

First Meeting of the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation

10 – 11 February 2014
Phuket, Thailand

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The First Meeting of the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation was held at Phuket, Thailand, on 10 – 11 February 2014.

2. The Meeting was attended by the participants from Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Georgia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey and Viet Nam. Representatives from Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI) secretariat, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), International Road Transport Union (IRU) and Cambodia Freight Forwarders Association (CAMFFA) also attended the Meeting. List of participants and programme are attached as Annexes I and II.

3. The participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Russian Federation, Thailand, Turkey and Viet Nam made presentations on the current legal arrangements for international road transport in their countries, in particular: (i) status of their accession to international conventions; (ii) participation in subregional transport facilitation agreements; (iii) bilateral agreements on transport; and (iv) relevant domestic legislation.

4. The representatives of SAARC and IRU made presentations on their main activities related to international transport.

6. The Meeting highlighted the existence of multiple challenges and barriers related to practical operation of cross-border and transit road transport, as well as of difficulties in the

implementation of many important transport facilitation measures under the existing international, subregional and bilateral legal instruments.

7. The Meeting pointed out the importance of strengthening of international cooperation in UNESCAP region for tackling the existing challenges and barriers to ensure smoother operation of international road transport.

8. The Meeting recognized the importance of the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport for providing long-term vision and comprehensive approach to address challenges to international road transport in the region, including building a more effective legal regime.

9. The UNESCAP secretariat informed the Meeting on the status of initial activities on the establishment of the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation and discussed possible future activities of the Regional Network. The members of the Regional Network presented the outcomes of the comparative studies on the subregional agreements related to transport facilitation.

10. The Meeting supported the establishment of the Regional Network of Legal and Technical Experts on Transport Facilitation as an important practical tool to move forward to more effective legal regime for international transport and officially launched the Network.

11. The Meeting requested the UNESCAP secretariat to facilitate the exchange of contact data of the current network members by distributing the list of its current members.

12. The Meeting supported publishing reports on comparative studies on existing subregional agreements and conducting studies on relationship between international conventions and subregional agreements in 2014, using the capacity of the members of the Network, and providing recommendations.

13. The Meeting suggested the Regional Network to undertake a study to explore the possibility of developing a draft model for bilateral agreement on international road transport as a tool for member countries to use in the formulation of new bilateral agreements or in amending the existing ones.

14. The Meeting underlined the importance of involvement of experts from Customs and other transport-related authorities into the relevant activities of the Regional Network. For that purpose, the members of the Regional Network may help the secretariat promote it among the relevant experts in their countries to encourage their further involvement.

15. The Meeting proposed to use the Regional Network as a platform to further encourage accession to international conventions on transport facilitation, with a focus on conventions recommended in UNESCAP resolution 48/11.

16. The Meeting suggested utilizing the Regional Network as the platform for discussing issues pertaining to drafting legislation among the experts using the means of electronic communication.

17. The Meeting proposed undertaking surveys among the members of the Regional Network on: (i) main barriers and challenges to accession to international conventions, and efficient implementation of subregional and bilateral agreements related to transport facilitation; and (ii) requirements and priority areas for training activities on legal issues of transport facilitation.

18. The Meeting requested UNESCAP secretariat to provide secretarial support to the activities of the Regional Network.

19. The participants of the Meeting expressed gratitude to the Government of the Russian Federation for generous financial support and the UNESCAP secretariat for organizing the

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