



**TRACECA PROJECT “LOGISTICS PROCESSES AND MOTORWAYS OF THE SEAS II”
APPLIED TRAINING WORKSHOP ON TRACECA CONTAINERISATION TRENDS AND
CUSTOMS CLEARANCE FOR REGULAR BLOCK TRAIN TRANSPORTATION**

BAKU, 17 APRIL 2012

Final Conclusions of the Meeting

The Participants in the Applied Training on TRACECA containerization trends and customs clearance for regular block train transportation:

- welcomed the continuous support of the European Commission to logistics and MOS development in TRACECA within the framework of the current project;
- expressed gratitude to the Azerbaijan TRACECA National Secretariat and Permanent Secretariat of IGC TRACECA in support to workshop organization;
- expressed gratitude to the delegation of the European Union to Azerbaijan in support and participation to the workshop;
- thanked H.E. the Ambassador of the EU to Azerbaijan for its highlight of the EU broader political perspective in fostering regional cooperation based on the European experience and confirmed their adherence to the corresponding principles and targets;
- constituted the continuation of regional dialogue and proactive cooperation within TRACECA intermodal transport and logistics dimensions;
- focused discussions on containerization trends, regular block train transportation, logistics initiatives and their interaction with TRACECA countries;
- invited stakeholders to continue exchanging on logistics and MOS dimensions of TRACECA with a view to the implementation of pilot projects.

Beneficiaries and stakeholders:

- approved the methodology followed by LOGMOS Project for reaching its targets;
- noted on new actions initiated by the LOGMOS Project on follow up of the previous MOS and Logistics Projects and implementation of corresponding and pilot-projects and new potential ones;

Concerning the pilot project "Silk Wind - Block Train of Intermodal Transport" presented by the Delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Participants:

- supported the general concept of the project;
- recognized the growing economic role of Western China in the trade with Europe and thus in TRACECA containerization processes, which was also emphasized by the Azerbaijani Delegation in its presentation of the 'China to London' routes, and therefore agreed to take the Chinese cargo potential into account in the development of the TRACECA Corridor;
- underlined the potential of the proposed Block Train Route to become the shortest and time saving transportation route compared to alternative routes (sea and other rail road routes) connecting China with Turkey and Southern Europe;
- appreciated the complementarity between this project and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway on-going project whose latest developments were presented by the Azerbaijani Delegation,
- reviewed the preliminary action plan proposed by the Kazakh Delegation on the project implementation and agreed to provide comments and recommendations on this action plan within a period of one (1) month;
- stressed the necessity, for the smooth development of regular block train operations, to develop a complex approach addressing, among other such issues as border-crossing procedures, profile of the train sole economic operator responsible at national level in each country in front of customs, tariffs, supporting infrastructure, etc;
- agreed on the methodology recommended in the above-mentioned action plan based on continuous negotiations between involved stakeholders of the proposed member-countries to eliminate bottlenecks in order to achieve the necessary regularity of the service and guarantee its seamless operation through the Corridor;
- agreed that the implementation of modern border-crossing procedures was the key prerequisite for the launch of regular international block trains. This would pave the way for the harmonization of customs and other administrative procedures and their future joint performance between country-members entailing substantial decrease in cargo transit-times and reduction of transport costs and charges thus enhancing the attractiveness and competitiveness of TRACECA Corridor, compared to alternative routes and / or transport modes.
- suggested the use of experience and achievements of VIKING train in the development of Silk Wind Block Train project;
- the Customs Services of participating member-states agreed to assist in improving border-crossing customs procedures and jointly work on the introduction of pre-arrival information exchange systems such as PAIES between themselves. The first pilot project for PAIES will be used as a good practice example for the Silk Wind Block Train route;

- agreed upon the necessity to establish a coordinating body with the support and under the leadership of the Permanent Secretariat to follow-up the implementation and further developments of the action plan and ensure a smooth implementation of the project. This coordinating body will include representatives from Ministries, Customs authorities, railway companies and port administrations of participating member-states (each country will appoint delegates from its own relevant organizations) which will be distributed in 2 sub-working groups, one for Customs issues and the second for railway operations and management. The LOGMOS Project will bring its assistance to the fulfillment of the tasks of the coordinating body;
- agreed to have each participant drafting a list of prioritized problems and obstacles on the project implementation and submit it to the LOGMOS Project (for further handling over to the Coordinating Body as soon as it will be gathered) within the period of one (1) month as from the date of the present meeting;
- discussed the issues of CIM/SMGS joint application for the regular block trains and agreed to continue discussions within the framework of the Railway Sub Working Group meetings; agreed to review the draft of the Cooperation Agreement on Development of Transportation through Caspian Sea and Black Sea (main agreement on Silk Wind Block Train project) after review and approval of the proposed action plan, i.e. after one month; suggested and agreed to continue this discussion at the Regional LOGMOS Seminar to be held in Istanbul (Turkey) in June 2012;
- approved the proposed measures as a basis for cooperation; recommendations for implementation are to be further updated and specified in the course of the project's implementation;