

Statement by Mr. Mircea Ciopraga

Secretary General, Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission of TRACECA

The High-Level Meeting for the Euro-Asia Region on Improving Cooperation on  
Transit, Trade Facilitation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Your Excellences,

Dear participants of the Meeting!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me on behalf of the Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA welcome you and thank to R S Vietnam Government and Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya Under Secretary General, for the invitation to speak at this High-Level Meeting which is deemed very important for strengthening cooperation in the field of transport and trade.

Presently the activities of TRACECA are aimed at promotion and expansion of trade-economic and transport relations between Europe and Asia, as well as realization of economic opportunities of TRACECA member states through development of transport infrastructure of the TRACECA corridor.

If we briefly describe TRACECA, first of all this is currently the international transport corridor Europe-the Caucasus-Asia, including transport systems of 13 member states of Central Asia, Iran, South Caucasus and Turkey as well as 4 countries of the Eastern Europe who signed the Basic Multilateral Agreement TRACECA being the legal framework of our activities.

On the other hand, TRACECA is the programme directed to the development of economic ties, trade and transport communication in the region via supporting political and economic independence of the countries by means of expanding their opportunities to have access to European and world markets; further expansion of regional cooperation between the TRACECA countries.

We highly appreciate the activities of the structures functioning under the UN aegis, and other international organizations as well, engaged in trade facilitation and simplification of border crossing procedures, and therefore we continue fruitful cooperation with the UN ECE and UN ESCAP, IRU, CAREC Programme implemented by the ADB and now together with officials from the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States UN-OHRLLS.

One of the priority areas of our activities consists in taking measures on simplification of border crossing procedures. At this stage the TRACECA countries launched and vigorously implement the "Single Window" concept at the road border check points, work on the implementation of new technologies and equipment renewal at check points, which in its turn beneficially impacts the time of goods delivery and performance of traffic.

I will provide the information on the TRACECA activities in more detail later in the presentation within the framework of the corresponding panel. I would like to take this opportunity and to thank the organizers for giving me such a chance.

We are interested in constructive cooperation between the countries in the region and think that our common objective is to render support in the implementation of international conventions and introduction of engineering standards within the framework of cooperation with our member states. As is known, in order to implement important transnational projects in the field of transport there is the need of mobilization of considerable human and material resources.

We consider that making joint efforts we could attract attention to these issues and purposefully contribute to making corresponding decisions and achieving significant results. With the view of assisting in the implementation of relevant legal acts with participation of experts engaged in trade facilitation and border crossing simplification issues I think it would be useful to arrange joint trainings and educational courses, particularly within the framework of implementation of the 2014-2024 Vienna Programme of Action wherein a number of our member states take interest.

Besides, I think that in cooperation with other specialized organizations or financial institutions assistance could be provided to our member states in the realization of national transport policies or improvement of long-term strategies. Moreover this could favour the implementation of corresponding National action plans for trade and transport development.

In this regard we are ready to full-fledged cooperation with UN-OHRLLS.

I think that coordination of efforts in transport development between international and regional financial institutions, investment and donor organizations, other competent structures, functioning in this region will make it possible to avoid duplication of actions, to optimize the use of resources and to focus on the implementation of priority and realistic projects. Approaches to and mechanisms of resolving such issues may be different and I hope that we will proceed with search of these solutions.

A characteristic feature of the most TRACECA countries, especially in Central Asia is the absence of direct access to the world ocean. That proves the existence of transport problems. I consider that this an area for our possible joint cooperation.

We are convinced that the ITC TRACECA is a natural and the most reliable transit bridge among the present existing ones between Europe and Asia from the point of view of ensuring safety and security of transported cargo.

I would like to emphasize that TRACECA is open for all initiatives that favour strengthening of regional transport dialogue and ensuring effective, reliable and safe international Eurasian transport connections.

I am sure that our Meeting will successfully work and fully come up to our common expectations.

Let me wish you all fruitful work and positive outcomes.

Thank you for your attention.