

Regional Seminar on Development of Efficient and Effective Logistics Systems

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Hangzhou, China

**Opening Statement of
Mr. Dong-Woo Ha, Director, Transport Division**

*Ms. Tang Guomei, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation,
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*Mr. Guo Jianbiao, Director General, Transport Department of Zhejiang Province of
China*

*Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Regional Seminar on Development of Efficient and Effective Logistics Systems. At the outset, I would like to offer my profound gratitude to the Government of China for generous financial support for this Seminar. I am grateful to Ms. Tang Guomei, Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Transport of China, and Mr. Guo Jianbiao, Director General, Transport Department of Zhejiang Province of China, for joining us for the opening session despite their pressing duties. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Ministry of Transport and Transport Department of Zhejiang Province for excellent arrangements made for the seminar.

*Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

An efficient and effective logistics system plays a crucial role in supporting economic and trade growth, and developing regional production and distribution networks. However, the logistics industry in many developing countries in the region is still at an early stage of development. High costs and poor performance of the logistics industry have significant impacts on the growth potential of the economy, and hinder the contribution of the industry to economic and social development.

The importance of an efficient and effective logistics system, as an enabler of economic and

trade growth, and strengthened regional connectivity, has long been recognized by member countries in various inter-governmental meetings, and reiterated in the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, Phase II (2012-2016), which was adopted by the second Ministerial Conference on Transport convened in Bangkok in March 2012.

Under the Regional Action programme, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP) has been actively working with member countries to enhance the logistics capacity of the region, and I would like to highlight some of recent initiatives in this regard.

Infrastructure is an unquestionable requirement for transport and logistics systems, and one of the theme areas of work for the Regional Action Programme. As you are aware, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network have served as coordinated frameworks of member countries for planning, implementing and improving their road and rail infrastructure. In a way to promote the integration of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks into an intermodal system, last week in Bangkok, the ESCAP Commission at its 69th session adopted the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. The formalization of a regional network of dry ports through the intergovernmental agreement will further advance progress towards the realization of the vision of an international, integrated intermodal transport and logistics system for the region. I am please to inform you that the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports will be open for signature during the second session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport to be convened from 4 to 8 November 2013 in Bangkok. I look forward to your support for the signing of the agreement by your Governments.

Transport logistics is another theme area of the Regional Action Programme. ESCAP has been working with member countries to support their efforts to develop and implement transport and logistics policies, which promote efficient, reliable, safe and competitive logistics. In 2011, ESCAP published regional Guidelines for Minimum Standards and Codes of Professional Conduct for Freight Forwarders, Non-Vessel Operating Common Carriers and Multimodal Transport Operators, with the aim to provide governments and industry in member countries with a tool for formulating, reviewing and revising relevant regulations to enhance the professionalism and competitiveness of the logistics sector. A similar publication is being prepared for logistics service providers.

The logistics industry is characterized by the need for strong knowledge and skills, and therefore requires continuous professional development. ESCAP has been implementing capacity building programmes for the logistics industry through national training-of-trainers workshops and foundation courses for freight forwarders. Providing a sustainable training framework to build skills and support continuous learning however still remains challenging in many member countries. To help countries address this, ESCAP prepared last year a study on Establishing Sustainable Accredited Training Systems for Freight Forwarders, Multimodal Transport Operators and Logistics Service Providers in Asia and the Pacific Region. We look forward to working with member countries to use this study to further enhance training and capacity building in the logistics industry of the region.

Since 2007, ESCAP has also been organizing an annual regional forum and a meeting of chief executives of national associations for freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers to provide an enabling platform for the logistics industry in the region to share knowledge and experience, discuss emerging issues and promote development of their services.

***Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The main purpose of this Seminar is to provide you with an opportunity (i) to share experience on improvement of logistics performance, and development of integrated logistics information systems (ii) to share good practices for formulation of logistics policies and coordination of logistics stakeholders; and (iii) to discuss ways to increase regional cooperation for logistics development.

A logistics information system, based on state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure and software, is a key element of increased efficiency and reduced transactions costs of the logistics industry, with considerable impact on the international competitiveness of the industry. In this regard, you will have the opportunity during the field visit this afternoon to learn more about two logistics information systems: (i) the China Transport Logistics Public Information Sharing Platform (LOGINK), which is an information system jointly developed by the Ministry of Transport of China and the Transport Department of Zhejiang Province of China, with the cooperation of the private sector and (ii) the Northeast Asia Logistics Information Service Network (NEAL-NET), which has been implemented as an effort to establish a seamless logistics system among China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea and promote information sharing and unified logistics service standards.

*Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I believe that with your rich experience and strong commitment to developing an efficient and effective logistics system in the region, the seminar will have fruitful discussion and pave the road to increased regional cooperation in the logistics sector.

Finally, I wish you every success in your deliberations and a pleasant stay in Hangzhou.

Thank you.

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