



PRESS RELEASE



UN OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

**UN Under-Secretary-General Calls for International Commitment
To Establish Efficient Transit Transport Systems**

**UN Meeting in Kazakhstan Focuses on constraints of
Landlocked Developing Countries**

Almaty, Kazakhstan, 29 March 2005: The United Nations Under-Secretary-General and the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Anwarul K. Chowdhury, called on the international community to turn their attention to the transit problems facing Landlocked Developing Countries. “Landlocked developing countries continue to face difficult transit problems that reduce their competitiveness in the world market. It diminishes export profits, and inflates the prices of imported inputs for manufacturing,” he said today. He was addressing a 3-day High-Level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Sub-regional Organizations in the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

“By making trade expensive,” Mr. Chowdhury added, “high transport costs can’t help but have an enormous impact on the overall economic development of Landlocked Developing Countries.”

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Mr. Chowdhury stressed the need for a coordinated technical cooperation programme by relevant agencies, including the World Bank, World Trade Organization, World Customs Organization, UNCTAD, and regional commissions. He underscored the importance of developing common indicators to measure the progress in establishing efficient transit transport systems. “Such indicators should be few in number and easy in application,” he said.

At the opening ceremony of the High-Level Meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Landlocked Developing Countries, Somsavat Lengsavad of Lao PDR, Vice Foreign Minister and Coordinator of the Landlocked Group on Trade Issues, Ruben Ramirez Lezcano, Foreign Minister Kassymzhomart Tokaev of Kazakhstan, Transport Minister Kazhurat Nagmanov of Kazakhstan made statements.

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