



United Nations
**Sustainable
Transport
Conference**

14-16
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Beijing



**Side
Event**

CONCEPT NOTE: Digitalization of multimodal transport corridors and its contribution to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA)
(Joint side event by UN-OHRLLS, ICTD and TRACECA)

during

Second United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference (Beijing, China)

Virtual event: 13 October 2021

(8:00-10:00 pm, China Standard Time) (8:00am-10:00am New York Time)

Background

The development of multimodal transport corridors and digitalization of transit and border crossing procedures are crucial elements of sustainable connectivity for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), as it helps to reduce logistics costs for trade in these countries.

Under Priority 1 “Fundamental transit policy issues” of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), specific objectives have been recognized to significantly reduce time spent at land borders and significantly improve intermodal connectivity with the aim of ensuring efficient transfers from rail to road and vice versa and from port to rail and/or road and vice versa.

The Ashgabat Statement on Commitments and Policy Recommendations of the Global Sustainable Transport Conference adopted after the First United Nations Global Sustainable Transport Conference (26-27 November 2016, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan) recognizes that all stakeholders need to work together to put in place integrated multi-modal transport and transit systems and corridors that optimize the comparative advantages of each mode of transport to achieve sustainable transport of passengers and freight within and between countries, including through regional and sub-regional connectivity, integration, and harmonization of transport systems and frameworks. In this regard, there was recognition of the need to revive the ancient Silk Road with modern technology and advanced management of transit corridors.

The Political Declaration of the High-level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 adopted by the General Assembly on 5 December 2019 in its Resolution 74/15 welcomes the recent developments among landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours in building transit transport and economic corridors. Progress has been made in reducing travel time and corresponding costs along corridors, significantly reducing the time spent at borders and at intermodal points. The Political Declaration also encourages landlocked developing countries to strengthen their services sector and enhance their efforts to integrate into e-commerce and, in this regard, encourages international partners to provide capacity-building to assist landlocked developing countries in addressing gaps in legal and regulatory frameworks and developing digital skills.

The set of recommendations on digitalization of multimodal transport corridors through digital transformation of data and document exchanges in multimodal transport was presented by the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) during the 11th International Seminar on Trade and Transport Facilitation, ‘Digital transformation of multimodal transport using the UN/CEFACT reference data model (26-28 May 2021, Odesa, Ukraine)’.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the smooth functioning of corridors due to various factors including the closure of state borders, and the imposition of restrictions on the movement of people and goods. COVID-19 has highlighted the increased need for digital connectivity and technologies that allow for non-physical trade facilitation.

Objectives

The Side Event will be organized on the margins of Thematic Session 3 “Sustainable transport and connectivity, including rural areas and countries in special situations”. The specific objectives of the Side Event include, to:

- Highlight the necessity of digital transformation of multimodal transport corridors, which should be based on the latest technological developments, UN/CEFACT standards and recommendations and be implemented in close cooperation with the international organizations, governments, businesses community in the trading, IT and transport sector,
- Share experience in the area of development of new digital tools, incl. blockchain for transit along the multimodal transport corridors in LLDCs and other regions,
- Identify/Review areas where digital multimodal transport corridors’ support of the implementation of the VPoA can be enhanced;
- Provide a platform to discuss policies and measures that could help implement new digital tools for transport, transit and border crossing;
- Support landlocked developing countries in building institutional and sustainable human resource management aimed at digitalization of multimodal transport;
- Identify technical assistance and capacity building areas.

Format

The Side Event will feature presentations by panelists representing different stakeholders including representatives from UN, other international organizations, private sector and Member States. The panel presentations will be followed by an interactive dialogue with members of the audience.

Participants

Representatives from LLDCs, transit counties, development partners, development banks, UN system entities, other international and regional organizations and the private sector will be invited to attend.

Partners

This side event is being co-organized by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), the International Center for Transport Diplomacy (ICTD) and the Inter-Governmental Commission TRACECA.

Language

The side event will be in English.

Contact Persons

Igor Rounov: igor.rounov@gmail.com & Arslan Chaudhary: chaudhary4@un.org