

**Speech of Mr Ali Abdollahi ,form Iranian Railways
at the 7th Session of UNESCAP Committee of Transport
23 November 2022 (Virtual)**

Mr/Ms Chairman

Dear Delegates,

Esteemed participants,

First of all let us extend our thanks to UNESCAP for all its valuable attempts and plans for developing transport linkages in Asia especially supporting its members in increasing the efficiency of international freight operation through taking measures for making the international rail corridors connecting Asia and Europe operational and reliable.

Connecting the rail network of Iranian Railways to the rail network of its neighbor countries and also making the international corridors operational are of the top priorities of the government of I.R.Iran.

Following this policy, Presently Iranian Railways network is connected to the railway network of CIS countries through Turkmenistan, to Turkiye to Pakistan Railways and the rail network of Iran has been extended until border with Iraq and construction of missing link inside Iraq is seriously followed up with Iraqi Railways; Moreover, the rail network of Azerbaijan Republic has been extended inside Iran and the construction of the missing link from Astara to Rasht inside Iran, which is the main missing link of the International North-South Corridor, is under way. Furthermore, the railway between Iran and Afghanistan was inaugurated in December 2020.

Various international corridors cross through Iran in East-West and North-South routes and one of important projects of our country for making these corridors more efficient and reliable is establishing is lectronic data exchange and information with our neighbor countries.

In fact the efficiency of rail border crossing depends on the efficient can speed up completion of border crossing formalities therefore needs to be promoted and encouraged.

Presently there is no electronic Consignment note as well as no electronic data exchange with our neighbor countries as well as customs.

I should mention that we have already enjoyed UNESCAP support for establishing electronic data exchange between our neighbors and therefore

UNESCAP conducted Study for Rail Digital Exchange between Iran & Turkmenistan .The main objective of the study project is to improve capacity of railway and border officials of the countries along the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan –Iran (KTI) corridor to foster sustainable transport for sustainable development.

Moreover, we would like thank UNESCAP transport section for doing a study of Digitalization of Iranian Railways, the results will be presented during in National Workshop in Tehran in December 2022.

Regarding the importance of electronic data exchange in international rail transport and in order to realize establishing electronic data exchange on the Eurasian Corridors crossing Iran, the **the Islamic Republic of Iran proposed for Adding a new annex, as annex III to the TAR Agreement was welcomed in the 7th Biennial Meeting of the Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, 20-21 May 2021 as “General principles on electronic information exchange/data interchange among railways and between railways and control agencies along the Trans-Asian Railway Network”** ,which was welcomed by the meeting.

We expect ESCAP countries, particularly, the TAR members to support the adoption of the proposed Annex to the intergovernmental agreement on Trans-Asian Railway network at the next working group meeting.

Than kyou very much