

Annex I

Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1–3	11
II. Partnerships	4–9	11
III. Objectives	10	12
IV. Priorities.....	11–51	13
Priority 1. Fundamental transit policy issues	11–14	13

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by heads of State and Government on 8 September 2000, laid out a set of development goals which call for the creation of an environment at national and international levels conducive to

establish efficient transit transport systems. The international community, including financial and development institutions and donor countries, should provide financial and technical support to help those countries to deal effectively with their transit transport problems and requirements.

5. The efficiency of transit transport systems will depend on the promotion of an enabling administrative legal and macroeconomic environment in both landlocked and transit developing countries for effective policy-making and resource mobilization and on cooperative arrangements between landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours. An effective strategy to improve transit transport systems requires actions at the regional, subregional and bilateral levels for the effective solution of transit problems, which would improve transit transport safety and enable significant economies of scale, particularly relevant for landlocked developing countries. This cooperation must be promoted on the basis of the mutual interest of both landlocked and transit developing countries.

6. The role of the private sector must be taken into account. The private sector, as a service provider and as a user of transit transport services, is an important stakeholder in society and should be a main contributor to the development of infrastructure and productive capacity in both landlocked and transit developing countries.

7. The costs of establishing and maintaining an efficient transit transport system often pose a daunting challenge to the landlocked and transit developing countries. Their development partners can play an important role in supporting and assisting them in their efforts to establish efficient transit transport systems.

8. The interests and concerns of landlocked and transit developing countries should be taken fully into account while establishing transit transport systems. In this regard, the interests and concerns of landlocked and transit developing countries should be considered complementary and mutually reinforcing.

9. Regional and subregional cooperation or integration can play an important role in successfully addressing the specific problems of transit transport from, in and through developing countries. Regional cooperation or integration initiatives can also facilitate the participation of landlocked and transit developing countries in the global economy, better sharing its benefits and containing its negative effects. In this context, support from all existing sources, where requested, for mechanisms of regional and subregional dialogue and regional integration among landlocked and transit developing countries, is important.

III. Objectives

10. The objective of the present Programme of Action is to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and establish a new global framework for action for developing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries, taking into account the interests of both landlocked and transit developing countries. The Programme of Action thus aims to: (a) secure access to and from the sea by all means of transport according to applicable rules of international law; (b) reduce costs and improve services so as to increase the competitiveness of their exports; (c) reduce the delivered costs of imports; (d) address problems of delays and uncertainties in trade routes; (e) develop

adequate national networks; (f) reduce loss, damage and deterioration en route;

transport facilitation. In that regard, the role of the regional commissions and subregional organizations should be further strengthened. In this context, the regional commissions and subregional organizations in Africa, Asia and Latin America need further assistance from the international community;

(f) The existing institutional mechanisms at the policy and operational levels to monitor and promote the implementation of agreements and arrangements involving landlocked and transit developing countries should be further strengthened;

(g) Efforts should be made to promote integrated training programmes encompassing all levels, from the top management to low-level operators, in both the public and private sectors.

Priority 2 Infrastructure development and maintenance

15. Inadequate infrastructure is a major obstacle to establishing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries. The deterioration of transport infrastructure is a general problem that affects both. Communications facilities are required to facilitate advance knowledge of transport service availabilities and to ensure smooth and speedy transit. Addressing these needs will involve considerable investment, setting up of public-private partnerships, capacity-building, and new policies and institutional reform, where necessary. The share of national resources and official development assistance allocated to infrastructure development in many landlocked and transit developing countries is limited. Also, the challenge of establishing adequate infrastructure facilities and of remedying the deterioration of existing transport infrastructure in both landlocked and transit developing countries could go beyond the public sector. In particular, the financial and technical support of donors, international financial institutions and development assistance agencies remains critical. The private sector could also play an important role.

16. A prerequisite for successfully attracting private investment in infrastructure projects is a sound regulatory and institutional framework. Regional and subregional economic cooperation or integration can help to overcome problems of market size in landlocked and transit developing countries, especially in the least developed among them, and attract the private sector to invest in infrastructure development. In this context, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an important initiative, as most landlocked and transit developing countries are in this continent, and may well boost the creation of subregional and regional infrastructure. The interests and concerns of landlocked developing countries should be taken into careful consideration in the implementation of the trans-African

appropriate, financial assistance and investment from donors, international financial institutions and development assistance agencies;

(b) Landlocked and transit developing countries should make every effort to provide a conducive environment for using all transport modes in transit transport services in order to encourage competition among different transport modes, particularly road and rail transport. At the same time, capacities and legal regimes for multimodal transport operations should be further developed;

(c) Particular attention should be given to constructing “missing links” in the regional and subregional transport network;

(d) Private-sector participation should be encouraged, also by development partners, in transit transport infrastructure development, through co-financing, Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT), and playing a catalytic role in attracting foreign direct investment, as well as facilitating increased access to bond markets;

(e) Private-public partnership platforms along trade and transport corridors should be promoted through the development and extensive use of common information and communication technology-based management and monitoring systems.

B. Road transport

20. Road transport is an increasingly important mode of transport for the imports and exports of landlocked developing countries. In particular, road transport is the main mode of transit transport in Africa. For the expansion of roads, transit infrastructure sizeable resource allocations are required. The key problem areas, particularly with regard to international road transport, are the worsening road safety due to inadequate calibration, absence of social infrastructure along the transit corridors and particularly the ageing of transport means and poor maintenance, which are closely associated with the practice of overloading vehicles.

21. The following specific actions are required:

(a) The subregional and regional infrastructure development plans should give high priority to transit corridors linking landlocked developing countries to the transport network in transit developing countries, as well as to the regional network;

(b) Landlocked and transit developing countries should consider taking the necessary initiatives to accede to and implement relevant international conventions related to road transport;

(c) At the bilateral, subregional and regional levels, consideration should be given to taking measures to gradually liberalize road transport services, taking into account specific circumstances in landlocked and transit developing countries, and to facilitating road operational planning and management, through expansion of the databases on road transit and review of the quota system and transit and transportation costs and of other measures such as roadblocks and custom supervised convoys.

C. Ports

22. The efficiency of port operations depends on adequate infrastructure and good management. Many seaports are a critical bottleneck in the transit systems because of a range of physical inadequacies and operational constraints. Problems of quality of handling and storage facilities for transit cargo, cumbersome procedures for the clearing and release of cargo, congestion and the shortage of skilled manpower, are particularly relevant.

23. The following specific actions are required:

(a) Landlocked and transit developing countries should seek cooperative arrangements to improve port facilities and services for transit goods, including the modernization of existing terminals, the establishment of new ones and the simplification of procedures where appropriate;

(b) Expand the capacity to handle transit trade, also allowing private terminal operations to promote competition and encourage efficiency;

(c) A greater cooperation and coordination should be promoted between public and private institutions dealing with transit traffic in ports (customs administration, security personnel, port authorities, commercial banks, clearing and forwarding agents, insurance companies);

(d) The establishment of dry ports in landlocked and transit developing countries should be promoted;

(d) Training programmes at the national and subregional levels should be expanded.

G. Communications

and the need for enhanced technical assistance and capacity-building in this area. Also, the decision in the same declaration that the World Trade Organization programme would address issues related to the trade of small, vulnerable economies and their full integration in the multilateral trading system was a welcome step for most landlocked and transit developing countries.

37. The following specific actions are required:

(a) The accession of landlocked and transit developing countries to the World Trade Organization should be further accelerated. In this respect, the accession process for landlocked and transit developing countries should take into account their individual level of development, including special needs and problems caused by the geographical disadvantage. The development partners should provide assistance in this matter;

(b) The Monterrey Consensus recognizes the importance of enhanced and predictable access to all markets for the exports of developing countries, including landlocked and transit developing countries. In accordance with the commitments in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, in particular paragraphs 13 and 16, and the rules of the World Trade Organization, current negotiations should give full attention to the needs and interests of developing countries, including landlocked and transit developing countries;

(c) Landlocked and transit developing countries should be provided assistance in the area of trade facilitation in the light of the agreement in the Doha Ministerial Declaration that the negotiations will take place after the fifth session of the Ministerial Conference on the basis of a decision to be taken by explicit consensus at that session, on the modalities of negotiations;

(d) More efforts are required within available financial resources to facilitate transit traffic through border posts, to expand the use of information technology, to implement efficient customs control systems and simplification of documents and procedures, and to strengthen the capacity-building of government agencies in the

The development partners should play an important role in supporting transit transport development programmes. Such support should take fully into account the special vulnerabilities and developmental needs of landlocked and transit developing countries in providing assistance to them.

38 bis. The primary responsibility for implementing the present Programme of Action should rest with landlocked and transit developing countries. It is essential that they seek to create conditions in which resources can be generated, attracted and effectively mobilized to address their development challenges, including those that result from being landlocked.

39. The following specific actions are required:

(a) The international community, including financial and development institutions and donor countries, should play an important supporting role to assist those countries to deal effectively with their transit transport problems and requirements, including, inter alia, by:

(i) Facilitating an external environment supportive of full and timely realizing of the objectives of the present Programme of Action;

40. The following areas should be considered a priority for financial assistance:

(a) Investments designed to complete “missing links” in the transit transport chain to extend railways and roads to landlocked developing countries;

landlocked and transit developing countries in organizing those subregional meetings.

49. The United Nations General Assembly is invited to consider conducting a comprehensive review of the implementation of the present Programme of Action at a moment to be decided upon, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B. The Office of the High Representative should coordinate the preparatory process for the review. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank and the regional commissions are invited to provide substantive and technical assistance for that process.

50. The Secretary-General of the United Nations should report, on the basis of the information provided by Member States and relevant international, regional and subregional organizations, on the implementation of the present Programme of Action to the General Assembly, which is invited to decide its periodicity.

51. In accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/227, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States is requested to, inter alia, enhance its cooperation and coordination with organizations within the United Nations system, particularly those engaged in operational activities on the ground in landlocked and transit developing countries, to ensure effective implementation of the Programme of Action in line with General Assembly resolution 57/270 B. The Office of the High Representative will continue to carry out advocacy work to mobilize international awareness and focus attention on the implementation of the present Programme of Action.