

CAPACITY BUILDING ON RAIL CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND NORTH AND CENTRAL ASIA - AZERBAIJAN'S PERSPECTIVE

High-Level Meeting on Deepening Digitalization of International Rail Transport in Asia-Pacific

13-15 May 2025, Xi'an, China

AZERBAIJAN'S ROLE AS A TRANSIT HUB

Geostrategic Location

- The **East-West** (China–Europe) and **North-South** (Russia–Iran–India) routes
- Critical part of the **Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)**, also known as the **Middle Corridor**

Modern Rail Infrastructure Development

- **Baku–Tbilisi–Kars (BTK) Railway**
- **Alat Port and Logistics Hub**

Multilateral and Regional Cooperation

- Regional initiatives: **OSJD, TRACECA, ECO**
- Partnerships with **UNESCAP,** and other international institutions

Capacity Building Contributions

- Can serve as a training and demonstration center
- Can host regional workshops and technical exchange programs

EXISTING RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **National Rail Network (Operated by ADY – Azerbaijan Railways)**
  - Over **2,100 km** of railway lines, mostly electrified and standard gauge (1,520 mm, compatible with CIS countries)
- **Baku–Tbilisi–Kars (BTK) Railway**
  - Links **Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkiye**
  - Initial capacity: **6.5 million tonnes/year**, with plans to increase to **17 million tonnes/year**
- **North–South International Transport Corridor (INSTC)**
  - Connects **Russia, Azerbaijan, Iran**, and onwards to **India**
  - Key component: the **Astara–Rasht–Qazvin line**, linking **Iran and Azerbaijan** by rail.
- **Port of Baku (Alat) and Rail Linkages**
  - Designed to handle **up to 15 million tonnes of cargo/year**, with expansion capacity to **25 million tonnes**
- **Integration with the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)**
  - Transit link within TITR, facilitating cargo from **China to Europe** via **Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, and the BTK.**



CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

- **Institutional Capacity Building & Training**
  - Regional and International Cooperation Platforms
  - ADY Training Center (Azerbaijan Railways)
  - Knowledge Exchange Programs
- **Digital and Technological Modernization**
  - Railway Digitalization Projects
- **Corridor-Level Capacity Enhancement**
  - Trans-Caspian and Middle Corridor Development
  - Standardization & Gauge Transition Management
- **Institutional and Policy-Level Initiatives**
  - Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Development
  - Customs and Border Facilitation Reforms
- **Hosting and Supporting Regional Workshops**

TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS

Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR / Middle Corridor)

- Facilitates cargo movement from China (which aggregates cargo from SE Asia) to Europe via the Caspian Sea and South Caucasus

Baku–Tbilisi–Kars (BTK) Railway Enhancement Projects

- Linked to broader **China–Central Asia–Caucasus–Europe** freight flows, which carry goods originating in SE Asia.

CAREC Railway Strategy and Digital Corridors

- Technical frameworks are also promoted in the **CAREC corridors** that extend toward **South-East Asia via China**

UNESCAP Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) Network Projects

- Workshops and capacity building on digital rail freight, time-table coordination, and regulatory frameworks

Customs and Border Integration with Regional Partners

- Technical alignment of single window customs systems

PROPOSALS FOR REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Establishment of a Regional Rail Connectivity Training Hub	• Establishment of a Regional Railway Capacity Building Center • Provide hands-on training and technical workshops
Joint Development of Digital Transport Corridors	• Co-develop digital rail corridors with Southeast Asian and Central Asian partners
Regional Platform for Harmonization of Technical Standards	• Collaboration on technical working group
Expansion of Unified Tariff and Scheduling Agreements	• Expansion of the **TITR model** of unified tariffs and harmonized timetables
Institutional Twinning Programs	• Launching **"Railway Twinning Initiatives"** between ADY and railway operators from SEA, Central Asia and other countries

CONCLUSION



Azerbaijan is committed to regional capacity building



Open for collaboration on training leadership, digital corridor partnerships, technical harmonization, unified tariff agreements and institutional cooperation

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION