

Declaration of the ASEM Symposium on Eurasia Transport and Logistics Network

SEOUL DECLARATION

1. Background

In accordance with the Chair's Statement of the 10th ASEM Summit (ASEM10) held in Milan, Italy in October 2014, and the Riga Declaration of the 3rd ASEM Transport Ministers' Meeting (ASEM TMM3) held in Riga, Latvia in April 2015, the ASEM Symposium on Eurasia Transport and Logistics Network was held from September 9th to 11th in Seoul, Republic of Korea, with the participation of ASEM Partners (ASEM Member Countries, EU and ASEAN Secretariat), non-ASEM Member Countries of interest in Eurasia, international organizations and institutions, and industry and academia in the areas of transport and logistics.

2. Chair's Statement

We, the Heads of Delegations of ASEM Partners assembled herein under the leadership of Republic of Korea in;

Seeking to introduce an effective cooperative mechanism for Eurasia's integrated transport and logistics network

Have agreed to:

- (1) RECOGNIZE the need to establish an integrated transport and logistics network for strengthened connectivity between Asia and Europe, as proposed by President Park Geun-hye of Republic of Korea, adopted in the Chair's Statement of the ASEM10, and stipulated by the Riga Declaration adopted at the ASEM TMM3;
- (2) AFFIRM the indispensable role of transport as a promoter of economic growth and sustainable development by facilitating connectivity between Asia and Europe, ensuring a smooth flow of goods and services, as well as enhancing people-to-people and business-to-business linkages;
- (3) ACKNOWLEDGE the various challenges including security and safety issues currently faced by the transport sector regarding the connectivity between Asia and Europe, and the need for respective countries of these two continents to cooperate in order to reinforce the transport network by enhancing various transport modes, such as railways, roads, aviation, shipping and intermodal transport to overcome these challenges;
- (4) TAKE INTO ACCOUNT new innovative and sustainable solutions that can efficiently cope with growing trade volumes between Asia and Europe and facilitate the emergence of inland ports, airports and logistics centers;
- (5) SUPPORT the need to improve cross-border cooperation between different institutions, particularly in relation to quarantine and customs procedures, and to address administrative bottlenecks of Eurasia's logistics system;
- (6) EMPHASIZE the crucial role of the private sector in the development and innovation of logistics and transport services in public-private partnership and its positive contribution to the development of transport infrastructure in Asia and Europe, the willingness of the ASEM Partners to actively cooperate with non-ASEM member countries located on Eurasian corridors, as well as the importance of international financial organizations in seeking the optimal investment and funding methods;

And, in line with the Chair's Statement of the ASEM10 and the Riga Declaration of the ASEM TMM3,

Have decided to:

(7) Agree to institute - as proposed in the Riga Declaration of the ASEM TMM3 – a rotating ASEM TMM Coordinating Partner and strengthen the capacity of the ASEM InfoBoard to serve as a virtual platform to ensure the continuity of the ASEM TMM framework;

Coordinating Partner

(7-1) The Coordinating Partner, serving under such status for a definite time period before and after the ASEM TMM, is the partner hosting the ASEM TMM;

(7-2) The Coordinating Partner will be responsible for hosting and organizing the ASEM TMM, organizing the ASEM Transport Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) to be held in the intermediate year between the biennial ASEM TMM, as well as coordinating the organization of the Eurasia Expert Group meeting. During the SOM, the next ASEM TMM venue will be chosen and the role of the Coordinating Partner will be passed over to the selected partner which will be chosen to host the next ASEM TMM;

(7-3) The Coordinating Partner, in close cooperation with the Asia-Europe Foundation, ensures timely publishing of topical information regarding the ASEM TMM and related events and matters in the official ASEM information platform – www.aseminfoboard.org;

(8) PROPOSE to establish a Eurasia Expert Group mandated to ensure continued discussion and recommend measures on cooperation in enhancing Asia-Europe connectivity within the framework of the Action Plan on Facilitation of Movement of Goods and People between Asia and Europe approved at the ASEM TMM2 held in Chengdu, China in October 2011;

Eurasia Expert Group

(8-1) The Eurasia Expert Group might consist of three working groups of high level officials and specialists from ASEM Partners set up within the framework of the ASEM:

- a) Working Group on Transport Modes and Logistics;
- b) Working Group on Transport Facilitation and Cross-border Cooperation;
- c) Working Group on Finance;

(8-2) If necessary, the Eurasia Expert Group has the right to organize Task Forces in dealing with specific subjects;

(8-3) The Eurasia Expert Group will closely cooperate with the existing ASEM working groups such as the ASEM Customs Working Group;

(8-4) The Eurasia Expert Group meetings could operate in collaboration with the following international and regional organizations, included but not limited to: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Intergovernmental Organization for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), Organization for Cooperation between Railways (OSJD), International Union of Railways (UIC), International Road Transport Union (IRU), Community of European Railway and Infrastructure

Companies (CER), International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations (FIATA), International Financial Institutions (IFIs), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and International Maritime Organization (IMO), Coordinating Council on Trans-Siberian Transportation (CCTT), Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank (WB), World Customs Organization (WCO), Air Transport Research Society (ATRS), Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO);

(8-5) In Principle, the Eurasia Expert Group meetings will be held annually, and the venue and agenda thereof will be linked to the biennial ASEM TMM. Nevertheless, the first meeting will be organized by Republic of Korea in May 2016;

(8-6) In the years when the ASEM TMM does not take place, the venue and agenda of the following Eurasia Expert Group meeting will be decided by the initiative of the ASEM Coordinating Partners.

3. Report of the Seoul Declaration

This Declaration and the outcome of this ASEM Symposium on Eurasia Transport and Logistics Network held in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 9th to 11th September 2015 will be reported to the ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting to be held in Luxembourg in November 2015.