

**5th Ministerial Conference on
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
20 October 2006
Urumqi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China**

**Opening Statement and Views on the CAREC Comprehensive Action Plan
Mr. Marat Urazbekov, Chairman, Railway Transport Committee,
Ministry of Transport and Communications
(Kazakhstan)**

Dear Chairman,
Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, let me express gratitude on behalf of the Kazakhstan delegation to the Government of the People's Republic of China, the Government of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Government, and to the Asian Development Bank for their hospitality and excellent organization of the conference.

Today's Fifth Ministerial Conference has been preceded by the great work both in the CAREC units and every CAREC member country.

Today nobody doubts that cooperation under the CAREC Program would bring benefits to its participants.

Reduction of trade barriers, more efficient development of the infrastructure and energy resources, and other forms of regional cooperation would allow to expedite our countries' development which in its turn would result in improving the peoples' living standards.

The Republic of Kazakhstan's location is beneficial as it is located in the center of the Eurasian continent.

Kazakhstan pursues the policy of expanding and deepening international cooperation as it has a lot to offer to its partners: rich mineral resources, industrial and agricultural products, and it has sufficiently developed transport infrastructure which allows both regional and continental transportation. The Kazakhstan's economic growth rate is high. However, if no measures are taken in the nearest future to further develop its infrastructure including the transport one, it may result in slowing its economic growth.

With this regard, in April this year, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan approved the Transport Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the year 2015.

Building effective and efficient transport infrastructure providing for the Kazakhstan products competitiveness, and maximum developing the country's transit transport capacity are the strategy's main objectives.

However, separate development of a country without regional cooperation is impossible. That is why, Kazakhstan is guided by the common CAREC goal – development through cooperation – and our Comprehensive Plan presented at the Ministerial Conference shall allow for the long-term coordination of our initiatives.

The Comprehensive Action Plan sets out goals, objectives and expected outcomes of the CAREC Program.

As it has been noted, the Comprehensive Action Plan's activities shall adhere to a two-level approach. However, we are supporting the proposals voiced earlier at the Senior Officials Meeting, that the CAREC Program should not disperse trying to implement a large range of issues but focus on implementing the first level activities. This would be development of transport and energy, and trade facilitation.

In conclusion, I would like to mention the CAREC units and its Secretariat operations. In the course of discussing the Comprehensive Action Plan, there were voiced many remarks and proposals, and practically all of them have been further elaborated and taken into account. And the paper presented today is an actual action plan for further expanding the regional cooperation scope.

We are supporting the action plan proposed and hope that it will be successfully implemented.

Thank you for your attention.

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