



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic
and Environmental Activities**

Vienna, 8 November 2006

To: All OSCE Delegations
Partners for Co-operation
Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

Subject: **Road Map leading to the Transit Conference in Tajikistan
and background material**

Please find attached information on the Road Map leading to the Transit Conference in Tajikistan (autumn 2007) and background material in support of the Draft MC Decision on the Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

The Secretariat

**Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic
and Environmental Activities**

Vienna, 8 November 2006

Tentative 'Road Map'

leading to the 'Transit Conference in Tajikistan' (fall 2007)

During the 14th Economic Forum process the Government of Tajikistan offered to host in 2007 an OSCE Conference on the prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia till the year 2015. This proposal was supported by a joint statement of the delegations of Central Asian participating States at the Economic Forum (EF.DEL/51/06), as well as by many other delegations.

In order to bring the desired added value, such a Conference should be well prepared.

The ultimate goal would be to strengthen the co-operation with regard to transportation and transit issues across the region, taking into account the special needs of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), including in the framework of the Almaty Programme of Action (APA). The conference should also promote an increased co-operation between the public and private sectors as well as with the academic community and the civil society in managing transport and transit related issues. Furthermore it should lead to better coordination among International Organizations active in this field.

The Conference could be organized in the fall of 2007 (October), it should be focused and the topics to be discussed should be prioritised and well documented. The agenda and the outcome of the meeting should be linked to the planned mid-term review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

The whole preparatory process should be based on and stimulate the ownership of the countries concerned.

Possible follow-up activities should in principle fall into the responsibility of specialized International Organizations and countries in the region. The OSCE does not intend to get involved into technical activities as a result of this; however it may remain involved as a facilitator and continue to play a catalyst role by offering a platform for dialogue and cooperation among international actors as well as among its participating States. The OSCE Permanent Council may decide on appropriate actions based on the Conference's results.

The following timeline and preparatory work is envisaged:

1. OSCE/UN-OHRLLS Expert Workshop on the Specific Problems of Landlocked Countries, Vienna, 12-13 December 2006

Aim: to formally launch the preparatory process for the Conference and identify the most relevant sub-topics for the Conference.

The Workshop will be organized jointly by the OSCE and the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS). The OSCE Secretariat will provide conference facilities and funding for the participation of experts (if needed). In this regard, on 10 October 2006, the Special Envoy of the Chairman-in-Office Mr. Pierre Chevalier received a letter from Under-Secretary-General and High Representative Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury in which he expressed strong support for initiatives within the OSCE related to the issue of landlocked countries and emphasized the relevance and importance of the joint OSCE/UN-OHRLLS Expert Workshop.

This expert meeting will provide an opportunity for the exchange of information among experts from various regional UN agencies active in the field of transport and transit such as the UN-OHRLLS, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Also, it should benefit from the substantive expertise of relevant partner organizations such as World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), World Customs Organization (WCO), TRACECA, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), International Road Union (IRU), International Road Federation (IRF) and others. Following the workshop, such organizations could become associated to the preparatory process and the most relevant ones could co-organize the conference.

Participants in the workshop are expected to make presentations on their efforts or methodologies to measure the intensity of transit transport and how effective it is in supporting the overall economic development and the external trade performance of landlocked developing countries.

The participants will also exchange views on the transit transport situation in Central Asia with a view to identify relevant sub-topics to be included on the agenda of the Conference. The areas where work is still needed as well as the most useful indicators will be selected (to be further used during the preparatory process leading to the Conference).

The responsibilities and the further preparatory work will be divided among the OSCE and the co-organizers. A draft agenda is currently being shared by the partner organizations involved.

2. Mid-December 2006 to end of January 2007

As immediate follow-up to the **Expert Workshop**, the relevant international organizations (OSCE, UN-OHRLLS and others) will:

- design a more detailed agenda for the Conference;
- elaborate in greater details the next preparatory phase and develop concrete project proposals (consider commissioning studies to research institutions and organizing additional meetings in the region, only when deemed necessary and appropriate).

3. End of February 2007 (date and venue TBD)

Based on the outcome and recommendations of the Expert Workshop it could be considered to hold a Regional Meeting (in Central Asia) with the following goals:

- to engage the Governments in the region in the preparatory process (launching of the 'governmental component');
- to further engage OSCE Economic and Environmental Officers in the region;
- to engage research institutions and other regional actors (in accordance with the recommendations of the Expert Workshop).

4. January - July 2007 – Providing analytical background material for the Conference

Aim: contribute to the preparations for the Transit Conference in Tajikistan by providing solid background material and identifying and documenting in greater details on the needs and priorities.

- The **UNECE Transport Division** will provide further inputs based on the achievements of the Joint UNECE-UNESCAP Euro-Asian Transport Links Project (Phase I) carried out over the period 2002-2006. The final report on Phase I will be presented at the 4th Expert Group Meeting to be held in Thessaloniki, Greece on 21-24 November 2006.
- Further strengthening the ownership of the Governments in the region, by inviting them to share information on the steps already taken in the implementation of Almaty Programme of Action (APA) and by stimulating them to assess their own needs and plans for future action. **The Economic and Environmental Officers will be instrumental in this.**
- The possible launching of a 'business component', which would involve **business associations**, could also be envisaged. In that respect, during the first half of 2007, a Regional Business Round Table could be organized. Enhancing public-private cooperation was one of the recommendations put forward by the Economic Forum in Prague. Such an event should offer a platform for dialogue among representatives of the local, regional and international business community (including representatives of the US

Chamber of Commerce, Eurochambres and others) and provide a business perspective on the priorities and needs related to transportation and transit in the region. Here we could, among others, build on the work done by the US Chamber of Commerce, i.e. the recently conducted commercial feasibility study on “Land Transport Options between Europe and Asia” and the recently established Eurasia Business Platform (EBP) aimed at creating and maintaining dialogue with Eurasia's government and business decision makers.

5. July 2007 (place TBD) – Second Expert Workshop

In July 2007, a second Expert Workshop similar in scope with the one held in December 2006 could be convened; this could be done in order to consolidate the results achieved so far and to launch the final preparatory phase. This workshop could be organized in New York during the *Second Committee* deliberation of the progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action (APA). Here we could seek the possibility to organize a panel discussion at the Second Committee to present our proposal on indicators.

6. Second half of 2007 (October) - ‘Transit Conference in Tajikistan’

- **Aim:** take stock of the progress achieved in the implementation of Almaty Programme of Action (APA); contribute to the Almaty Programme of Action (APA) review process; identify ways and means to further improve the transit potential of Central Asian states;
- **Partners/Participants:** Central Asian landlocked states, their transit neighbours, development partners, relevant international, regional and sub-regional organizations (as identified throughout the preparatory stages);
- **Follow-Up:** it is expected that the Conference would generate follow-up activities. As stated before, the OSCE does not intend to get involved into technical activities as a result of the conference; however it might remain involved as a facilitator and continue to play a catalyst role by offering a platform for dialogue and cooperation among international actors as well as among its participating States.