

Speech by Representative of the Azerbaijan Republic's Delegation (Ministry of Transport) at the CAREC Workshop on the National Joint Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee and the Regional Joint Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee
May 26, 2009, Ulaan-Baator, Mongolia

Dear participants of the meeting!

Ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the Azerbaijan Republic's delegation let me greet you, participants of the CAREC Workshop on the National Joint Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee and the Regional Joint Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee, and thank the organizers for warm welcome and wish great success in work.

By developing the transport and trade cooperation in the region we primarily facilitate friendly relations and create conditions for full scale economic cooperation, development of free trade based on smooth and safe movement of passengers and cargo.

Azerbaijan lays emphasis on joint efforts aimed at improving transport communications and implementing the priority regional transport projects, particularly on improvement of competitiveness of international transport corridors, upgrade and development of infrastructure, security assurance, facilitation and reduction of dwell time of vehicles at border checkpoints. Special regard is given to improvement of the regulatory framework. For the last years a number of bilateral transport cooperation agreements were signed. Azerbaijan takes an active part in the projects aimed at developing infrastructure

of the main transport corridors “Europe – Caucasus – Asia” (TRACECA) and “North – South”.

Participation of Azerbaijan in the international project «North - South» will enable to increase cargo transportation volume and will facilitate additional attraction of shipments and improvement of competitiveness of this transport corridor. Unfortunately, construction of the missing railway section is significantly delayed that causes serious losses of transit flows through our countries.

For the last 5 years the country economy is developing at a rapid pace, with GDP having grown twofold. Special focus is made on development and improvement of the transport sector. The transport infrastructure is strengthened and modernized, the motor vehicles fleet is upgraded, international transport corridors is developed at the expense of government investments and loan funds provided by international financial institutes, including the Asian Development Bank.

To improve quality of transport services 4 international airports were reconstructed and put into operation and one new international bus station was built in our country for the last years with application of advanced technologies and innovation programs. These facilities may compete with best transport infrastructures in the region.

Currently, with application of advanced technologies major activities are carried out on construction and rehabilitation of international and national highways, including wide concrete roads from Baku to the Russian Federation border, as well as the road from Baku to the Iranian border, and from Baku to the

Georgian border. All construction and reconstruction activities are planned to be completed by 2011.

In continuation of major regional projects construction of the new junction railroad Baku – Tbilisi – Kars has started with view to provide new opportunities for creation of optimal routes in the region with access to Europe and Mediterranean. Currently, intensive construction works are going on in the Turkish and Georgian parts of the road that are planned to be completed by 2011. Under the same project it is planned to reconstruct the Azerbaijani railway from the Russian Federation border to the Iranian border (Yalama – Astara) and from Baku to the Georgian border (Baku – Beyuk-Kyasik). Reconstruction of the railroad will help to increase the through-flow rate, increase speed of trains, and will allow streamlining of power supply system, system, communications and management systems with application of advanced technologies. Dedicated reconstruction of railway infrastructure, upgrade of the rolling stock, implementation of the advanced management system are also planned.

In order to fit with the increasing transport volumes and create favorable conditions for development of multi-modal transport the construction of a modern international sea port is being designed to be implemented in 2010 – 2013. Location of the new port at the crossing of the main transit cargo transport routes along the transport corridors “West – East” and «North - South», as well as upgrade of the fleet of high capacity ships and ferries will transform this port into a large regional logistics center.

Due to the increasing role of the petrol ship fleet in the increasing cargo transportation in the Caspian sea 8 modern double-bottomed petrol ships with the

deadweight of 13 thousand tons complying with international standards and 2 ferries with capacity of 52 railway wagons were purchased.

To simplify the customs transport procedures and reduce the dwell time for vehicles at the customs border crossing points in Azerbaijan the Single Window system has been introduced into practice since beginning of this year.

On average the number of vehicles in the country has increased by up to 100 thousand cars causing big traffic problems in the capital which is typical for all large cities of the world. Therefore, the existing highways are reconstructed, and bypass roads, many fly-over bridges and pedestrian crossing are constructed in Baku city.

In addition, in order to ensure automatic management of traffic, optimize the routes of the city passenger transport, navigation, collection and analysis of information the intellectual city traffic management system is being introduced. The intellectual city traffic management system will cover not only the capital, but also the entire Apsheron peninsula.

Issues of warning, identification and suppression of crimes and terrorist actions threatening safe transport operation are crucial. Terrorism has become a transnational problem. Azerbaijan has also experienced error of terrorism in transport. For that reason we are particularly care about security of transportation of passengers and cargo.

Dear colleagues!

For the growing globalization of trade and economic relations there is a

need to accelerate integration of the national transport system into the international transport network.

The transport integration in the region should be primarily focusing on creation of necessary preconditions for diversification of transport activities, particularly development of the existing international corridors, elimination of barriers in the international transit process.

We recognize the following priorities for development of transport networks in the CAREC region:

- improving transport infrastructure in the region;
- developing the international transport corridors in the region with view to improve competitiveness;
- simplifying procedures and reducing the dwell time of vehicles at the border crossing points, helping to reduce the transportation costs;
- ensuring safe movement of vehicles in the territory of our countries;
- introducing the transport and logistics facilities and ensuring their interaction to provide effectiveness of multimodal transport in the region;
- ensuring the coordinated actions by the emergency rescue teams for transport, as well as protection of nature from negative impact of vehicles.

Dear participants of the meeting!

Emphasizing importance of the issues included in the agenda I hope that constructive decisions made at the meetings will encourage development of transport infrastructure, increase of multimodal transport and improve transit

capacity of our countries.

Finally, we are looking forward to making through joint efforts the transport sector of the CAREC region more effective, dynamically developing and safe for the sake of prosperity.

Once more, I wish all the participants of the meeting successful and efficient work.

Thank you!