countries located in world trade routes in the Europe/ Asia region from one hand and inter-continent coordination among regulations, provisions and executive procedures of trade, customs and transport on the other hand can be considered as two major fundamental factors to develop an inter-continent trade.

It is obvious that the transport fleet as well as free, safe and smooth traffic play a fundamental role in international trade from safety, security and sustainability points of view.

To reach to such a goal, it is obvious that EU countries as well as Asian countries should contribute in transport issues more than before, especially in Middle East and Central Asian regions.

To reach to such a required coordination, contributions like investment in infrastructural aspects of the transport sector, providing required supports to grant bank loans by internationally financial institutions, common investment in developing transport fleet, exchange of technical and professional knowledge as well as contribution in transport operations would be expected.



Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Road & Transportation
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Date:

A review on activities happened after independency of CIS countries indicates that many endeavors have been executed to reform regulations and provisions as well as transport and trade infrastructures in the territory of ECO countries among which the signature of TTFA Agreement (Transit Transport Framework Agreement) and also TTA (Transit and transport Agreement) can be addressed as the most important ones. Additionally, execution of numerous projects like construction of Mashad- Sarakhs - Tedjan Railway between Iran and Turkmenistan and/or Bafgh-Bandar Abbas Railway (as important links for more activation of the North – South Corridor of Iran), leading to a 1000 kilometers reduction in distance for connecting the Persian Gulf of Iran to the land-locked countries of Central Asia, can be enumerated as major infrastructural developments. In fact, construction of such a rail road for reducing distance among neighboring countries has resulted in benefit of all the countries in the region.

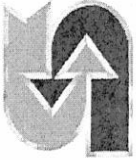
In addition, many infrastructural projects are under consideration which their finance by developed countries (specially European concerned countries), as well as equipping them with either standard or advanced facilities and also providing technical assistance is seriously expected.

Furthermore, I would like to draw the attention of European friends and UNECE to the necessity and importance of their support toward the establishment and development of regional networks to link Europe/Asia countries in a more convenient way leading to benefits of all. Among which I can refer to the North- South corridor established by Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of India and Russian federation - Islamic Republic of Iran has been appointed as depositary state- and including 14 countries as members. Similarly, the establishment of the East-West corridor which connects the East to West through Iran - Persian Gulf - Iraq - Syria and Mediterranean Sea zone, is under pursuance.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Islamic Republic of Iran as one of the most important countries in the region is satisfied with numerous capabilities on international transport affairs like a shorter path to access Asia and Europe countries and consequently a lower cost for carriage, compared with other candidate routes. Islamic Republic of Iran is a safe and high secure country for transit, satisfied with a wide network of road, rail , maritime, and air transport network, being cross road for connecting other international corridors of Asia and Europe as well as, be provided with benefits of multi-modal and/or inter-modal transport. On the other hand, Iran has undertaken immense investment on transport sector. While developing transport networks through national resources, our country as one of the important countries of the region have added on the volume of these investments during the recent years. So, my country not only can provide good facilities for transit countries but also can convince the landlocked countries.

In this regard, it seems to be necessary that international organizations welcome and support any investment on transport sector to develop infrastructures, either nationally or regionally/ internationally. It is obvious that all the countries in the region will benefit from these kinds of supports in transport sector investment. Of course, we did, and will do our best to provide a good network to facilitate transport services for all our neighboring/ regional



land-locked Countries; however a higher focus and support of developed countries could accelerate such a possibility.

In other word, it is obvious that supporting invest-able transport projects in transit countries might lead in supporting all developing or land –locked countries.

While confirming the principals and nature of the prepared draft by this meeting, I would like to submit the following proposals to draw the attention and consideration of all honorable colleagues:

- 1) Providing multilateral support on transit countries in transport sector especially on infrastructures and transport fleet would be necessary to satisfy the needs of land-locked countries and sustainable transport development in the region.
- 2) Visa elimination or facilitation for drivers and traders and also cost reduction, with respect to transport affairs, for traders as well as professional drivers of transit developing countries will be beneficial.
- 3) Elimination of current transport permit system or providing the annual transport permits, instead of “single trip” permission for transit developing countries' drivers along European territory would be a major step to facilitate the international trade.
- 4) Inviting transport authorities of transit countries to ECMT meetings or other sessions as observers in order to coordinate in developing policies and facilitation of transport and trade between the regions of Europe/Asia as well as contribution and coordination of new provisions with transit countries, would be advisable.
- 5) The recognition of mutual and multilateral barriers to expand multilateral transport and inter – continent trade via European resources might be taken into account till settling barriers.
- 6) Assistance of land-locked and transit countries to access to technical conventions such as ADR would be expected.

Thank You for Your Kind Attention

