
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Status of implementation of the Intergovernmental
Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network**

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Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document contains information on the current status of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network with regard to the number of signatories and Parties to the Agreement and the obligations of the latter, as well as information on missing links.

The Working Group may wish to consider the present document with a view to encouraging the participation of member States in the implementation of the Agreement in order to promote and develop efficient rail transport infrastructure and services within the ESCAP region, as well as with neighbouring regions.

I. Introduction

1. The Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network¹ is a treaty aimed at promoting and developing international rail transport in Asia and with neighbouring regions. The present document contains an outline of the status of the Agreement in respect of its signatories and Parties and a review of the latter's obligations.

II. Status of implementation of the Agreement

A. Signatures and ratifications

2. The Agreement entered into force on 11 June 2009, that is, 90 days after the requisite number of States had deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in New York. As of 30 August 2013, 22 member States had signed the Agreement and, of that number, 17 subsequently became Parties through ratification, acceptance or approval. In addition, in October 2012, the

* E/ESCAP/TARN/WG(3)/L.1.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2634, No. 46171.

Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea became a Party to the Agreement through accession, bringing the total number of Parties to 18. Annex I contains a list of signatories and States that have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Secretary-General.

3. A ceremony to mark the entry into force of the Agreement was held in Bangkok on 11 June 2009, at which representatives of resident missions and the media were present. During the ceremony, dignitaries from the Parties stressed the importance of the Agreement.

4. In this regard, member States may wish to update the Working Group on the progress made towards ratification, acceptance, approval and accession of the Agreement. Signatory States wishing to become Parties to the Agreement should deposit their instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval of the Agreement after completing the necessary national procedures. A model instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval is given in annex II. Member States that have not signed the Agreement can become a Party to the Agreement by accession, which is a one-step action. A model instrument of accession is given in annex III.

5. Member States wishing to deposit their instruments in relation to article 4 of the Agreement should contact the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs at United Nations Headquarters in New York (telephone: 1 212 963 5047, facsimile: 1 212 963 3693, e-mail: treaty@un.org) to make the necessary arrangements. The Transport Division of the ESCAP secretariat stands ready to assist member States in this process by receiving the said instruments and liaising with the Office of Legal Affairs (telephone: 66 2 288 1371, facsimile: 66 2 288 3050, e-mail: escap-ttd@un.org).

6. Reservations may not be made with respect to any of the provisions of the Agreement, except as provided for in article 13, paragraph 5, of the Agreement, whereby any State may, at the time of depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, deposit a reservation stating that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article 13 relating to conciliation. A model instrument of reservation/declaration is given in annex IV.

B. Obligations of the Parties to the Agreement

7. The main obligations of the Parties to the Agreement are as follows:

(a) To adopt the Trans-Asian Railway network as a coordinated plan for the development of railway lines of international importance, which they intend to undertake within the framework of their national programmes (article 2);

(b) To bring the Trans-Asian Railway routes into conformity with a set of guiding principles related to technical characteristics (article 3).

8. The guiding principles relating to technical characteristics of the Trans-Asian Railway network, as set out in annex II of the Agreement, were agreed as a set of issues that member countries should take into account when constructing new railway lines and upgrading or modernizing existing ones.

9. The underlying principle is that the Trans-Asian Railway network will only fulfil its true function of serving economic integration and facilitating international trade if basic common standards are applied in the design of

infrastructure and the operation of individual networks in order to ensure the smooth flow of goods.

10. Based on the information received from member countries, the 117,000-km Trans-Asian Railway network already enables the transportation of containers most commonly used by maritime shipping. Enhancing the efficiency of the network requires that attention be focused in the future on areas such as line capacity, compatibility of rolling stock and the design of intermodal interfaces. Meanwhile, strengthening the outreach of the network requires that the construction of missing links be considered a priority issue.

C. Missing links in the Trans-Asian Railway network

11. The Trans-Asian Railway will only reach its full potential when connectivity is finally established within and between subregions. Missing links in the network have existed since its inception. They were nominated by member countries on the basis of their importance in facilitating regional economic development or trade and, in some cases, improving domestic connectivity. The network is not stagnant but instead evolutionary in nature, dependent on the aspirations and needs of countries.

12. For the Working Group's consideration and ease of reference, the secretariat has compiled information on missing links in the Trans-Asian Railway network as promulgated in the Agreement incorporating amendments (see annex V).

III. Issues for consideration

13. The Working Group may wish to consider the present document with a view to encouraging the participation of member States in the implementation of the Agreement in order to promote and develop efficient rail transport within the ESCAP region as well as neighbouring regions, taking into account the relevant provisions of the Agreement. Most significantly, the Working Group may wish to: (a) to encourage all member States to become Parties to the Agreement; (b) to expedite plans to complete the missing links; and (c) communicate to the secretariat plans being considered to build the missing links, including information on alignment, cost and completion dates.

Annex I

Signatories/Parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network

To date, 22 member States have signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and 18 have deposited their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.^a The Agreement entered into force on 11 June 2009.

Member State	Date of signature	Date of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession
Armenia	10 November 2006	
Azerbaijan	10 November 2006	
Bangladesh	9 November 2007	25 August 2010 (ratification)
Cambodia	10 November 2006	27 April 2007 (acceptance)
China	10 November 2006	13 March 2009 (approval)
Democratic People's Republic of Korea		12 October 2012 (accession)
Georgia	18 December 2007	13 May 2009 (approval)
India	29 June 2007	13 September 2007 (ratification)
Indonesia	10 November 2006	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	10 November 2006	3 November 2009 (ratification)
Kazakhstan	10 November 2006	
Lao People's Democratic Republic	10 November 2006	29 March 2011 (ratification)
Mongolia	10 November 2006	4 September 2008 (ratification)
Nepal	10 November 2006	6 March 2012 (ratification)
Pakistan	28 January 2008	18 November 2009 (ratification)
Republic of Korea	10 November 2006	5 February 2008 (ratification)
Russian Federation	10 November 2006	4 January 2008 (acceptance)
Sri Lanka	10 November 2006	16 February 2010 (ratification)
Tajikistan	10 November 2006	19 February 2008 (approval)
Thailand	10 November 2006	4 February 2008 (ratification)
Turkey	10 November 2006	
Uzbekistan	10 November 2006	28 July 2009 (ratification)
Viet Nam	10 November 2006	30 September 2009 (approval)

^a In accordance with article 5 of the Agreement, for each State which deposits its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession after the date upon which the conditions for the entry into force of the Agreement have been met, the Agreement shall enter into force for that State 90 days after the date of its deposit of the said instrument.

Annex II

Model instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval

(to be signed by Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

WHEREAS the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network was adopted on 12 April 2006 in Jakarta and opened for signature in Busan, Republic of Korea, on 10 and 11 November 2006, and thereafter at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 16 November 2006 to 31 December 2008,

AND WHEREAS the said Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network has been signed on behalf of the Government of **[name of State]** on **[date]**,

NOW THEREFORE, I, **[name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs]** declare that the Government of **[name of State]**, having considered the above-mentioned Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, **[ratifies, accepts, approves]** the same and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the stipulations therein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have signed this instrument of **[ratification, acceptance, or approval]** in **[place]** on **[date]**.

[Signature]

Annex III

Model instrument of accession

(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

WHEREAS the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network was adopted on 12 April 2006 in Jakarta and opened for signature in Busan, Republic of Korea, on 10 and 11 November 2006, and thereafter at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 16 November 2006 to 31 December 2008,

NOW THEREFORE, I, **[name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs]** declare that the Government of **[name of State]**, having considered the above-mentioned Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, accedes to the same and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the stipulations therein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have signed this instrument of accession in **[place]** on **[date]**.

[Signature]

Annex IV

Model instrument of reservation/declaration

(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)

I, **[name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs]**,

HEREBY DECLARE that the Government of **[name of State]** makes the following **[reservation/declaration]** in relation to article 13(5) of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network adopted on 12 April 2006 in Jakarta:

[Substance of reservation/declaration]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal.

Done at **[place]** on **[date]**

[Signature and title]

Annex V

Missing links in the Trans-Asian Railway network

Country concerned	Missing links
Armenia	Martuni to Meghri – <i>(for future connection with the Islamic Republic of Iran)</i>
Bangladesh	Dohazari to Gundum – <i>(for future connection with Myanmar)</i>
Cambodia	Poipet to Sisophon – <i>(for future connection with Thailand)</i> Bat Deng to Kratie – <i>(for future connection with Viet Nam)</i>
China	Kashi to Torugart (Kyrgyzstan) – <i>(for future connection with Kyrgyzstan)</i> Yuxi to Mohan – <i>(for future connection with the Lao People's Democratic Republic)</i> Baoshan to Ruili – <i>(for future connection with Myanmar)</i>
Georgia	Akhalkalaki to Kartsakhi – <i>(for future connection with Turkey)</i>
India	Jiribam to Moreh – <i>(for future connection with Myanmar)</i>
Indonesia	Yogyakarta to Magelang – <i>(for improved connectivity on Java)</i> Banda Aceh province – <i>(for improved connectivity in Aceh on Sumatra)</i> Rantauprapat to Payakumbuh – <i>(for improved connectivity on Sumatra)</i> Muaro to Lubuklinggau – <i>(for improved connectivity on Sumatra)</i>
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Rasht to Astara – <i>(for future connection with Azerbaijan)</i> Arak to Khosravi – <i>(for future connection with Iraq)</i> Sangan to border with Afghanistan – <i>(for future connection with Afghanistan)</i>
Kyrgyzstan	Kochkor to Torugart – <i>(for future connection with China)</i> Arpa to Karasu – <i>(for future connection with Uzbekistan)</i>
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Thanaleng to Mu Gia – <i>(for future connection with Viet Nam)</i> Vientiane to Boten – <i>(for future connection with China)</i> Thakhek to Nakhom Phanom – <i>(for future connection with Thailand)</i> Vangtao to Densavanh – <i>(for future connection with Thailand and Viet Nam)</i>

Country concerned	Missing links
Mongolia	<p>Shiveekhuren to Choibalsan – <i>(for future connection with China and the Russian Federation)</i></p> <p>Tavan Tolgoi to Gashuun Sukhait – <i>(for future connection with China)</i></p> <p>Khuut to Bichigt – <i>(for future connection with China)</i></p> <p>Khuut to Numrug – <i>(for future connection with China)</i></p>
Myanmar	<p>Lashio to Muse – <i>(for future connection with China)</i></p> <p>Kalay to Tamu – <i>(for future connection with India)</i></p> <p>Thanpyuzayat to the Three Pagoda Pass – <i>(for future connection with Thailand)</i></p>
Nepal	<p>Kakarvitta to Brahma Mandi – <i>(for improved domestic connectivity and future connection with India)</i></p>
Pakistan	<p>Dalbandin to Gwadar – <i>(for improved connectivity to the port)</i></p>
Sri Lanka	<p>Matara to Kataragama – <i>(for improved domestic connectivity)</i></p> <p>Kurunegala to Dambulla – <i>(for improved domestic connectivity)</i></p>
Thailand	<p>Bua Yai to Nakhon Phanom – <i>(for future connection with the Lao People's Democratic Republic)</i></p> <p>Bua Yai to Mukdahan – <i>(for future connection with the Lao People's Democratic Republic)</i></p> <p>Ubonratchathani to Chong Mek – <i>(for future connection with the Lao People's Democratic Republic)</i></p> <p>Nakhonsawan to Mae Sod – <i>(for future connection with Myanmar)</i></p> <p>Denchai to Mae Sai – <i>(for future connection with Myanmar)</i></p> <p>Namtok to the Three Pagoda Pass – <i>(for future connection with Myanmar)</i></p> <p>Aranyaprathet to Klong Luk – <i>(for future connection with Cambodia)</i></p>
Turkey	<p>Kars to the border with Georgia – <i>(for future connection with Georgia)</i></p>
Uzbekistan	<p>Angren to Khalkobad – <i>(for improved domestic connectivity)</i></p>
Viet Nam	<p>Tan Ap to Mu Gia – <i>(for future connection with the Lao People's Democratic Republic)</i></p> <p>Tan Ap to Vung Ang – <i>(for improved connectivity to the port)</i></p> <p>Ho Chi Minh City to Vung Tau <i>(for improved connectivity to the port)</i></p> <p>Ho Chi Minh City to Loc Ninh – <i>(for future connection with the Lao People's Democratic Republic)</i></p>