

JOINT DECLARATION

of the International Conference on “Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway link – new opportunities in the development of Silk Road”

We, participants of the International Conference on “Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway – new opportunities in the development of the Silk Road” organized by the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on October 16, 2014, in Baku, hereinafter referred to as Parties,

Recognizing significance of revival of the Great Silk Road on the new technological basis to provide unimpeded transportation of goods and passengers, as well as the role of transport in economic development, social stability, trade and regional cooperation of countries of the Eurasian region, mainly of the landlocked countries;

Considering high unrealized potential of Eurasian region in the development of trade and transit transportations between Asia and Europe through the Great Silk Road;

Acknowledging the support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of frontiers of the states, which are the important conditions for strengthening stability and sustainable economic development;

Highly evaluating the transport and transit potential of the Caspian region in the development of transport relations between Asia and Europe;

Acknowledging that the development of effective, safer and reliable Eurasian inland transport routes can provide extra and alternative transport opportunities for the current and future trade flows between Europe and Asia and facilitate further the participation of national economies in the global economy;

Noting a positive trend of constant growth of container transportations between Europe and Asia, where railways intend to take a considerable role, thereby reducing the congestion in maritime transportations;

Convinced that the volume of Eurasian railway transportations over long distances may significantly increase in case of the development of fast, reliable and uninterrupted railway and intermodal transport services in Eurasian transport connections;

Attaching due importance to the interregional project of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway connection in terms of creating great opportunities for the transportation of passengers and non-staging and multimodal delivery of goods from Asia to Europe and vice versa;

Recognizing that implementation of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project, as well as construction of the new Baku International Sea Trade Port at the settlement of Alat, and Anaklia deep seaport and commissioning of the new underwater tunnel in the Istanbul strait within the framework of "Marmaray" project, will create high-speed, secure and short connections for the efficient transportation of goods from Asia to Europe and vice versa, connecting Trans-Europe and Trans-Asian railway networks;

Underlining that the commissioning of Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway link as a whole will significantly increase the volume of international trade and expand transport connection among the countries of the region;

Declare the following:

- Parties will increase the level of cooperation in all aspects of the development of Eurasian transport connections and restoration of the Great Silk Road;
- Parties will promote wider use of electronic document circulation and intelligent transport system;
- Parties recognize that unresolved conflicts in the region are the main obstacles for the regional cooperation and realization of joint transport projects;
- Parties continue to take agreed measures for closer regional economic integration through implementation of the projects of joint development of transport infrastructure, as well as creation of favourable investment climate and competitive market for transport services;
- Parties welcome and express their support to the initiative of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Turkey on the implementation of project of the construction of the new railway line Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, which will contribute to the increase of international trade by connecting Trans-Europe and Trans-Asian railway networks,
- Parties support and will contribute to the efficient integration of New railway line Baku-Tbilisi-Kars with Trans-Europe and Trans-Asian railway networks;

- Parties welcome the construction of the new Baku International Sea Trade Port at the settlement of Alat, with the application of advanced modern technologies, which will contribute to the creation of railway, highway and sea route hub, as well as will provide high-speed and safe transportation of passengers and goods from Asia to Europe and vice versa;
- Parties will make efforts to attract resources of international financial institutions and development banks for the implementation of national and international projects in order to develop transport infrastructure through expanding the use of public-private partnerships;
- Parties shall create favorable conditions to attract cargo flows and develop transportation and expedition services;
- Parties shall take measures to expand the network of transport and logistics centers for the purpose of developing of multimodal transportations.

Parties extend their gratitude to the President and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for their efforts to develop transport and transit potential of Eurasian region and excellent organization of the Conference.