

## Side-event at the 80<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission

### Accelerating rail digital transformation for a more climate friendly transport in Asia-Pacific

25 April 2024, (12.45-13.45 hrs. Bangkok time)

Online and MR-A, Level 1, United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98021670507>

Meeting ID: 980 2167 0507

Passcode: #Raildigi1

Event registration link: <https://bit.ly/SideEventCS80>

#### Background

Being one of the more sustainable modes, rail needs to be promoted proactively, to address many of the negative externalities of transport that have recently been exacerbated. The rapid increase in trans-continental freight trains over the last decade have firmly established role of rail in fostering sustainable transport connectivity between Asia and Europe and vice versa.

The resilience demonstrated by rail transport during pandemic and the need for electronic information exchange among railways provides yet another opportunity to further enhance rail competitiveness by deepening rail digitalization in the region. Rail border crossings are central to efficient international railway transport and therefore proactive measures are needed ensure that border crossing formalities are carried expeditiously.

Electronic information interchange among stakeholders at the rail border crossings can support efficient completion of regulatory formalities and operational requirements. However, due to diverse legal and regulatory frameworks underpinning them the information gets fragmented.

The recent adoption of the [new annex](#) to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network containing *general principles on electronic information exchange among railways and between railways and control agencies* along the Network by eighth meeting of the Working Group on Trans-Asian Railway (September 2023) would provide overarching framework for railways of the region to work on seamless electronic data interchange practices along the rail corridors along the Trans-Asian Railway network.

Furthermore, the adoption of [Strategy 2030 on Accelerating Rail Digital Transformation in Asia-Pacific](#) by the eighth meeting of the Working Group on Trans-Asian Railway (September 2023) aims to provide further momentum and coherence to rail digitalization initiatives.

The implementation of new annex and Strategy 2030 is, therefore, expected to make international rail transport ready to handle increasing trans-continental traffic promoting shift to rail and

addressing many of the negative externalities of transport, particularly, reducing the carbon footprint of transport and thereby supporting countries to solutions to address climate change and realize Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development.

## Objectives

In this background, the side event aims to: (a) promote the importance of rail digitalization for a more climate friendly transport among the key policy makers in the region; and (b) encourage the parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway to complete the required national processes and submit *instrument of acceptance of new annex* for its entry into force in terms of Article 7, paragraph 5 to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway network.

The side-event is being organized by Islamic Republic of Iran together with Transport Division of ESCAP with the following tentative programme.

Time (BKK)	Tentative programme
1245-1300hrs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E Nassereddin HEIDARI, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of Islamic Republic of Iran in Bangkok (tbc)</li> <li>• Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina Ducrest, Chief, Transport Connectivity and Logistics Section, Transport Division</li> <li>• OSJD representative (tbc)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
1300-1325hrs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent rail digitalization initiatives in Asia-Pacific region <i>Presentation by Mr. Sandeep Jain, Transport Division, ESCAP</i></li> <li>• Promoting electronic information exchange among railway along Tran-Asian Railway Network <i>Presentation by Mr. Ali Abdollahi, Head of International Organizations Group, International Affairs Department, Iranian Railways (online)</i></li> </ul>
1325-1340hrs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country experiences on importance of electronic data interchange among railways for efficient international rail transport <i>Intervention by representative of JSC Russian Railways (tbc) (online)</i> <i>Department of Rail Transport, Thailand (tbc)</i> <i>Ministry of Road and Transport Development of Mongolia(tbc) (online)</i></li> </ul>
1340-1345hrs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concluding remarks</li> </ul>