

Dear participants of the conference, ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me on behalf of Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan to welcome all participants of the First Preparatory Conference for the 18th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum.

Allow to express gratitude to employees of OSCE Secretary and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan for great assistance, rendered in preparation and carrying out the given conference.

Over 170 delegates from 38 countries of the world, including regional representatives of the UN ECE, the UN ESCAP, the EU, the CAREC, the ECO, the international financial institutions, as well as officials of the state bodies, the transport organizations, branch associations of the Republic of Kazakhstan are taking part in work of the Conference.

We are grateful to all participants for arrival to Kazakhstan, having found time and opportunity.

Today OSCE is one of the most authoritative international organizations, bringing the essential contribution to strengthening of interaction and to expansion of trade and economic relations between states.

We consider forthcoming Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OSCE in 2010 as evidence of the international community's high appreciation of our state's and our President Mr. Nursultan Nazarbaev's role in development of integrating processes on the Euroasian continent.

Kazakhstan, possessing a favourable geographical location, makes a contribution to maintenance of peace and concord, to extension of the regional economic cooperation.

Today, in century of globalization and high speeds, transport has become the most significant structural component of economy and plays an considerable role in life of population, providing its increasing mobility.

For maintenance of reliable and sustainable operation of transport, some problems should be solved, to discussion of which our conference is devoted. We need to precisely compile list of them, to map out the ways of practical study and overcoming.

The problems of border crossing and transportation safety are key ones in formation of the single Euroasian transport system.

For solving these problems, all member states to OSCE must take comprehensive measures on elimination of physical and non-physical barriers. The problems include ones such as a lack of appropriate infrastructure on some parts of the regional transport network, an excessive require of documentation, a delay at entry points, etc.

Barriers at entry points, insufficient coordination in work of frontier services of the states of region and lack of agreement in tariff regulation issues, particularly regarding freight in transit, leads to decrease in efficiency and competitiveness of the Euroasian surface transport routes.

As a whole, we should consider and take decisions within the Economic and Environmental Forum regarding development of the transeurasian transport corridors, creation of favourable conditions for the reliable and safe transport communication on the continent, which will promote economic growth in the states of region.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Our conference is taking place in heart of the Eurasian continent on land of the ancient nomads. It is a place, where the basic corridor of the Great Silk Way passed through, connecting civilizations and cultures between East and West centuries ago, having laid foundation of the modern international relations.

Today Kazakhstan has started a practical stage of the realization of idea about revival of the Great Silk Way. Jointly with the Russian and Chinese colleagues and with support of our partners from the European countries and the international financial institutions, we have begun work on creation of a transcontinental road corridor “Western Europe – Western China”.

The given project has been determined as a key one within the implementation of Transport Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan up to 2015.

There should be remarked that the Strategy includes the main directions of development of all types of transport in the country and measures on development of transit through territory of the country. For these purposes, scaled works on formation of a modern transport infrastructure and increase of traffic capacity are being conducted.

It will be presented by short film about more details of work Kazakhstan is conducting on developing transport and transit potential. We would like to offer watching it now.