

Thailand's intervention
By Mr. Punya Chupanit
Director General, Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning
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Thank you, Mr./ Madam Chair

With the relief from the COVID-19 pandemic, international travel and freight transport have significantly increased in the region and across the world. With this projected trend, efficient infrastructure, transport, and logistics services are considered to be critically important.

Thailand is committed to enhancing regional connectivity to achieve greater efficiency, sustainability, and resilience of the regional transport network. There are several completed or ongoing projects that Thailand would like to update on the implementation of the Asian Highway Network, the Trans-Asian Railway Network, and Dry ports.

First of all, Thailand has realized the need for urgent development of rail infrastructure to facilitate the growth of domestic and regional transport, including the development of Trans-Asian Railway Networks. In this regard, our highlighted ongoing projects include double-tracking and new line construction projects. The civil works of the first phase of double-tracking, covering about 700 kilometers, would be

completed by 2023, and priority projects in phase two would follow. Additionally, the construction of a 322-kilometer new line from Den Chai to Chiang Rai and Chiang Khong in northern Thailand started in 2022 and would take six years to be completed.

To enhance railway connectivity with the neighbors, the construction of a 6-kilometer of missing link between Thailand and Cambodia was completed, now pending activation of joint agreement for rail traffic between the two countries. For connectivity with Myanmar, the detailed design of a 256-kilometer new railway line between Mae Sot – Nakhon Sawan, a part of east-west economic corridor connectivity, was recently completed. Moreover, the State Railway of Thailand is also in the process of requesting the 2024 budget to carry out the Feasibility Study of the Kanchanaburi – Ban Phu Nam Ron missing link.

Furthermore, Thailand is building high-speed rail in the northeast to connect with Lao PDR and China as part of the Trans-Asian Railway Network. Thailand and Lao PDR agreed to build a new Mekong bridge to accommodate more passenger and cargo trains that could boost the economy of the region.

Secondly, concerning the Dry Ports, the Chiang Khong Intermodal Facility has been open for operation under the soft-opening scheme since April 2021. In this regard, the construction of the second stage will commence in 2023 and is expected to complete in 2025. Moreover, the Chiang Khong Intermodal Facility will be operated

under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) scheme where the PPP agreement is expected to be signed in mid-2023. Apart from Chiang Khong Intermodal Facility, the Department of Land Transport is soon to construct the Nakhon Phanom Cross Border Transportation Center which will function as a dry port in such area.

Lastly, being aware that some countries do not have laws regulating multimodal transport in place which hinders the development of the international transport industry, UNESCAP has organized 4 sessions of Virtual Expert Group Meetings on Legal Frameworks for Multimodal Transport Operations in Asia and the Pacific during 2020 – 2022. The primary objective of the meetings is to develop the Guidelines for the Harmonization of National Laws on Multimodal Transport in Asia and the Pacific. The guideline was previously endorsed at the fourth meeting on 15 June 2022, with the contents in line with ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport (AFAMT) and the Multimodal Transport Act B.E 2548 (2005).

To conclude, Thailand would like to reaffirm its determination to continue the development of regional connectivity to ultimately achieve more efficient and resilient transport.

Thank you.