



**Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
The Secretariat**

**Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE
Economic and Environmental Activities**

78th session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee
(Geneva, 23-26 February)

Agenda item 20 – Activities of other organizations of interest to the committee

**Statement by Roel Janssens, Economic Adviser
Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), it is a great pleasure for me to briefly take the floor under this agenda item.

In the field of transport, trade and customs the OSCE's main focus this year will remain on capacity-building, awareness-raising and exchange of best practices activities. The OSCE Border Management Staff College in Dushanbe, where we conduct many of our training activities, will remain a key instrument in this regard.

As pointed out by the Deputy Co-ordinator during the high-level policy segment last Tuesday, our support for the further development of Euro-Asian transport links and corridors will be continued. OSCE participating States have provided us with a clear mandate to do so and we have a proven track-record of effective, longstanding co-operation with the UNECE in this field.

Our work in the EATL field dovetails nicely also with the German 2016 OSCE Chairmanship's emphasis this year on "economic connectivity" through closer regional co-operation in the fields of trade and transport. The second preparatory meeting in the framework of this year's OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum scheduled to take place in Berlin on (19-20 May) will focus *inter alia* on good governance as a basis for business interaction and the creation of a positive investment climate. Back to back with this meeting the German Chairmanship will organize a business conference expected to gather business

representatives and investment agencies from across the OSCE/UNECE region. The main objective of the Business Conference “*Connectivity – for Commerce and Investment*” is to initiate a substantial dialogue between government officials and high-ranking business representatives about framework conditions for economic activity across the Euro-Asian region. Transport and logistics infrastructure, supply chain security, trade procedures, business processes, customs and border administration issues will all be an integral part of our discussions during these two events.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In line with the OSCE’s dual approach to transport paying attention to both “facilitation” and “security” and given the complex range of security risks faced by the inland transport sector we stand ready to continue and further intensify our co-operation with the UNECE and co-organize with them in June of this year an inter-modal Inland Transport Security Forum meeting here in Geneva.

Not only at the Secretariat level but also our network of field operations across the region is very active in the transport field. Let me briefly inform you on two forthcoming activities that may be of interest to the Committee:

In June 2016 in Dushanbe, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan with the support of our Office and the UNECE Trade Division will organize a *Regional Trade Facilitation Workshop* for Ministry of Trade, Transport and Customs representatives from countries in Central Asia as well as Afghanistan. The event will focus on simplifying and harmonizing procedures for international trade and will be aimed at supporting governments to reduce delays at border crossings, and to streamline, simplify and automate customs clearance, transit, import and export procedures. *Inter alia*, it will provide guidance for countries interested in establishing National Trade Facilitation Committees and look into issues related to acceding and implementing the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

In September 2016, in Astana, we plan to conduct jointly with the OSCE Programme Office in Astana and the World Customs Organization (WCO) and with the support and involvement of the UNECE Sustainable Transport Division a *Regional Workshop on Enhancing Trade Facilitation through the improvement of Regional Transit*. The event will gather relevant officials from Landlocked Developing Countries in Central Asia and the

South Caucasus. The agenda will provide an overview of available instruments and approaches towards improving the transit transport potential of the region among others through the introduction of customs information sharing systems; customs-business partnerships; deeper implementation of the TIR Convention and its guarantee system as well as issues related to rail transit in Central Asia.

Chair, with this I would like to conclude my brief intervention. I look forward to continue co-operating with many of you. Thank you for your attention.