

**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**
Committee on Transport**Third session**

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**Preparations for the Ten-Year Review Conference of
the Almaty Programme of Action, 2014****Preparations for the Ten-Year Review Conference of the
Almaty Programme of Action, 2014*****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

In its resolution 66/214 of 22 December 2011 on specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, the General Assembly decided to hold a comprehensive ten-year review conference on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, in 2014.

The ESCAP secretariat, in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and member States, is undertaking a comprehensive review of the Almaty Programme of Action in Asia and the Pacific, which will serve as the focus for discussions at a high-level regional review meeting in early 2013. One synthesis paper and eight background papers will be prepared as regional inputs to the global review process. In the area of transport and transit, the secretariat has prepared outlines for two background papers on the following topics: harmonization and strengthening of regulatory and legal frameworks pertaining to international transport and transit; and bridging infrastructure gaps.

The Committee may wish to offer guidance on the outlines for the background papers and provide information on the progress in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action at the national level.

* The late submission of the present document is due to late consultations with member countries.

I. Background

1. Landlocked developing countries face serious constraints due to their lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets and high transport costs. Much of their international trade depends on cross-border and transit transport over land, which is hindered by numerous physical and non-physical barriers. To discuss ways to deal with these constraints, the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in August 2003. The Conference adopted the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries.¹

2. The Almaty Programme of Action identified five priority areas which would contribute to a new global framework for developing efficient transit transport systems: (a) fundamental transit policy issues; (b) infrastructure development and maintenance; (c) international trade and trade facilitation; (d) international support measures; and (e) implementation and review.

3. In its resolution 66/214 of 22 December 2011 on specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, the General Assembly decided to hold a comprehensive ten-year review conference on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014. In the same resolution, the Assembly recalled that, per paragraph 49 of the Almaty Programme of Action, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States had been designated as the United Nations system-wide focal point for the preparatory review process, and noted that United Nations system organizations, including the regional commissions, should provide necessary support and actively contribute to the preparatory review process and the comprehensive ten-year review conference itself.

4. In its resolution 67/1 of 25 May 2011 on the Ulaanbaatar Declaration: Outcome of the High-level Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and other Development Gaps Faced by the Landlocked Developing Countries, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to provide, in collaboration with relevant international organizations, necessary assistance to the landlocked developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region during the final review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

II. Regional review of the Almaty Programme of Action

5. The ESCAP secretariat, in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative and member States, is undertaking a comprehensive regional review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2012 and 2013. A high-level regional review meeting on the implementation of the

¹ *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003 (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.*

Almaty Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries is tentatively scheduled to be held in Vientiane in early 2013.

6. For this regional review meeting, the secretariat is preparing one synthesis paper and background papers on the eight critical areas identified in the draft concept note prepared by the Office of the High Representative,² which will be discussed at the global review conference. These eight critical areas can be clustered under the four substantive priority areas of the Almaty Programme of Action,³ together with an additional area on new and emerging issues for consideration, as shown below:

(a) *Priority 1 - Fundamental transit policy issues:*

- Harmonization and strengthening of regulatory and legal frameworks pertaining to international transport and transit

(b) *Priority 2 - Infrastructure development and maintenance:*

- Bridging infrastructure gaps
- Boosting the private sector and increasing foreign direct investment

(c) *Priority 3 - International trade and trade facilitation:*

- Harnessing international trade, trade facilitation and aid for trade

(d) *Priority 4 - International support measures:*

- Promoting regional and South-South cooperation

(e) *New and emerging issues for consideration:*

- Building the productive capacity of the landlocked developing countries
- Addressing emerging issues, including vulnerabilities to external shocks, climate change, rising and volatile food and fuel prices, and economic and financial downturns
- Reducing economic and social disparities

7. In the area of transport and transit, the secretariat has prepared outlines for two background papers, on the topics of “harmonization and strengthening of regulatory and legal frameworks pertaining to international transport and transit”; and “bridging infrastructure gaps”. The annotated outlines of these papers are contained in annexes I and II. These background papers will provide an overview of the progress made by landlocked and transit developing countries in developing transit transport systems. They will also identify key emerging challenges and opportunities together with a set of recommendations on how to address the challenges and opportunities. As part of this process,

² See www.unohrrls.org/en/lldc/975/.

³ The Almaty Programme of Action contains five priority areas. The actions pertaining to priority area 5, which covers “implementation and review” will be referred to in the reporting on the other four priority areas.

Governments will be invited to prepare country reports on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action at the national level.

8. The outcome of the regional review meeting will be submitted to the Special Body on Least Developed Countries and Landlocked Developing Countries during the sixty-ninth session of the Commission, which will be held in May 2013. Following its endorsement by the Commission, the outcome document will be submitted to the Office of the High Representative as the regional input to the Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action, 2014.

III. Issues for consideration

9. Committee members may wish to provide information on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action at the national level. The Committee may wish to provide guidance on the outlines for the background papers, as contained in annexes I and II, and encourage Governments to participate actively in the preparations for the regional review conference, particularly in preparing country reports.

Annex I

Draft outline of background paper - Harmonization and strengthening of regulatory and legal frameworks pertaining to international transport and transit

I. Introduction

This section will provide an overview of the key issues and specific actions relating to regulatory and legal frameworks included in the Almaty Programme of Action. It will also present an overview of the key issues relating to regulatory and legal frameworks pertaining to international transport and transit with regard to priority 1 of the Almaty Programme of Action, namely fundamental transit policy issues.

II. Review of progress in the harmonization and strengthening of regulatory and legal frameworks for facilitation of international transport and transit in the region

A. Accession to and implementation of international conventions relating to transit transport

B. Formulation and implementation of subregional agreements relating to transit transport

C. Formulation and implementation of bilateral agreements relating to transit transport

D. Establishment of regional transport corridors and adoption of common rules and standards

E. Promotion of simplified formalities and procedures

This section will present progress achieved in the harmonization and enhancement of regulatory and legal frameworks in Asia and the Pacific in the period since the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2003. It is expected to contain inputs from relevant member countries, other international organizations and institutions to reflect regional progress and assistance provided by the international community.

III. Looking forward: challenges and opportunities

This section will highlight the key trends in the development of regulatory and legal frameworks in the region and describe future challenges and opportunities at the regional level.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

This section will present a set of recommendations of the secretariat for further building on the progress made during the 10 years since the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action in harmonizing and strengthening regulatory and legal frameworks pertaining to international transport and transit in the region.

Annex II

Draft outline of background paper - Bridging infrastructure gaps

I. Introduction

This section will summarize the key issues and specific actions related to priority 2 of the Almaty Programme of Action, namely infrastructure development and maintenance.

II. Review of progress in infrastructure development and maintenance

- A. Asian Highway Network
- B. Trans-Asian Railway Network
- C. Euro-Asian transport links
- D. Dry ports
- E. Financing and public-private partnerships

This section will provide an overview of the progress made by landlocked and transit developing countries in developing regional and interregional transport networks in the period since the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2003. The focus will be on three core areas of transport infrastructure which have the greatest significance for landlocked developing countries, namely roads, rail and dry ports. This section will also describe the secretariat's efforts to promote the development of these networks, including private sector involvement in the construction and maintenance of these transport networks and linkages. It is expected that the section will include inputs from relevant member countries, other international organizations and institutions to reflect regional progress and assistance provided by the international community.

III. Looking forward: challenges and opportunities

This section will highlight the key trends in the development of infrastructure in Asia and the Pacific and describe future challenges and opportunities at the regional level.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

This section will present a set of recommendations of the secretariat for further building on the progress made during the 10 years since the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action in infrastructure development, particularly in the areas of road, railway and dry port development.
