

**2<sup>nd</sup> ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Transport Issues in North-East Asia  
(Online)**

*Transport Sector:*

*Cross-Sectoral Linkages towards Resilient Connectivity*

30 June 2021 (Wednesday, 4:00-6:00pm, ROK time)

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**Background**

The COVID-19 pandemic amplified the need to address disruptions in operational connectivity and supply chains involving several sectors. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including East and North-East Asia, have implemented transport-related policy measures ranging from keeping border crossing open for freight to ensuring transport health and safety as well as preserving smooth transport operations and processes through transport facilitation measures.<sup>1</sup> Customs-related and other trade facilitation measures implemented in response to the disruptions were also key in preserving seamless and safe transport of freight goods, to the extent possible. More importantly, the need for closer coordination among relevant agencies—both within each government and across countries—were reinforced, particularly at the height of the pandemic.

While governments have taken these measures to address the immediate adverse impacts caused by the pandemic, going forward, there are opportunities to build on lessons learned to strengthen pandemic preparedness and resilience of transport connectivity in line with sustainable development. For beyond the disruptions to operational connectivity, the COVID-19 pandemic also showed vulnerabilities to shocks of those involved including transport and trade operators, regulators and health inspectors, and border officials.

Countries in the East and North-East Asian subregion have pursued multiple approaches to achieve secure, efficient, and seamless trade and transport connectivity within and beyond national borders. More so demonstrated during the pandemic, appropriate implementation of trade and transport facilitation measures are mutually reinforcing and generated benefits are more optimal when measures are applied in a holistic and coordinated manner. Success in further improving the connectivity landscape in the subregion lies in deepening the coordinated approach between the key connectivity sectors of trade and transport.

It is in this context that the 2<sup>nd</sup> ESCAP-GTI Seminar on Transport Issues is being held. Through the years, transport and trade are dynamic areas of cooperation among member countries in the Greater Tumen Initiative region.<sup>2</sup> Transport sector, being an important component of connectivity, is well-positioned to engage other

<sup>1</sup> Policy responses to COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific (<https://www.unescap.org/covid19/policy-responses>).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.tumenprogramme.org/>

sectors and generate momentum for joint collaborations to address issues of mutual interests. At a broader context, cross-sectoral linkages align with the directions of expanding cooperation areas within the platform of GTI highlighted in several of its official meetings.<sup>3</sup> ESCAP, a regional intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific working on a broad range of sectors, works in partnership with GTI to promote sustainable economic development through regional cooperation and integration in line with the ESCAP-GTI Memorandum of Understanding.<sup>4</sup>

## Objectives and Scope

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic cut across sectors, hence, the focus on cross-sectoral linkages is timely as countries explore approaches on building back better towards more resilient connectivity. To this end, the Seminar provides a platform to:

- a. jointly engage GTI sectoral bodies on transport and trade issues of common interests;
- b. present perspectives on areas of coordination on subregional connectivity involving transport and trade facilitation; and
- c. identify approaches on how cross-sectoral linkages on connectivity can be strengthened in North-East Asia through the GTI platform.

The highlights of a subregional study on policy coordination between trade and transport facilitation in East and North-East Asia, developed by ESCAP ENEA Office, will be presented as a starting point of discussions. (Reference: Executive Summary).

## Participants

The Seminar, organized annually, is held in conjunction with GTI Transport Board meetings. In line with the aim for cross-sectoral engagements, aside from officials participating in the GTI Transport Board meeting, participation will also include other GTI bodies and stakeholders involved in transport and trade cooperation areas, including: Trade and Investment Committee (and its Customs Sub-Committee); NEA Local Cooperation Committee (and its NEA Logistics Sub-Committee); NEA EXIM Banks Association; NEA Business Association; and Research Institutions Network.

## Organization

The Seminar will be held on a virtual platform using MS Teams with technical support provided by ESCAP ENEA Office and GTI Secretariat. The Seminar will be conducted in English.

---

<sup>3</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> GTI Consultative Commission Meeting (<http://www.tumenprogramme.org/?info-769-1.html>); 19<sup>th</sup> GTI Consultative Commission Meeting (<http://www.tumenprogramme.org/?info-751-1.html>).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/20170901-GTI.pdf>

<b>Indicative Programme</b>	
4:00-4:15	<p><b>Opening Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav (Head, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office)</li> <li>• Mr. Andrey Smorodin (Director, GTI Secretariat)</li> <li>• Mr. EO, Myeong-so (Director General, Comprehensive Transport Policy Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Republic of Korea)</li> </ul>
4:15-5:15	<p><b>Session 1: Cross-sectoral Linkages towards Resilient Connectivity</b> Moderated by: ESCAP ENEA Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy coordination on trade and transport facilitation in East and North-East Asia (Ms. Varvara Krechetova, ESCAP Consultant)</li> <li>• Developments on transport connectivity (multimodal transport, Euro-Asian connectivity, COVID-related provisions for transport agreements) (Mr. Fedor Kormilitsyn, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP)</li> <li>• Digitalization in transport (electronic information exchange between railways) (Mr. Sandeep Jain, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP)</li> <li>• Developments in trilateral cooperation on transport and logistics (Ms. Keiko Koyoma, Economic Affairs Officer, Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat)</li> <li>• Regional value chains and logistics network in the Greater Tumen Region (Ms. Halin Han, Researcher, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy)</li> </ul>
5:15-5:50	<p><b>Session 2: Perspectives from GTI</b> Moderated by: GTI Secretariat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of insights and experiences from GTI sectoral bodies on how cross-sectoral linkages could be strengthened within the GTI framework</li> <li>• Mr. Hirofumi Arai (GTI Transport Expert Group)</li> <li>• Mr. Mikhail Kholosha (GTI Transport Expert Group)</li> <li>• Mr. Sergey Mikhnevich (GTI NEA Business Association)</li> <li>• Mr. Jae Gab Kim (GTI LCC/LSC)</li> <li>• Mr. Florian Miss (GTI Development Partner)</li> </ul>
5:50-6:00	<p><b>Closing Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Ganbold Baasanjav (Head, ESCAP East and North-East Asia Office)</li> <li>• Mr. Andrey Smorodin (Director, GTI Secretariat)</li> <li>• Mr. EO, Myeong-so (Director General, Comprehensive Transport Policy Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport, Republic of Korea)</li> </ul>