

REPORT

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# Expert Group Meeting on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in North and Central Asia

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7-8 June 2023,

Almaty and online

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in North and Central Asia was held on 7-8 June 2023 through a hybrid format in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and online on Zoom. The EGM was organized by the Subregional Office for North and Central Asia (SONCA) of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The objectives of the meeting were to (i) review progress and gaps in achieving specific objectives of the Vienna Programme of Action in North and Central Asia, (ii) address the impacts of multiple crises on Landlocked Developing Countries' progress and their National Development Strategies, (iii) provide expert opinions on national and subregional development needs and gaps in implementing key action areas of the Roadmap pertaining to transport and energy connectivity, clean energy, trade facilitation and digital trade. The final programme of the EGM is enclosed in Annex 1.

The EGM was opened by Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Officer-in-Charge, Subregional Office for North and Central Asia, ESCAP. The EGM was also attended by high-level participants such as H.E. Mr. Sohail Khan, Deputy Secretary-General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Mr. Arken Arystanov, Chairman of the Executive Board, Kazakhstan Agency for International Development.

The EGM was attended by a total of 70 participants (24 female, 46 male) from the following ESCAP member countries in North and Central Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. In addition, technical experts from multiple International and Regional Organizations, NGOs and academia also participated. There were 17 representatives from member States (5 female, 12 male), 12 participants from business and academia (4 female, 8 male), 26 participants from intergovernmental organizations, international and regional organizations (10 female, 16 male), and 15 participants from the United Nations (5 female, 10 male). The list of participants is enclosed in Annex 2.

79 per cent of meeting participants completed the post-event assessment. Based on the evaluation results, participants rated the meeting favourably (maximum rating of 5) – 4.77 for relevance, 4.70 for effectiveness, and 4.88 for efficiency. Participants appreciated that the topics of transport corridors and decarbonization were well discussed during the sessions. The focus of discussions on sharing country experiences and practical examples rather than theory was particularly praised by participants. Overall, participants agreed that the EGM served as a valuable opportunity to take stock of the progress achieved to date and discuss jointly future steps and actions to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA.

## 2. Substantive discussions and outcomes

### Session 1: Progress and challenges in implementing the Vienna Programme of Action and emerging risks and priorities

The session aimed to enhance awareness and understanding of the key challenges and opportunities for landlocked developing countries in North and Central Asia to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. The discussion reviewed the critical role of infrastructure development, the impacts of climate change and emerging risks, as well as the current financing gap and barriers to mobilizing the necessary financial resources.

It was noted that over the last few years, countries in the subregion have demonstrated progress in improving infrastructure, in particular, their connectivity. Prominent examples include greater quality of roads in Tajikistan and Azerbaijan, as well as large infrastructure projects such as the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway. Nevertheless, the implementation of such projects has not been uniform, and insufficient transport networks together with poor storage facilities are observed in the region. Overdependence on road transport remains and rail connectivity throughout the subregion is still underdeveloped.

Similarly, improvements in digital infrastructure have been uneven between and within countries in the subregion and the digital divide persists. Addressing this issue has become more urgent due to accelerated mass digital adoption, as countries are rapidly transitioning towards e-governance, e-financing, e-learning, and e-trade. For such transition to be beneficial and inclusive, it requires faster, reliable and less costly internet coverage and access. Investment in ICT infrastructure and connectivity should be accelerated, and digital literacy and skill could be strengthened further.

At the same time, development of energy infrastructure shows little progress. While all Land Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) in North and Central Asia have national policies that promote the use of renewable energy, the average share of renewable energy consumption has declined from 12.1% to 11.7%. Hydropower was identified as a feasible alternative to fossil fuels for countries such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, although more countries have included plans to substantially upscale their hydropower capacity in the coming decade. However, overreliance on hydropower could be harmful since water allocation requires balancing across its competing uses. Countries should reduce water stress by adopting more efficient infrastructure, for instance by retrofitting aged water pipes and infrastructure to reduce water losses, while also increasing investment into other sources of renewable energy through initiatives such as public-private partnerships.

During the session particular attention was given to climate change and associated risks, which present major challenges for LLDCs in the subregion, as they face growing food insecurity issues, extreme weather events, and limited access to international markets. Mitigating climate change and building-up climate resilience requires transformative climate action across all sectors, ranging from green investments and sustainable trade policies to renewable energy and green technologies.

On the other hand, access to financing was identified as a key prerequisite for the implementation of the VPoA. However, progress in mobilizing new sources of financing has been insufficient. This is partly due to high levels of external debt, which constrains external borrowing, while countries continue facing

challenges of deploying innovative financial instruments. Yet opportunities to expand financing through new instruments exist as demonstrated by Uzbekistan's issue of the Sovereign Sustainable Development Goals Bond.

During the Q&A session, participants highlighted the need to review action area 6.1 of the Roadmap on "Mitigation and resilience building to the adverse impact of climate change, natural disasters and environmental degradation", and address the global challenges of climate change in LLDCs in North and Central Asia; the necessity to incorporate VPoA objectives in all aspects of national priorities, instead of being part of country national development strategies; and the need to have uniform methodology and produce comparable data. Participants also highlighted the importance of building transit linkage between Central Asia and South Asia, and highlighted the role of comprehensive digital transformation to improve connectivity. Additional suggestions included concrete initiatives to facilitate structural economic transformation such as enabling policies to incubate high tech parks and designing favourable policies to attract foreign talents and human capital.

Overall, the session provided a comprehensive assessment of progress and challenges in implementing the VPoA in North and Central Asia. Equally, the discussion offered insightful lessons for countries in the subregion by encouraging them to improve transport networks, reduce digital divide, expand renewable energy sector, mitigate climate change, and scale-up financing. Among others, the need for greater cooperation at the regional level emerged as the running theme of the session. Whether to enhance transport and communications, achieve digital connectivity, address climate change, or obtain vital financing, participants throughout the session continuously highlighted the crucial role of cross-country collaboration in accomplishing the goals of the VPoA.

#### Presentation of ESCAP Report Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Seamless and Sustainable Connectivity

The session provided an overview of key challenges that Landlocked Developing Countries in Asia and the Pacific face in terms of strengthening regional cooperation for seamless and sustainable connectivity, drawing from ESCAP's 2023 report "Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report". The report examined the role of transport, energy and ICT connectivity in achieving sustainable development and a low-carbon, resilient economy, and provided examples of regional cooperation facilitating long-term transformation towards net-zero emission growth.

The session noted there were several common issues faced by LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, including limited regional connectivity, with widening gaps compared to other countries. The report highlighted the urgent need for accelerating transport, energy and ICT connectivity, through accelerating infrastructure development, scaling up multimodality, promoting transport corridor cooperation, developing political, technical and institutional standards required for power system connectivity, as well as promoting public-private partnerships (PPP). Asian LLDCs continue to lag behind the achievement of several SDGs, and especially Goal 13 on Climate Action. It was noted that LLDCs in North and Central Asia were seeing progress in digital connectivity, regional cooperation and capability building in the energy sector.

## Session 2: Enhancing transport connectivity for sustainable recovery and green growth in North and Central Asia (Priority 3)

The session was devoted to discussing transit corridors, regional connectivity, integrated multimodal transport systems and seamless connectivity between transport and trade networks. Discussions included environmentally sustainable and resilient transport development at regional level, strengthening partnerships for capacity-building, sustainable transport, data sharing, regional initiatives, and mobilizing additional financial resources and reducing financial costs for transport investment. Participants further explored ways to accelerate technology, innovation and digitalization to enhance transit and trade facilitation, and facilitate regional transport and transit procedures through harmonization and simplification of standards and procedures in implementing Priority 3 (international trade and facilitation) of the Vienna Programme of Action.

Transport had been seen as an essential factor in economic growth and achieving the SDGs. Key prerequisites for the implementation of the VPoA in the area of transport were connectivity and decarbonization. Transport connectivity in North and Central Asia was found to have been particularly affected by the impact of COVID-19, and the current geopolitical situation. Despite this, the growth of transit volumes was a sign of optimism that could reinvigorate and counteract stalled progress. It was highlighted that acceleration of greening transportation was needed. Freight had fallen behind passenger transportation in terms of decarbonization, while the importance of cleaner fleets and fuels was increasing.

North and Central Asia recorded some progress towards achieving the VPoA, such as growth in the length of the paved road network and transit traffic, rapidly increasing in TIR issuance, digitalization, eTIR, accession to e-CMR (in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan), innovation in data sharing, and digitalization. In addition, eco-friendly and efficient patterns of territorial transport also has improved in the subregion. Various opportunities were unfolding for multimodality, territorial integrity and geographical connectivity, while abundant natural resources and minerals also would support the development of transportation. Meanwhile, participants at the EGM shared examples of how North and Central Asia made progress on intra-regional and cross-regional cooperation on international corridors.

However, the session noted the need for additional efforts to cope with the impacts of different crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Some factors, such as limited financial resources, fragmentation in the freight industry, limited data on emissions and connectivity, different legal regimes for rail networks, missing linkages and old infrastructure, lack of coordination, or limited border crossing capacities brought major setbacks to progress in regional transport connectivity. There had been limited progress in achieving VPoA's priority 2 'Infrastructure development and maintenance', and priority 3 'International trade and trade facilitation' - many issues remained unresolved, including both infrastructural barriers and non-physical barriers, such as non-harmonized procedures, non-coordinated restrictive measures for transit, idle time at border crossing points, unstandardized weight, dimension, papers and procedures, complexity in legal regime, among others. Digitalization and risk-based priority lanes were seen as paramount for improving the efficiency of corridors.

Decarbonization efforts need to be prioritized to achieve green growth in North and Central Asia, particularly by using five levers: training, efficient logistics, efficient vehicles, alternative fuels and collective mobility. Future efforts should aim at supporting transport corridor cooperation, such as the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, the operationalization of the Kazakhstan-

Turkmenistan-Islamic Republic of Iran (KTI) rail corridor, and preliminary analysis and consultations on the Uzbekistan–Iran–India corridor. Additional suggestions highlighted the potential of scaling up multimodality and digitalization, enhancing the application of innovation, technology and information, upgrading to smart solutions for cross-border transport, harmonizing border crossing procedures, coordinating tariff policies and mechanisms for corridor management. International organizations were encouraged to pursue further actions to improve public-private partnerships, harmonize soft solutions, and coordinate in capability building and knowledge sharing. Engagement of academia, the scientific community, and higher education institutions also needed to be reinforced.

In conclusion, North and Central Asia showed great potential to achieve the Vienna Programme of Action. However, there were several factors that hindered progress. There was a strong consensus from the participants in this session, that key areas to support the subregion to achieve VPoA were a need to focus on connectivity and decarbonization. High quality (efficiency and safety), technology (in measurements, logistics, digitalization and multimodality), and human resources were also recommended as further areas to accelerate VPoA implementation.

### Session 3: Strengthening energy connectivity to enable sustainable and clean energy in North and Central Asia (Priority 4)

The session focused on green energy cooperation, clean energy transition, and digitization in North and Central Asia. It discussed the potential areas for cross-border coordination and multi-stakeholder participation, conditions and frameworks required to facilitate cross-border collaboration and investment in energy connectivity and the role of sustainable management of critical minerals. It also reviewed opportunities to modernize cross-border power connectivity infrastructure as a cornerstone for the regionally integrated and digitized energy system, and solutions to enable access to renewable energy to implement Priority ii and iv of the Vienna Programme of Action.

Increasing cross border power connectivity yields economic benefits, ensures energy security, and promotes sustainability in North and Central Asia. Although power connectivity is less integrated and multilateral compared to the past, the region has a strong foundation to take advantage of technical harmonization. Regulatory collaboration plays an important role in overcoming obstacles and enabling effective connectivity by sharing information and setting standards, transferring best practices and lesson learned, settling cross-border disputes and cost-sharing, and harmonizing incompatibilities. Transit countries play an important role to provide interregional connectivity between LLDCs in North and Central Asia and developed economies. The development of the EUR 2.1 billion 1195km and 1000MW Georgia-Romania Black Sea Submarine Cable Project serve as critical examples to enable power transmission between Europe, South Caucasus, and Central Asia and increase transit opportunities between regions. To help countries align power system connectivity efforts with sustainable development, ESCAP is initiating a new project looking at how to develop a common regional electricity market among the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) countries.

Globally trends suggest that 90% of all decarbonization in 2050 would involve Renewable Energy (RE), which entails a rapid increase of renewables: installed power capacity for wind needs to increase by 10-fold, solar photovoltaics by 30-fold, and electric vehicle by 250-fold from the 2021 baseline. Addressing the challenges of ensuring environmentally and socially sustainable long-term supply including in the region requires technological innovations in the chemistry process to reduce or eliminate material

demands and in mining, processing, and recycling to advance efficiencies and sustainability. Third-party Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) verification and stakeholder collaboration must be in place to ensure benefits to local communities for the supply of critical raw materials.

While RE is unevenly distributed around the world, countries in North and Central Asia display large potential for hydropower, solar, and wind energy. Ambitious renewables target consistent with National Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Long-Term Strategies (LTS) offers a strong business case for scaling up RE investment in LLDCs. At the subregional level, North and Central Asia has a total of 21.5GW installed capacity for hydropower and set ambitious targets to scale up hydropower electricity, with significant progress achieved particularly in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Georgia and Kazakhstan.

However, considering the environmental and social impact of hydropower, hydropower sustainability standards can enable investor and developers to identify, prevent and mitigate ecological damage and social problems. Hydropower standards and certifications in line with internationally recognised environment safeguards can enable access to financing to prepare clients to meet lender requirements and reduce risk barriers for investment. By having adequate documentation and processes in place, project sponsors can satisfy the ESG risk framework of lenders, investors, and securing electricity supply contracts with consumers committed to purchase renewables – such as the RE100 Group.

As typical in the subregion, countries such as Kyrgyzstan are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Deteriorating energy infrastructure represents an additional challenge, as it can result in lower quality of produced energy or an increase in energy prices. On the other hand, the uptake of renewable energy (RE) capacity in the country has not matched the parallel increase in the production and consumption of oil . Although several RE incentives are in place in Kyrgyzstan, electricity price remains below production costs due to concerns about affordability.

In conclusion, the discussion stressed the importance of transboundary cooperation on power grid interconnection, water-energy coordination and enhanced regional and interregional energy trading. The session noted the importance to improve coordination of national policies and regulations, enhanced institutional capacities, and setting clear targets and strategies. Participants recommended creating a level playing field to lower barriers, streamline investment procedures and energy tariff reforms, implement auctions for large capacities. The discussion pointed a common interest to gradually establish country, regional and continental, and global energy interconnection. Many of these potential global power lines passing through North and Central Asia, making the subregion vital for connecting countries and regions.

#### Session 4: Accelerating trade facilitation and digital trade in North and Central Asia (Priority 2)

The purpose of the session was to explore long-term strategies to adapt trade facilitation in times of multiple crises. Session participants assessed the state of readiness for cross-border paperless trade in the subregion, and discussed the status, trends, emerging issues and opportunities to accelerate trade facilitation in the subregion. This included identifying bottlenecks in trade procedures, exploring innovative digital solutions, and promoting inclusive trade with a focus on small-and-medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and women's participation.



Speakers noted that in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis and due to the impacts of the Ukraine crisis, the subregion was now facing high inflation amidst a global economic slow-down, as well as transport and trade interruptions leading to significant cost increases. In this context, further development of digital trade and e-commerce were becoming both a necessity and an opportunity for countries in North and Central Asia. All countries in the subregion (though to differing degrees) had progressed in implementing various aspects of trade facilitation during and after the COVID-19 crisis, including WTO-aligned, digital and sustainable trade facilitation measures. One important aspect was improving laws and regulations for cross-border paperless trade and electronic transactions as part of a wider digital transformation.

Among the challenges hampering the increase of trade volumes across the subregion, speakers identified underdeveloped hard and soft infrastructure, limited resources, weak interaction and low operational activities between parties. Additional barriers included the low consumption rate in the subregion, and a historically grown structural orientation of transport networks towards the Russian Federation. Most of the envisaged economic and transport corridors crossing the subregion from North to South and East to West were lacking harmonized legislation between countries, had neither an end-to-end railroad tariff nor an end-to-end logistical operator, and suffered from limited through-put capacity for road and railroad transportation. Logistics costs remained high, which call for reforms to increase efficiency in market structure, enhance digital applications and improve clearance at destination. Regarding implementation of specific groups of measures, the biggest challenge was implementing cross-border paperless trade as it necessitated agreement between two or more countries. Meanwhile, lack of access, affordability and digital literacy were the main barriers to internet use hampering digital trade facilitation, though there was large divergence in the subregion. Moreover, traditional cross-border trade procedures represented disproportionate barriers for small-scale and women traders due to their lack of transparency, high complexity and costs, as well as gender-specific safety risks.

Speakers stressed that Central Asia had the potential to be an important trade and logistic hub bridging China, Europe, South and Southwest Asia. A significant increase in trade turnover was possible by building economic corridors and logistical hubs with quality infrastructure and optimized railroads and aviation. According to an ADB study<sup>1</sup>, improving transport infrastructure quality by one percent in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan could increase exports by over nine and imports by over five percent. There was clear evidence that trade process digitalization and cross-border paperless trade would reduce trade costs significantly, while also improving compliance with regulations and reducing environmental burdens. In North and Central Asia, Armenia signed the UN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific agreement in 2017, while Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan have accessed it between 2018 and 2022. Meanwhile, it was noted that digital and gender-responsive trade facilitation protected women from security risks and discrimination, saved time, and provided easier access to information and qualified customs brokers.

The speakers reviewed several important international standards, tools, and best practices that enabled effective cross-border trade facilitation. The UN Global Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation Survey of the UN regional commissions and UNCTAD provided important data on WTO trade facilitation measures, as well as digital, sustainable and crisis-linked trade facilitation. Countries in North and Central Asia that had not done so yet were encouraged to join the UN Framework Agreement on Facilitation of Cross-border Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, as an inclusive regional platform to signal high-level

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/636651/adbi-wp1184.pdf>



commitment to digital trade transformation and enable cross-border cooperation. Additional initiatives included the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda (CITA), which aimed at building a pipeline of projects, mobilizing funds and improving regional border services. The ADB and CAREC also promoted Economic Corridors, implementation of transit schemes, and Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM) for various trade and transit facilitation indicators. The ADB-CAREC Digital Trade Initiative featured national single windows and helped countries adapt enabling policies and standards to harmonize interoperability, ensure innovative solutions for payments structures, address logistic gaps, set up data centers and support e-Commerce particularly among SMEs. Kazakhstan was participating in a GIZ-supported trade facilitation project and the USAID platform for trade in Central Asia supporting digitalization of trade operations and transfer to paperless work.

Overall speakers called for North and Central Asia countries to engage in deeper regional cooperation through a collective effort to harmonize and build mutual trust, align with international conventions and best practices and to accede the WTO and other international instruments. For digital trade facilitation to take off, it was stressed that countries needed to establish the backbone networks, i.e. internet exchange points and data centers. Also, countries needed to enhance their capacity to enforce regulations, particularly in terms of communication and dispute resolution. Empowering women through gender responsive trade facilitation was seen as important for the VPoA to be inclusive. It was proposed to include two or three concrete indicators or reforms into the VPoA follow-up document and to consider targeted financial support and multi-stakeholder discussions to move gender issues forward. Speakers expressed wishes that present development partners would join forces on capacity building of government agencies and think tanks in North and Central Asia to strengthen institutions' expertise on trade facilitation.



## Annex I: Final Programme

### 7-8 June 2023 Almaty, Kazakhstan and Online

Time	Sessions
<b>Day 1, 7th June 2023</b>	
09:00 – 09:15	<b>Opening session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Opening Remarks</b> by Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Officer-in-Charge, Subregional Office for North and Central Asia, ESCAP</li></ul>
09:15 – 09:30	<b>Group Photo</b>
09:30 – 10:30	<b>Session 1: “Progress and challenges in implementing the Vienna Programme of Action and emerging risks and priorities”</b> <b>Part I</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Officer-in-Charge, Subregional Office for North and Central Asia, ESCAP <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• H.E. Mr. Sohail Khan, Deputy Secretary-General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization</li><li>• Mr. Arken Arystanov, Chairman of the Executive Board, Kazakhstan Agency for International Development “KazAID”</li><li>• Ms. Savia Hasanova, Executive Director, “PA The Investment Round Table”</li></ul>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:00 – 12:00	<b>Part II</b> <b>Moderator:</b> Ms. Asel Turgunbaeva, Senior Specialist of International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyzstan <b>Speakers:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Dulguun Damdin-Od, Executive Director, International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITLLDC)</li><li>• Mr. Vladimir Grebnev, Climate Change Specialist, the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia, CAREC</li><li>• Ms. Asel Turgunbaeva, Senior Specialist, Ministry of Economy and Commerce, Kyrgyzstan</li></ul>

12:00 – 13:30	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
13:30 – 13:50	<p><b>Presentation</b> of ESCAP Report <i>Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Seamless and Sustainable Connectivity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Oliver Paddison, Chief, Section on Sustainable Development and Countries in Special Situations, Office of the Executive Secretary, ESCAP</i></li> </ul>
14:00 – 15:00	<p><b>Session 2: “Enhancing transport connectivity for sustainable recovery and green growth in North and Central Asia”</b></p> <p><b>Part I</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina Ducrest, Chief of Section, Transport Division, ESCAP</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina Ducrest, Chief of Section, Transport Division, ESCAP</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Alexander Zabojev, Head of Center for Integration Studies, Eurasian Development Bank (EDB)</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Zeinolla Kalymbetov, Program Officer, Directorate for Transport and Communications, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)</i></li> </ul>
15:00 – 15:30	<b>Coffee break</b>
15:30 – 16:30	<p><b>Part II</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Michiko Enomoto, Officer-in-Charge, Subregional Office for North and Central Asia, ESCAP</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Tatiana Rey-Bellet, IRU Director, TIR &amp; Transit, International Road Transport Union (IRU)</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Sergey Andreev, Counsellor, Coordinating Council for Trans-Eurasian Transportation (CCTT)</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. John Pritchard, Transport Researcher and Analyst, International Transport Forum (ITF)</i></li> </ul>
16:30 - 16:45	<b>Evaluation questionnaires</b>

Day 2, 8th June 2023	
10:00 – 11:05	<p><b>Session 3: “Strengthening energy connectivity to facilitate the transition to clean, sustainable and renewable energy in North and Central Asia”</b></p> <p><b>Part I</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Zurabi Arveladze, Head of Legal Provision, Division of Energy Projects, Energy policy and investment Projects Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Matthew David Wittenstein, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Energy Division, ESCAP</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Joong Yeop Lee, Programme Officer, Country Engagement and Partnerships, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Ms. Amina Kadyrzhanova, Sustainability Specialist, International Hydropower Association (IHA)</i></li> </ul>
11:05 – 11:45	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:45 – 12:45	<p><b>Part II</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Mr. Zurabi Arveladze, Head of Legal Provision, Georgia</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mr. Zurabi Arveladze, Head of Legal Provision, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia</i></li> <li>• <i>Ms. Tatiana Vedeneva, President, Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Development (CREEED), Kyrgyzstan</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Xupeng Chen, General Director of Office of East Europe-Central Asia, Global Energy Interconnection Development and Cooperation Organization (GEIDCO)</i></li> </ul>
12:45 – 14:15	<b>Networking Lunch</b>

14:15 – 15:15	<p><b>Session 4: “Accelerating trade facilitation and digital connectivity in North and Central Asia”</b></p> <p><b>Part I</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Nazym Shalbayeva, Deputy CEO, Center for Trade and Economic Strategies, Kazakhstan</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Lyaziza Sabyrova, Director, Regional Cooperation and Operations Coordination Division, Central and West Asia Department, and Mr. Roman Mogilevskii, Senior Economist Asian Development Bank (ADB)</i></li> <li>• <i>Ms. Aida Karazhanova, Economic Affairs Officer, Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, ESCAP</i></li> </ul>
15:15 – 15:45	<b>Coffee break</b>
15:45 – 17:00	<p><b>Part II</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <i>Ms. Lyaziza Sabyrova, Director, Asian Development Bank</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ms. Nazym Shalbayeva, Deputy CEO, Center for Trade and Economic Strategies, Kazakhstan</i></li> <li>• <i>Mr. Yann Duval, Chief of Section, Trade, Investment &amp; Innovation Division, ESCAP</i></li> <li>• <i>Ms. Alina Fetisova, Trade Facilitation Programme Officer, Division of Market Development, International Trade Centre (ITC)</i></li> </ul>
17:00 – 17:15	<b>Evaluation questionnaires</b>
17:15 – 17:30	<b>Closing Remarks</b>

## Annex II: List of Participants

### **MEMBER STATES**

#### **ARMENIA**

**Mr. Davit Grigorian**

Head of Multilateral Economic Cooperation Division, Department for Multilateral Policy and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia

#### **AZERBAIJAN**

**Ms. Khatira Mehdiyeva**

Head of Division, Legal and International Relations Department  
Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan

**Ms. Shamsiyya Guliyeva**

Advisor, Department of Transport Policy  
Ministry of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan

#### **GEORGIA**

**Mr. Zurabi Arveladze**

Head of Legal Provision  
Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia

#### **KAZAKHSTAN**

**Ms. Nazym Shalbayeva**

Deputy CEO  
Center for Trade and Economic Strategies

**Ms. Togzhan Smagulova**

Expert of the Trade-economic Development Department  
Ministry of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan

#### **KYRGYZSTAN**

**Ms. Tolkunai Taalaibekova**

Head of Investment Promotion Department  
National Investment of Agency

**Ms. Asel Turgunbaeva**

Senior specialist of International cooperation division  
Ministry of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic



**Mr. Nurmat Musabekov**  
Chief Specialist of the Transport Department  
Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic

#### **RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**Mr. Egor Alimov**  
Assistant to Permanent Representative of Russia to ESCAP

#### **TAJIKISTAN**

**Mr. Karomatullo Mahmudov**  
Chief Specialist of the State Institution  
Center for the Implementation of Public-Private Partnership Projects of the State  
Committee for Investments and State Property Management

**Mr. Azam Usmonov**  
Head of the Department of Digitalization of the transport industry  
Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Tajikistan

**Mr. Suhrob Yokubzoda**  
Director of Digitalization Center  
Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Tajikistan

#### **TURKMENISTAN**

**Mr. Serdar Charyyev**  
Deputy Head of the Department for the Development and Finance of Economic  
Industries  
Ministry of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan

#### **UZBEKISTAN**

**Mr. Fakhriddin Sultanov**  
Consul-General and Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to ESCAP

**Mr. Nuriddin Mamatkulov**  
Consul and Deputy Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to ESCAP

**Mr. Natnicha Parichatnon**  
Assistant to the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to ESCAP

#### **UNITED NATIONS**

**UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**



**Mr. Oliver Paddison**

Chief

Section on Sustainable Development and Countries in Special Situations  
Office of the Executive Secretary

**Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina Ducrest**

Chief of Section

Transport Division

**Mr. Matthew David Wittenstein**

Chief of Section

Energy Division

**Ms. Aida Karazhanova**

Economic Affairs Officer

Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction  
Division

**Mr. Yann Duval**

Chief of Section

Trade, Investment & Innovation Division

**Ms. Heather Lynne Taylor-Strauss**

Economic Affairs Officer

Trade, Investment & Innovation Division

**Mr. Benjamin Mccarthy**

Economic Affairs Officer

Trade, Investment & Innovation Division

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