



DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

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Speech delivered by Ambassador Aurélia Bouchez, Head of the European Union Delegation to Kazakhstan, at the Panel "Black Sea and Caspian Sea Transit: Dialogue within TRACECA" in the framework of VII Astana Economic Forum

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Honorable Vice-Ministers, Dear Guests,

It is a great pleasure as representative of the EU in Kazakhstan, to welcome you at the panel on TRACECA.

Let me first thank the organisers, Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Kazakhstan, TRACECA National Secretariat for excellent organisation of this Forum and this important panel session.

I am delighted to see so many distinguished representatives of the government, Secretary General of the TRACECA Intergovernmental Commission, businesses from the Region as well as the representatives of the EU projects.

Distinguished guests,

The Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) is an EU programme launched in 1993 to develop a transport corridor from Europe to China, via the Black Sea, the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and Central Asia.

The EU TRACECA program is based on the two main pillars. The first one is to strengthen the political and economic foundations of the participating countries by enhancing their capacity to access European and beyond world markets through well-functioning transport routes, and secondly, to stimulate regional dialogue, good neighbourly relations and cooperation amongst the participating states in all matters related to the development and improvement of trade and communications in the region.

To successfully deliver these objectives, it is imperative that enhanced regional cooperation and reforms in the transport sector head for achieving sustainable economic and social development as well as for contributing to peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Until 2012, the EU has supported this cooperation with technical assistance with a total of almost € 180 million for more than 80 projects in the areas of infrastructure development, safety and security in transport as well as trade facilitation and logistics.

The ongoing TRACECA projects are covering Logistics Processes and Motorways of the Seas (2011 – April 2014; budget: 5.2 MEUR), Civil aviation safety and security (2012 – Feb 2015), Transport Dialogue and Networks Interoperability II (Jan 2013- Jan 2016; budget: 3.5 MEUR), Maritime Safety and Security II (Jan 2013- Jan 2016; budget: 3 MEUR), Implementation of the Regional Road Safety Action Plan for the Neighbourhood East and Central Asian countries (Jan 2014 – Jan 2016).

For the next financial Framework 2014-2020, the EU has the intention to extend the use of such a blending mechanism to also support the development of sustainable transport modes in Central Asia, through IFCA, the Investment Facility for Central Asia.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Transport networks and infrastructure has always been at the core of the EU with TRACECA countries Kazakhstan cooperation. I would like to appreciate efforts of the National Secretary of TRACECA in Kazakhstan to support implementation.

Specific reference should be made to the recent "Silk Wind" project, promoted and supported by the LOGMOS project. "Silk Wind" aims at ensuring a competitive container block train connection between the Chinese border and the EU, over Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. In November 2012, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Ministers of Transport of the four involved countries, pledging cooperative efforts for realising this transport corridor (besides hard infrastructure, a specific focus on trade facilitation measures, e.g. harmonization of customs procedures, etc.).

In this context, The LOGMOS-project has been working closely together with the Kazakhstani authorities and private operators to support the further development of the Aktau port and its transport links over land and over sea.

Our ongoing project in the Maritime sector is performing extra efforts in assisting the Kazakh authorities in setting up an efficient Maritime and Port Administration.

I would like to note the positive breakthrough on EU-Kazakhstan cooperation in aviation sector, which will allow expanding our flight connections. TRACECA civil aviation project has also contributed to this development.

As for the immediate future, a new project on Civil Aviation to improve its safety and security is under preparation. Of course, its implementation is conditional on the final approval by the Commission.

Distinguished guests,

The EU has a strong interest in a peaceful and economically prosperous TRACECA Region. TRACECA has a very important role to play in reaching these goals through creation of safe and secure transport networks stretching through the Black and Caspian Seas.

In this process, many stakeholders - governmental institutions, EU programmes businesses are closely tied together. Indeed, the one needs the other: work done under our projects needs to be endorsed and supported on regional level by the government, businesses and other stakeholders to obtain expected results and vice-versa. I believe that this distinguished panel presents a perfect platform to discuss this multifaceted cooperation;

Thank you for your attention and wish you very fruitful discussions.