



SEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (CAREC)

CAREC Press Conference

**Statement by
Xiaoyu Zhao
Vice President, Operations 1
Asian Development Bank**

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Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen: Today is a milestone for the [Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation program](#). After several years of partnership building, the program is set to launch fully into the implementation phase to make Central Asia a more integrated and cohesive region through economic cooperation.

I am pleased to report that Ministers from the eight CAREC countries (Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) today adopted strategy documents for working closely together in four key areas. Through these strategies for transport, trade facilitation, trade policy and energy, they will lay the foundations for a brighter future for their citizens.

Over the next few years, \$21 billion will be invested in the region's key transport and trade corridors. This is critical to connect Central Asian economies to each other and to the world. Deeper integration will bring with it a greater ability to attract even more investment, sustain economic growth and improve the lives of the poor.

We, at ADB, are particularly pleased with the adoption of a strategy for regional cooperation in the energy sector. Energy efficiency and energy security have risen to the top of the global agenda, and Central Asia has much to contribute to achieving these goals.

This 7th Ministerial Conference of CAREC has indeed been a productive one. With action plans in place, I believe we can envision a much changed Central Asian region by the year 2020. ADB is committed to working more closely with CAREC member countries and CAREC development partners to bring real benefits to the people of Central Asia and to the world.