


**Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific**
**Seventy-third session**

Bangkok, 15-19 May 2017

Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda \*

**Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure  
 of the Commission, including the work of the regional  
 institutions: transport**
**Report of the Ministerial Conference on Transport on its  
 third session**
*Summary*

The third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport was held in Moscow from 5 to 9 December 2016. It comprised two segments: the senior officials segment (5-7 December 2016) and the ministerial segment (8-9 December 2016). The Conference was attended by 325 representatives of 41 countries, 33 of which were represented by ministers and deputy ministers, as well as 28 international organizations and institutions. The Conference reviewed and deliberated on the emerging issues in transport, which subsequently led to the formulation of a set of recommendations on policy actions and initiatives to enhance regional transport cooperation and connectivity for sustainable development. The Conference culminated in the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, which contained six annexes including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021).

The Commission may wish to review and endorse the Ministerial Declaration and its annexes, and provide guidance on their implementation.

**Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention.....	2
II. Proceedings of the Conference.....	2
A. Policy debate on issues pertaining to sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific and the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), including the report of the senior officials segment .....	2
B. Other matters .....	11

\* E/ESCAP/73/L.1.

C.	Adoption of the ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including a regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021).....	12
D.	Adoption of the report of the Conference.....	12
III.	Organization of the Conference .....	12
A.	Opening, duration and organization .....	12
B.	Attendance .....	12
C.	Election of officers .....	13
D.	Agenda.....	14
Annex		
	List of documents .....	16

## **I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention**

1. The Ministerial Conference on Transport recommends to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) the endorsement of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) (see E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/11).

## **II. Proceedings of the Conference**

### **A. Policy debate on issues pertaining to sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific and the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), including the report of the senior officials segment** (Agenda item 9)

2. The Conference had before it documents E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/10 and E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/L.4.

3. The Conference stressed the key role of transport in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in light of its particular functions to provide people, industry and agriculture access to economic and social opportunities and combat climate change. It considered transport as an enabler to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. The Conference recognized that the draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific offered a timely and relevant framework for promoting sustainable transport and connectivity in the region. The draft ministerial declaration served as a key road map for developing the transport sector and strengthening regional cooperation and integration. It also provided new impetus for achieving the vision of seamless connectivity based on quality infrastructure and supportive policy and legal frameworks.

5. The Conference expressed its full support for the content of the seven components of the draft regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021). The regional action programme was relevant to sustainable development and transport connectivity and the implementation of the actions contained therein would significantly benefit cooperation and coordination between and among member States.
6. The Conference reiterated the importance of integrated intermodal transport systems for achieving sustainable transport connectivity in the region. In that regard, it underscored the importance of cooperation between countries in establishing and operationalizing intermodal transport corridors as a key element in the implementation of the regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity, phase I (2017-2021).
7. The Conference recommended, in the implementation of the regional action programme, that priority should be accorded to (a) comprehensive corridor plans and connections between national transport infrastructure development plans; (b) harmonization of construction standards, technical norms of transport means, transport policies and regulations on the basis of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports; and (c) development of multilateral transport facilitation agreements suitable to the region and connections between bilateral and subregional transport facilitation agreements.
8. The Conference noted with satisfaction that many member countries had accorded priority to the development of the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports to improve national and regional connectivity. It acknowledged the ongoing work of the secretariat in the fields of standard setting and promoting innovative new technologies for further development of the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports of international importance.
9. The Conference welcomed the recent accession of Turkmenistan to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports and the ratification by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. It also acknowledged that the process to become a party to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports was at its final stage in the Lao People's Democratic Republic.
10. The Conference recognized the existence of non-physical barriers afflicting the efficiency of international transport and increasing logistics costs and stressed the importance of eliminating those impediments, notably through harmonization of rules, regulations and technical and operational standards and simplification of documentation and procedures.
11. The Conference expressed strong support for the establishment of an interregional coordination committee on transport between Asia and Europe in view of the importance of such a committee in harmonizing technical and operational standards to ensure seamless connectivity between the two regions.
12. The Conference recognized the importance of connecting rural and remote communities to wider networks for poverty alleviation and long-term development of regional connectivity.

13. The Conference highlighted the importance of improving public transport policies and systems to increase the share of public transport in urban areas, including promotion of energy-efficient vehicles and non-motorized transport, reduction in the use of fossil fuels, construction of mass rapid transit systems, improvement of public transport services, use of intelligent transport systems and integration of different transport modes.

14. The Conference acknowledged the strong commitments of member States to reducing road traffic fatalities and injuries through the implementation of policies, strategies and activities in the areas of road safety management, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer road users and post-crash response. The Conference recognized that intelligent transport systems could play an important role in improving road safety.

15. The Conference noted with appreciation the offer of the delegation of the Russian Federation to organize professional training for transport engineers to build their capacity to improve transport infrastructure.

16. The Conference noted with appreciation the offer of the delegation of Japan to collaborate with the secretariat to share experiences with member States in the areas of road safety and sustainable urban transport, such as developing urban railways, increasing the modal share of public transport and implementing a high-quality infrastructure concept.

17. The Conference noted with appreciation the offer of the delegation of the Republic of Korea to provide technical support and share experience in cooperation with the secretariat to assist developing countries in building adequate transport infrastructure.

18. The delegation of Myanmar requested support for capacity-building to professionalize the skill sets of its government officials.

19. The delegation of Samoa requested the secretariat to organize a capacity-building workshop in Samoa to assist in enhancing transport connectivity for small island developing States.

20. The Conference noted that items 1 to 7 of the agenda had been allocated to the senior officials, whose conclusions and recommendations were contained in their report (E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/10). The Conference endorsed the findings and recommendations of the senior officials.

21. In their statements during the policy debate segment of the Conference, ministers and representatives provided information regarding their latest developments, challenges, good experiences and policy initiatives.

22. Afghanistan recognized the importance of developing its transport infrastructure and highlighted that the continuous development of the transport sector over the previous few decades had resulted in the reconstruction of highways and airports. In the railway sector, the Government planned to construct 5,000 km of railway lines to serve domestic traffic, while enhancing its collaboration with neighbouring countries to develop cross-border connections. Thus, railway links had been established with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, providing connectivity to China, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. A rail link to Turkmenistan had recently been inaugurated, while work was ongoing on a rail connection to the Islamic Republic of Iran, with which Afghanistan signed an agreement to gain access to seaports. Meanwhile, to connect Afghanistan to Europe, a five-party agreement among Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Turkmenistan was being prepared.

23. Armenia continued to give priority to the rehabilitation and modernization of its transport infrastructure, including along the routes of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks. Armenia was also developing integrated intermodal transport and logistics systems, including a planned dry port to be developed close to Yerevan international airport. It was also working on issues relating to cross-border transport facilitation, improving legal frameworks and strengthening institutional capacity. New roads and railway lines had been built along the International North-South Transport Corridor to link Asia and Europe, including the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia, to provide access to seaports on the Black Sea and in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The improvement of road safety and connectivity to rural areas was also receiving increased attention.

24. As a landlocked country, Azerbaijan was working on the diversification of its transport routes, the rational use of transit points and the simplification of border-crossing procedures. It highlighted some of the projects planned or under way to enhance connectivity between Asia and Europe, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars rail project, which supported the development of the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia and the construction of an eight-km section and a bridge for the future reconnection of its rail network with that of the Islamic Republic of Iran as part of the North-South corridor project linking the Persian Gulf to the Baltic Sea. Azerbaijan was also paying great attention to the development and maintenance of highways of international importance and improving its maritime sector through the introduction of new tankers and ferries, and the construction of the Baku International Port. It was also putting significant efforts into exploiting its transit potential, developing logistics centres and implementing cross-border transport facilitation measures.

25. Cambodia was according high priority to the development of its transport infrastructure. Recent improvements in the country's infrastructure had resulted in an average growth in gross domestic product of 7 per cent per annum and a drop in the poverty rate to 15 per cent compared to 40 per cent in 2006. Some recently completed key projects were (a) the expansion and modernization of airports in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Sihanoukville; (b) the expansion of Sihanoukville deep sea-port and the construction of a new river port in Phnom Penh; (c) the completion of the line section to reconnect with the railways of Thailand; and (d) the construction of inland container depots and the approval by the Government of new special economic zones. Cambodia had ratified a number of agreements and protocols, including the bilateral agreements on road transport with the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam.

26. China highlighted the importance of sustainable transport connectivity and the role of the transport sector in boosting global trade and economic dynamism. It noted the contribution of the Asian Highway network, the Trans-Asian Railway network and the network of dry ports in creating economic opportunities and fostering social development. China was exerting efforts to complete its safe, convenient, efficient, green and smart Modern Comprehensive Transport System by 2020 with a view to optimizing the combination of various modes of transport, rationalizing the utilization of urban transport resources and promoting low-carbon transport. The purpose of the Belt and Road Initiative proposed by China was to promote the economic development and prosperity of the countries along the Belt and Road corridors through the enhanced connectivity of the comprehensive transport networks in different countries. The Belt and Road Initiative would be developed based on the principle of wide consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits among all the countries concerned. It stressed the

potential role of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund in realizing regional transport connectivity.

27. Indonesia acknowledged the major role and contribution of transport in economic and social development. In that context, it continued to construct and improve roads, railway lines, airports, seaports and dry ports to enhance its infrastructure network, with a view to realizing an efficient and effective integrated intermodal transport and logistics system. In so doing, Indonesia was using public-private partnership modalities in implementing its medium-term national development plan. It also highlighted the implementation of different initiatives aimed at ensuring sustainability in the transport system, namely improving urban public transport and using intelligent transport systems. Indonesia was committed to improving road safety, as demonstrated by its implementation of programmes such as Safety School Zones, Best Public Transport Driver Award and Public Transport Ramp Check. Taking an active part in Asia-Europe connectivity, Indonesia would host the 4th Asia-Europe Meeting Transport Ministers' Meeting.

28. The Islamic Republic of Iran highlighted missing road and rail links, outdated fleet of vehicles and rolling stock, complicated border-crossing procedures and a lack of investment as the major obstacles to efficient and smooth transport operations. These factors resulted in unsafe transport operation. The Islamic Republic of Iran had recently collaborated with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan in constructing a railway line connecting the three countries and had completed a rail connection to the border with Afghanistan. It was also collaborating with Azerbaijan in reconnecting their rail networks and taking measures to encourage foreign investment in transport projects with a focus on railways. It had signed or become a party to a number of transport and transit agreements, including the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. In addition, with a view to improving road safety, it had launched a national road safety action plan covering the period 2015-2020.

29. Japan highlighted the role of the transport sector in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and mentioned that the demand for transport infrastructure in the ESCAP region would continue to increase. Japan was prepared to respond to that demand by making financing assistance available. However, responding to infrastructure needs also entailed ensuring the quality of transport infrastructure so that it was resilient to climate change and environmentally friendly. With regard to sustainable urban transport, it highlighted the need for a modal shift to rail in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and traffic congestion. It also highlighted its experience in increasing the modal share of rail in urban transport to 50 per cent as compared to 10 per cent for private vehicles, as well as its experience in reducing annual road-crash fatalities from 16,000 in 1970 to 4,000 in 2015.

30. Kazakhstan placed great importance on the diversification of international transport corridors, with particular emphasis on the construction of new railway lines and roads within the framework of international and regional transport programmes. Those programmes, for which Kazakhstan had already invested \$23 billion and was planning to invest another \$11 billion, were aimed at improving the efficiency of freight transit between Asia and Europe. Other key projects included the recently completed railway line offering transit to the Islamic Republic of Iran via Turkmenistan and continuation of the work on the Western Europe-Western China corridor project. Kazakhstan was also collaborating with Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Turkey and Ukraine within the framework of the Coordination Committee for Multimodal Trans-Caspian International Transport. Kazakhstan was also giving priority to the development of efficient logistics and in that regard had

established a major dry port in Khorgos, at the border with China, and, within the work of the Eurasian Economic Union, had set up the United Transport and Logistics Company to tap into the potential of intermodal traffic between China and Europe.

31. Through its transport-related policies, the Lao People's Democratic Republic was trying to transform itself from landlocked to land-linked. However, it acknowledged that limited financial resources remained an obstacle on the path to developing the necessary infrastructure, and it had been taking measures to encourage greater private sector participation in the financing of transport-related projects. Recognizing the importance of efficient logistics, the Government was continuing to develop the dry port at Savannakhet with the intention of making it a model by which to benchmark the future development of similar facilities in the country. The Government also recognized the importance of cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations in advancing the 2030 Agenda.

32. Malaysia announced that it was fully committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and had already taken a number of measures to promote the deployment of green technology in land, maritime and air transport, with a view to reducing the country's carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020. Relatedly, Malaysia was promoting the use of energy-efficient vehicles, in particular taxis and public buses, and taking an active part in global initiatives such as the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation promoted by the International Civil Aviation Organization. Under its Eleventh Malaysia Plan, Malaysia was also taking measures to develop intra- and interregional connectivity through large-scale infrastructure projects such as the high-speed rail line between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, the Pan-Borneo Highway and the Singapore-Kunming Rail Link project. Aware of the need to provide seamless transport with its ASEAN neighbours, Malaysia had also signed a number of ASEAN framework agreements. In line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety, 2011-2020, Malaysia had also adopted a national Road Safety Plan for the period 2014-2020.

33. Myanmar was placing great importance on developing and operationalizing efficient transport connectivity through (a) the modernization of its road and rail infrastructure; (b) the establishment of new ports and airports; and (c) the implementation of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on the Facilitation of Goods in Transit and the ratification of the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Multimodal Transport. To facilitate regional integration, Myanmar was also taking part in major international initiatives such as the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks. Aware that road-safety issues had to be dealt with at the highest level, Myanmar had recently established the National Road Safety Council, which was chaired by the Vice-President.

34. Nepal had started integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into its national development plan, and, as part of that plan, eight north-south transport corridors were being constructed to enhance connectivity with China and India. In addition, a fast-track road project to link Kathmandu with the Terai plain was being developed. The National Road Safety Action Plan (2013-2020) was being implemented to reduce road fatalities by half by 2020. To improve urban transport, Nepal had expanded its fleet of buses in the city of Kathmandu and was planning to develop a mass rapid transit system. Recently, the Government had imposed a mandatory requirement on municipalities to develop urban development master plans. With a view to improving the country's access to seaports, Nepal was looking forward to the

implementation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal.

35. Pakistan was heavily committed to developing efficient infrastructure and institutional connectivity. In that regard, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was a flagship project of the Government of Pakistan with positive benefits, which was eventually expected to reach Europe, the Middle East and other Western countries. Pakistan had also started to take a number of measures to facilitate transport and logistics through, for example, the launching of the Integrated Transit Trade Management System and the adoption of the Logistics Service Providers Act. It was currently completing the process to become a party to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. To improve transport in urban areas, mass transit systems had already been introduced in Islamabad, Lahore and Rawalpindi and similar systems were now being constructed in Karachi and Multan. Recognizing the high cost of road crashes, Pakistan had included road safety as an element of its national transport policy and established a national road safety council at the ministerial level and a national steering committee at the federal and provincial levels.

36. The Republic of Korea stressed that it had embarked on an extensive programme of research and development in the areas of energy efficiency and green technologies with a view to reducing congestion and contributing to environmental protection. It reaffirmed its desire to share its experience and provide technical assistance to other countries in the development and deployment of new technologies that could contribute to a more sustainable transport sector.

37. The Russian Federation highlighted the initiative of President Vladimir Putin to build a multi-level integration model for Eurasia in the form of a Great Eurasian Partnership, which will provide conditions for further development of the Asia and Pacific region.

38. In that respect, priority was being accorded to increasing the capacity of the Baikal-Amur and Trans-Siberian railway main lines and developing the Northern Maritime Route and the international road transport route connecting Europe and Western China with a branch line from the southern Ural region to Belarus. Deployment of intelligent transport systems and the Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) satellite tracking system were considered to be integral to transport infrastructure development.

39. Significant importance was also attached to upgrading road networks providing connections between Asia and Europe and to further developing seaports in the far east region of the country, which had recently been experiencing substantial growth in their throughput.

40. The main directions for the prospective development of the country's transport system were identified as (a) developing transport infrastructure for direct and multimodal carriage of goods; (b) harmonizing transport-related legislation; (c) increasing road safety and establishing sustainable urban transport systems; (d) facilitating international transport and border-crossing formalities; and (e) deploying satellite tracking systems, including the Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS).

41. The Russian Federation also welcomed the increasing number of parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports and noted with satisfaction



the signing of the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network during the Conference.

42. As a small island developing State, Samoa stressed the importance of maritime and aviation connectivity. In that regard, the Government had channelled its limited financial resources into the development of ports and airports. Related projects included the upgrading of runways and other facilities as well as the construction of a new terminal at Faleolo International Airport, the expansion of the Apia wharf and upgrading of existing port infrastructure, and the development of road connectivity to the international airport through the widening of existing roads and the construction of new climate-resilient ones. Samoa had entered into a bilateral air service agreement with China and was considering similar arrangements with Singapore, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

43. Sri Lanka stressed that, as an island country, land connection was only possible via the ferry link with India. In that regard, the railway line to Talaimannar pier had been reconstructed, while reconstruction of the pier itself was planned. Elsewhere in the country's rail network, work was ongoing to raise the operational speed from 80 km per hour to 100 km per hour, while a programme of electrification was being finalized. In the road sector, work had started on the extension of the southern expressway, the last stage of the Colombo circular expressway and a design study for the central expressway, which would provide domestic connectivity between the northern and southern parts of the country. Sri Lanka had also added concrete surfaces to rural roads to improve last mile connectivity.

44. Recognizing that sustainable transport was a key component of the 2030 Agenda, Thailand had formulated a 20-year strategic plan for transport development with a view to achieving efficient, green, safe, inclusive and innovative transport. The Government was committed to a long-term investment plan to develop its rail infrastructure in support of a modal shift from road to rail. The objective of the Government was to reduce the use of fossil fuels and to lower carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent by 2030. Those policies were accompanied by a commitment to deploy innovative technologies in the transport sector. The Government was also committed to promoting the universal accessibility of transport services and taking measures to reduce road fatalities and injuries by 50 per cent by 2020.

45. As a landlocked country, Tajikistan centred its economic growth on the development of international and regional transport connectivity and, to that end, had already implemented 38 transport infrastructure projects with a total value of \$1.2 billion since its independence. Tajikistan placed great importance on the emergence of international transport corridors, including a north-south corridor linking Europe to the Indian Ocean and an east-west corridor linking China and South-East Asia with Europe. Tajikistan was matching infrastructure development with strategies and programmes aimed at improving cross-border transport, improving road safety and developing intermodal transport and logistics. Tajikistan had become a party to 35 multilateral agreements and conventions, including the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports.

46. Turkey stressed that international cooperation was a prerequisite to the development of transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific. To provide competitive transit options between China and Europe, Turkey had been focusing on developing the middle corridor, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars rail project and the Edirne-Kars high-speed railway. Considered a modern

Silk Road, the middle corridor was also expected to bring substantial socioeconomic benefits to the landlocked countries of Central Asia. To support its vision of corridor development, Turkey had been investing \$20 billion in its rail infrastructure since 2002 and was planning an additional \$40 billion over the following 10 years. In the road sector, Turkey was planning to develop east-west and north-south corridors, and had proposed that 5,247 km of its highway network should be included in the Eurasia highway network. Investment had been channelled into raising the design standards of roads, resulting in a network of 25,000 km of dual carriageways compared to 6,000 km 14 years earlier. Those efforts had resulted in a significant reduction in the number of road crashes. Meanwhile, Turkey was also planning the development of ports around the country to enhance its container-handling capacity to 32 million twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) per annum.

47. Viet Nam had upgraded Asian Highway route 1 to class I and had completed the construction of Asian Highway route 14 from Hai Phong to Lào Cai. The Government planned to upgrade the entire Asian Highway network in the country to class III or higher by 2020. It was also considering the construction of roads to connect Ha Noi to Vientiane and Ho Chi Minh City to Phnom Penh. The country had been modernizing its rail infrastructure to increase the average speed on the network to 90 km per hour and was also preparing to invest in high-speed trains. It had signed bilateral and multilateral road transport agreements to promote trade, investment and tourism between the country and its neighbours. In addition, it had been giving special attention to improving safety on its roads and had managed to reduce the number of fatalities to less than 9,000 per year. Future plans to improve road safety included increasing the control of road transport operators, increasing the modal share of rail, continuing to implement a road-safety audit on all newly constructed roads, fitting all commercial vehicles with tracking technologies and revising road traffic laws.

48. The representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) recalled that decent work principles and pillars were encompassed in Sustainable Development Goal 8. Transport service demand and employment had increased in the previous 20 years, but negative consequences on the conditions of work for professional transport drivers could be observed. Concerns over employment conditions and ensuring a level playing field existed on a global scale for both the trucking industry and the taxi industry. ILO called upon Governments not solely to focus on the implementation of economic, technological and infrastructural development but also to take into account social improvement in transport services for the sector to be sustainable.

49. The representative of the World Customs Organization indicated the importance of cooperation between customs and transport to ensure sustainable connectivity in global supply chains. The Organization was of the view that the high costs of international trade were related to transportation and fulfilment of administrative requirements. The elimination of unnecessary and adverse impediments in transit operations would contribute to the increase of the trade volume, better interconnectedness of the global markets and integration of the peripheral landlocked developing economies into the global supply chains. The Organization was developing transit guidelines that aimed to support Governments in implementing efficient transit system.

50. The representative of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation emphasized the important role of its member countries in achieving better and faster connectivity between Asia and Europe. To promote

sustainable transport systems, the Organization had reinforced its efforts for the development of road and maritime infrastructure and the facilitation of road transport of goods in the Black Sea area. It had made a significant contribution to providing modern infrastructure and effective transport procedures for its member States, which could help increase intraregional trade, tourism, investment in infrastructure and economic development.

51. The representative of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways informed the Conference of the history of its foundation and development as well as its organizational structure. It had been coordinating international railway transport and setting common standards among its member countries and had planned 13 new railway corridors between Asia and Europe. It had been assisting its members in simplifying cross-border transport procedures to improve international railway transport along the Asia-Europe railway transport corridors. As an energy-efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transport, rail would play an important role in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

52. The representative of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization pointed out that it accorded priority to transport cooperation. A number of agreements, strategies, programmes and action plans related to road transport, customs, transit and transport infrastructure development had been formulated by the Organization. Its member States, with the assistance of the secretariat, had signed the Intergovernmental Agreement of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Facilitation of International Road Transport in Dushanbe in 2014. The Agreement aimed to create the legal basis for harmonized conditions for road transport and simplified transport processes among China, the Russian Federation and the Central Asian countries and to promote regional and subregional connectivity and integration.

53. The representative of the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations indicated that in order to enhance transport connectivity in the Asia-Pacific region, international organizations and transport enterprises could cooperate with Governments in three main areas: (a) advising Governments on elaborating transport policies; (b) assisting Governments in enhancing transport infrastructure, operational connectivity and capacity-building; and (c) participating in the evaluation of the effectiveness of transport policies. The Federation called for a seamless vertical and horizontal information communication mechanism among governmental institutions, industrial organizations and enterprises in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of trade policies, in order to fully achieve transport connectivity.

54. The representative of the Asian Institute of Transport Development highlighted the need for socially optimal modal choices, transport accessibility for rural populations and a reduction in the number of passenger vehicles on roads and the related change in mindset. The Institute emphasized the need for strong will and sagacity to address associated issues related to political economy.

**B. Other matters**  
(Agenda item 10)

55. No other matter was discussed.

**C. Adoption of the ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including a regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021)**

(Agenda item 11)

56. The Conference had before it a draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including a regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) as contained in annex I (E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/L.4).

57. The Conference adopted by acclamation the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021) (see E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/11).

**D. Adoption of the report of the Conference**

(Agenda item 12)

58. The report of the Ministerial Conference on Transport on its third session was adopted unanimously on 9 December 2016.

**III. Organization of the Conference**

**A. Opening, duration and organization**

59. The third session of the Ministerial Conference on Transport was held in Moscow from 5 to 9 December 2016. The Conference comprised two segments: the senior officials segment (5-7 December 2016) and the ministerial segment (8-9 December 2016).

60. Mr. Igor Levitin, Aide to the President, Government of the Russian Federation, delivered the message of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, and declared open the Conference. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered a welcoming and policy statement.

**B. Attendance**

61. The session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members of ESCAP: Afghanistan; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Democratic People's Republic of Korea; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Malaysia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; Nepal; Pakistan; Palau; Philippines; Republic of Korea; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

62. A representative of Germany attended.

63. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies attended: United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; ILO; Secretariat of the Greater Tumen Initiative/United Nations Development Programme; and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

64. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other organizations were present: ASEAN-Korea Centre; Coordinating Council on Trans-Siberian Transportation; Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation; Committee of the Organization for Cooperation between Railways; Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia; Eurasian Economic Commission; Eurasian Development Bank; European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; European Commission; Intergovernmental Commission TRACECA; Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail; World Customs Organization; Asian Institute of Transport Development; International Air Transport Association; International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations; International Road Transport Union; International Union of Railways; Global Infrastructure Fund Research Foundation Japan; Korea Transport Institute; Institute of Road Traffic Education; and Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

### C. Election of officers

65. The Conference elected Mr. Maksim Sokolov (Russian Federation) Chair.

66. Following past practice, the Conference decided to elect the following heads of delegation Vice-Chairs:

Mr. Mohammadullah Bataash (Afghanistan)  
 Mr. Vahan Martirosyan (Armenia)  
 Mr. Ziya Mammadov (Azerbaijan)  
 Mr. M.A.N. Siddique (Bangladesh)  
 Mr. Mustappa Sirat (Brunei Darussalam)  
 Mr. Chanthol Sun (Cambodia)  
 Mr. Liu Xiaoming (China)  
 Mr. Jong Gwan Kang (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)  
 Mr. Sugihardjo (Indonesia)  
 Mr. Davoud Keshavarzian (Islamic Republic of Iran)  
 Mr. Koichiro Kakee (Japan)  
 Mr. Zhenis Kassymbek (Kazakhstan)  
 Mr. Berik Kamaliyev (Kazakhstan)  
 Mr. Zhamshitbek Kalilov (Kyrgyzstan)  
 Mr. Santisouk Simmalavong (Lao People's Democratic Republic)  
 Mr. Liow Tiong Lai (Malaysia)  
 Mr. Ganbat Dangaa (Mongolia)  
 Mr. Thant Sin Maung (Myanmar)  
 Mr. Valdon Dowiyogo (Nauru)  
 Mr. Sitaram Mahto (Nepal)  
 Mr. Ahsan Iqbal (Pakistan)  
 Mr. Artemio U. Tuazon Jr. (Philippines)  
 Mr. Garry V. De Guzman (Philippines)  
 Mr. Hoontaik Suh (Republic of Korea)  
 Mr. Nikolay Asaul (Russian Federation)  
 Mr. Tsydenov Alexey (Russian Federation)  
 Mr. Papaliitele Nickel Lee Hang (Samoa)  
 Mr. Sherali Ganjalzoda (Tajikistan)  
 Mr. Ormsin Chivapruck (Thailand)  
 Mr. Oraz Hurtyyev (Turkmenistan)  
 Mr. Monise Laafai (Tuvalu)  
 Mr. Nguyen Hong Truong (Viet Nam)

67. Mr. Dhana Bahadur Tamang (Nepal) was elected as Rapporteur.

**D. Agenda**

68. The Conference adopted the following agenda:

*Senior officials segment*

1. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening addresses;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Assessment and evaluation of the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016).
3. Major issues in transport:
  - (a) Sustainable Development Goals and transport;
  - (b) Regional transport infrastructure connectivity;
  - (c) Regional transport operational connectivity;
  - (d) Strengthening of transport connectivity between Asia and Europe;
  - (e) Transport connectivity for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;
  - (f) Rural connectivity to wider networks;
  - (g) Sustainable urban transport;
  - (h) Improving road safety.
4. Draft regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021).
5. Draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific.
6. Other matters
7. Adoption of the report of the senior officials segment.

*Ministerial segment*

8. Opening of the session:
  - (a) Opening addresses;
  - (b) Election of officers;
  - (c) Adoption of the agenda.

9. Policy debate on issues pertaining to sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific and the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), including the report of the senior officials segment.
10. Other matters.
11. Adoption of the ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including a regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021).
12. Adoption of the report of the Conference.
13. Closing of the Conference.

**Annex****List of documents**

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>General series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/1	Assessment and evaluation of the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016)	2
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/2	Sustainable Development Goals and transport	3 (a)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/3	Regional transport infrastructure connectivity	3 (b)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/4	Regional transport operational connectivity	3 (c)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/5	Strengthening of transport connectivity between Asia and Europe	3 (d)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/6	Transport connectivity for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	3 (e)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/7	Rural connectivity to wider networks	3 (f)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/8	Sustainable urban transport	3 (g)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/9	Improving road safety	3 (h)
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/10	Report of the senior officials	9
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/11	Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific	
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/12	Report of the Ministerial Conference on Transport on its third session	
<i>Limited series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/L.1	Provisional agenda	1
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/L.2	Annotated provisional agenda	1
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/L.3	Draft report of the Conference	12
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/L.4	Draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific	11
<i>Conference room paper series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/CRP.1	Draft report of the senior officials	7
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/CRP.2	Draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific	4 and 5



<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
<i>Working paper series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/WP.1	Draft regional action programme for sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021)	4
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/WP.2	Draft ministerial declaration on sustainable transport connectivity in Asia and the Pacific	5
<i>Information series</i>		
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/INF/1	Information for participants	
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/INF/2	List of participants	
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/INF/3	Tentative programme	
E/ESCAP/MCT(3)/INF/4	Activities implemented under the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016)	2