Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs
Priority 3 Transit, Transport and Connectivity

Sandeep Raj Jain
Transport Division

Contents

- ❑ Priority 3 Awaza POA

- ❑ Mongolia's 2030 Ambition for transport

- ❑ ESCAP initiatives

- ❑ Way Forward

Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs

✓ POAs show progression from transit-transport/trade facilitation (Almaty) →to broader economic transformation and integration (Vienna) → innovation, resilience and connectivity in a digital & climate-aware era (Awaza)

✓ All three POAs retained the foundational elements of transit/transport, trade facilitation, and support for LLDCs, but each added priorities to respond to changing global context

✓ Means of implementation (finance, partnerships, capacity-building) remain a cross-cutting priority throughout, but are increasingly emphasised.

✓ Awaza PoA also signals stronger alignment with other global frameworks (e.g., digital economy, climate action, Sustainable Development Goals).

Covered under para159 to 191

✓ Recognition of *special geographical challenges* of LLDCs (159)

✓ Focus of improving physical infrastructure: roads, railways, inland waterways, dry ports (170), airports (165) and linking transport infrastructure (161 to 164)

✓ *Transit corridor as economic development corridors* – link hard infrastructure with soft to improve connectivity for LLDCs. Some LLDCs lack institutional mechanism to manage transit corridors (167 to 169)

✓ *Slow progress on freedom of transit* and right of access to sea

Targets (seven)

✓ Freedom of transit and right of access to sea; establish a high-level panel (1,3)

✓ Significantly expand and upgrade transport infrastructure and cross border connectivity including through multimodal systems and strengthen related institutional capacities (2, 4)

✓ Standardized cross border transport infrastructure and transit requirements 5

✓ Infrastructure investment finance facility 6

✓ Air transport 7

Actions

- ✓ LLDCs and transit countries to pursue connectivity related *bilaterial agreements*, in line with regional and international legal instruments including for corridor development and management 174

- ✓ Developing, upgrading, and maintenance of transit corridor leveraging ICT to enhance safety, and information sharing 176

- ✓ Legal and institutional framework for corridors 183

- ✓ Develop and maintain railway networks 182

Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs
Priority 3 Transit, transport and connectivity

Actions

✓ Safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems 172

✓ LLDCs develop Inclusive transport policy policies 173

✓ High level panel on freedom of transit 177

✓ Infrastructure investment finance facility 178, 184, 186, 187,188

✓ Air transport and ICAO (180 and 181)

✓ Develop multimodal transport networks

✓ Dry ports 191

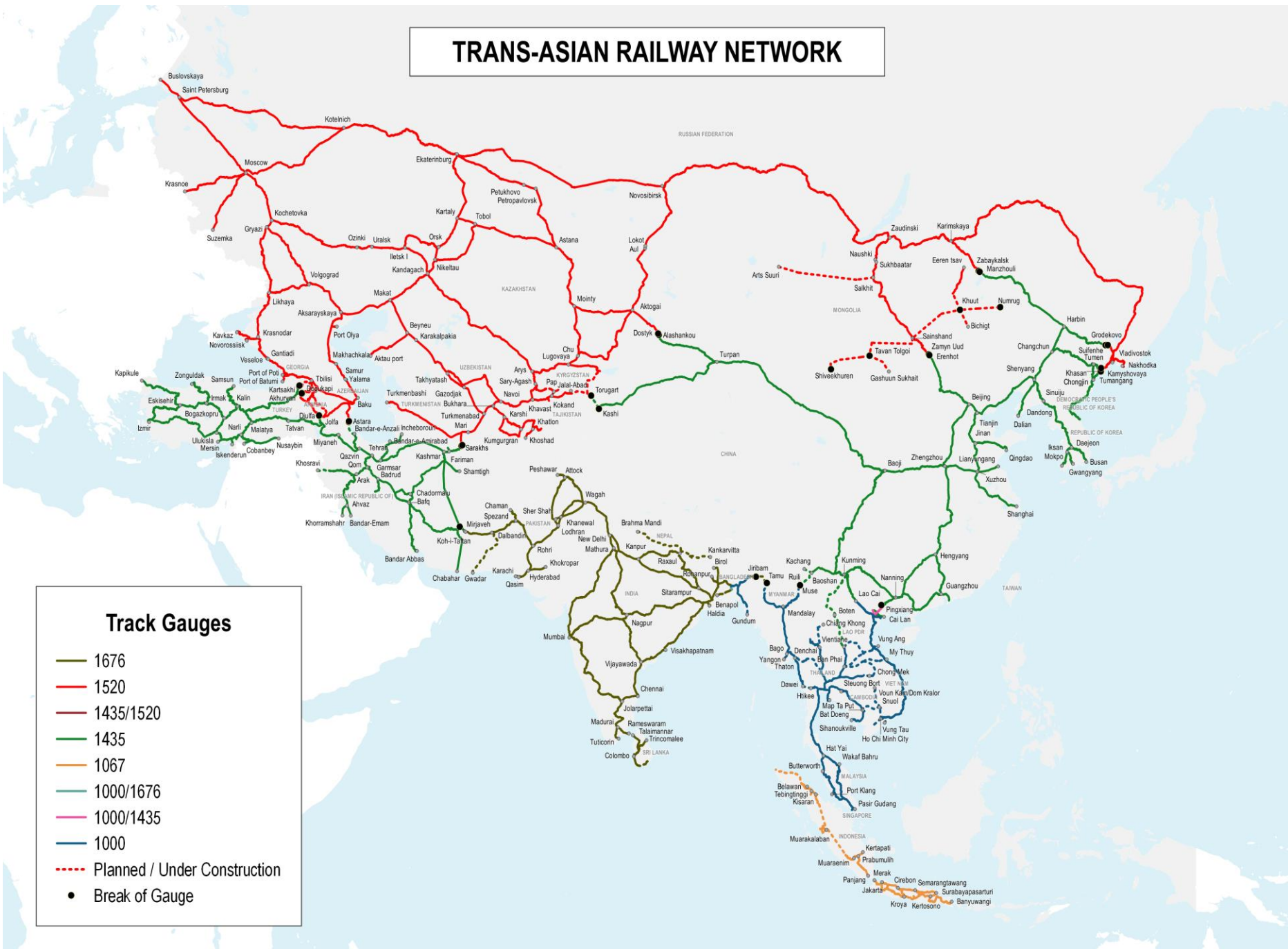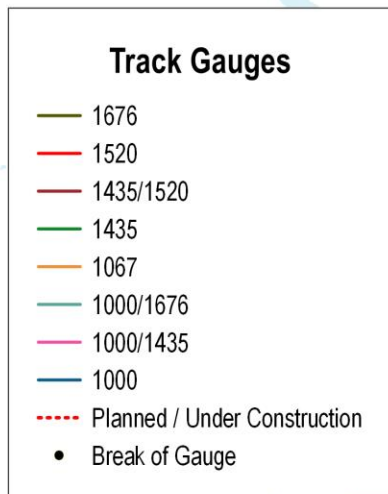## Actions under trade facilitation relevant for connectivity

- ✓ Develop and strengthen transport corridors streamlined border procedures, coordination in infrastructure development 140

- ✓ Stronger cooperation between LLDCs and transit countries to collect data to monitor and address transit challenges141

- ✓ Sharing best practices on border and corridor management 142

- ✓ Support digitalization of trade and customs procedures for fast and secure exchange of data and information concerning cargo and means of transport 143

- ✓ Capacity building for effective implementation of transport facilitation convention 146

Mongolia's 2030 Ambition

- ✓ Length railway tracks from 2020 km to 4680 km

- ✓ Border crossing railway 3 to 7

- ✓ Railway corridor 1 line to 3 line

- ✓ Sea port connected by rail 1 port to 17 port

- ✓ Intergovernmental agreement on international rail transport 2 countries – 11 countries

- ✓ Total transit 3.4mt/year to 40 mt/year (more that 10 time)

- ✓ Total export 8.2 mt to 80 mt/year (nearly 10 times)

- ✓ Total capacity 37 mt/year to 180 mt/year (five times)

TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

Track Gauges

- —— 1676
- —— 1520
- —— 1435/1520
- —— 1435
- —— 1067
- —— 1000/1676
- —— 1000/1435
- —— 1000
- - - - Planned / Under Construction
- ● Break of Gauge

RUSSIAN FEDERATION
KAZAKHSTAN
MONGOLIA
CHINA
GEORGIA
TURKEY
IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)
PAKISTAN
INDIA
NEPAL
BANGLADESH
MYANMAR
THAILAND
LAO PDR
VIET NAM
CAMBODIA
MALAYSIA
SINGAPORE
INDONESIA
SRI LANKA
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
TAIWAN
AZERBAIJAN
ARMENIA
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
KYRGYZSTAN
TAJIKISTAN

Intergovernmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway Network

Trans-Asian Railway Network was developed by ESCAP members as a coordinated plan to develop a regional railway network to meet the growing needs of intra and interregional trade and transport.

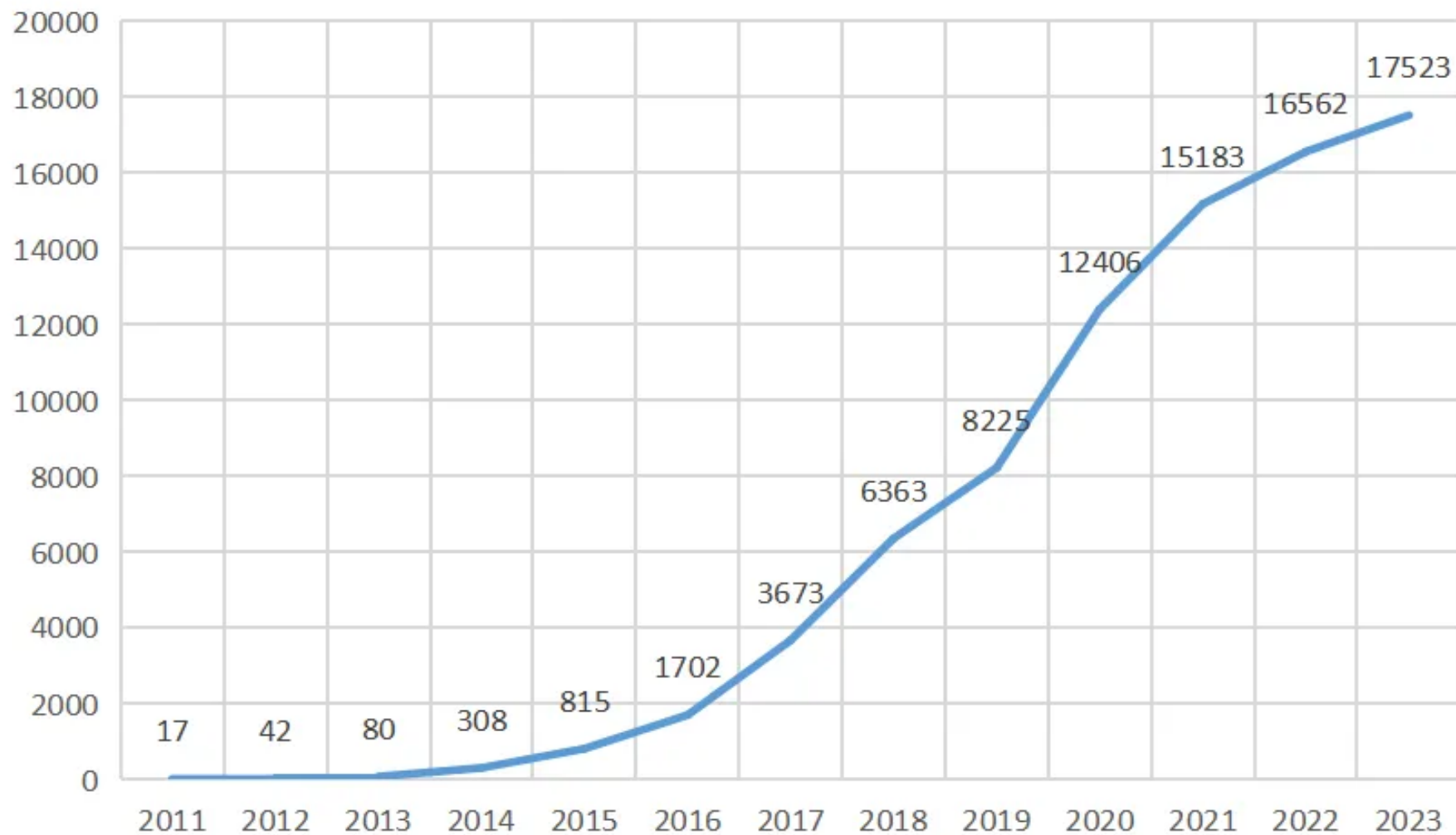Formalized through intergovernmental agreement entered into force in 2009. Has now 22 contracting parties

The Working Group under the agreement provides a regional platform for the member countries to discuss persistent and emerging issues in international railway transport along the network. Eight meetings- focus on operational issues

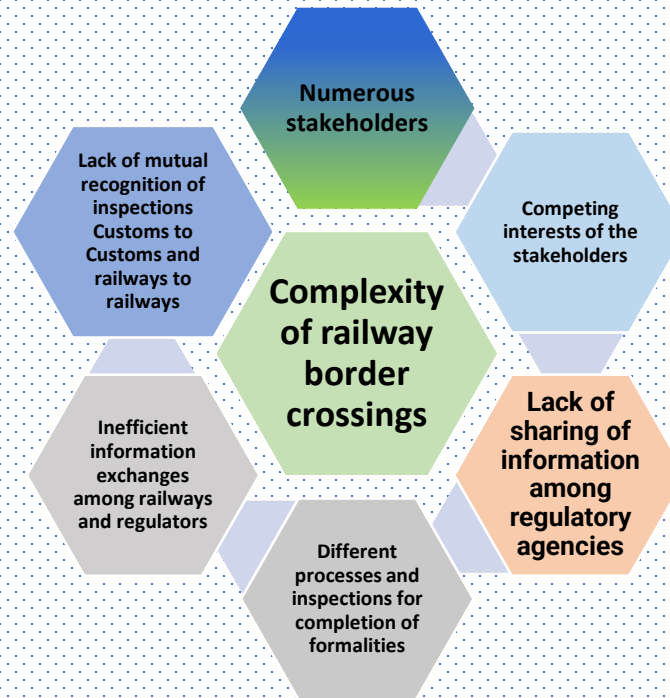# Rail is now established mode of interregional transport

- ✓ Exponential increase in Eurasian rail traffic in last decade

- ✓ Rail proved to be reliable transport means during pandemic-as the rail freight avoided major restrictions and kept international supply chain functioning

- ✓ Geopolitical challenges (Suez crisis) has further fortified role of rail in international transport as countries look to de-risk their transport connectivity

- ✓ Rail, therefore, is now established as sustainable, reliable and a competitive mode of transport between Asia and Europe and vice versa

ANNUAL FREIGHT TRAIN TRIPS BETWEEN CHINA/EUROPE FROM 2011 TO 2023

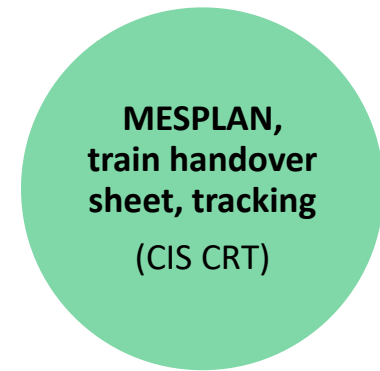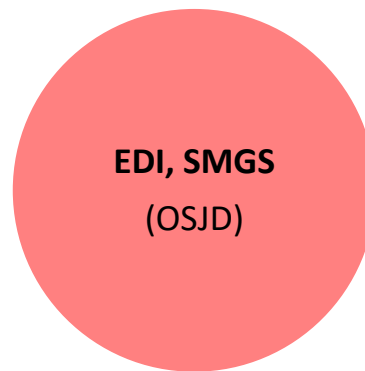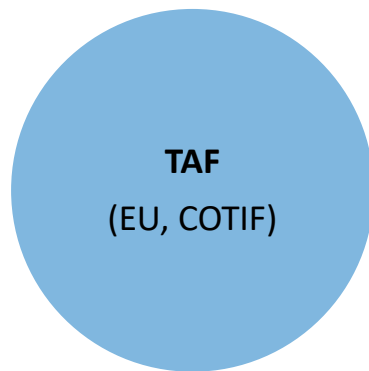| Year	Trips
2011	17
2012	42
2013	80
2014	308
2015	815
2016	1702
2017	3673
2018	6363
2019	8225
2020	12406
2021	15183
2022	16562
2023	17523

Source: CRCT, New Silkroad Discovery

Complex environment of railway border crossing

- Numerous stakeholders
- Competing interests of the stakeholders
- Lack of sharing of information among regulatory agencies
- Different processes and inspections for completion of formalities
- Inefficient information exchanges among railways and regulators
- Lack of mutual recognition of inspections Customs to Customs and railways to railways

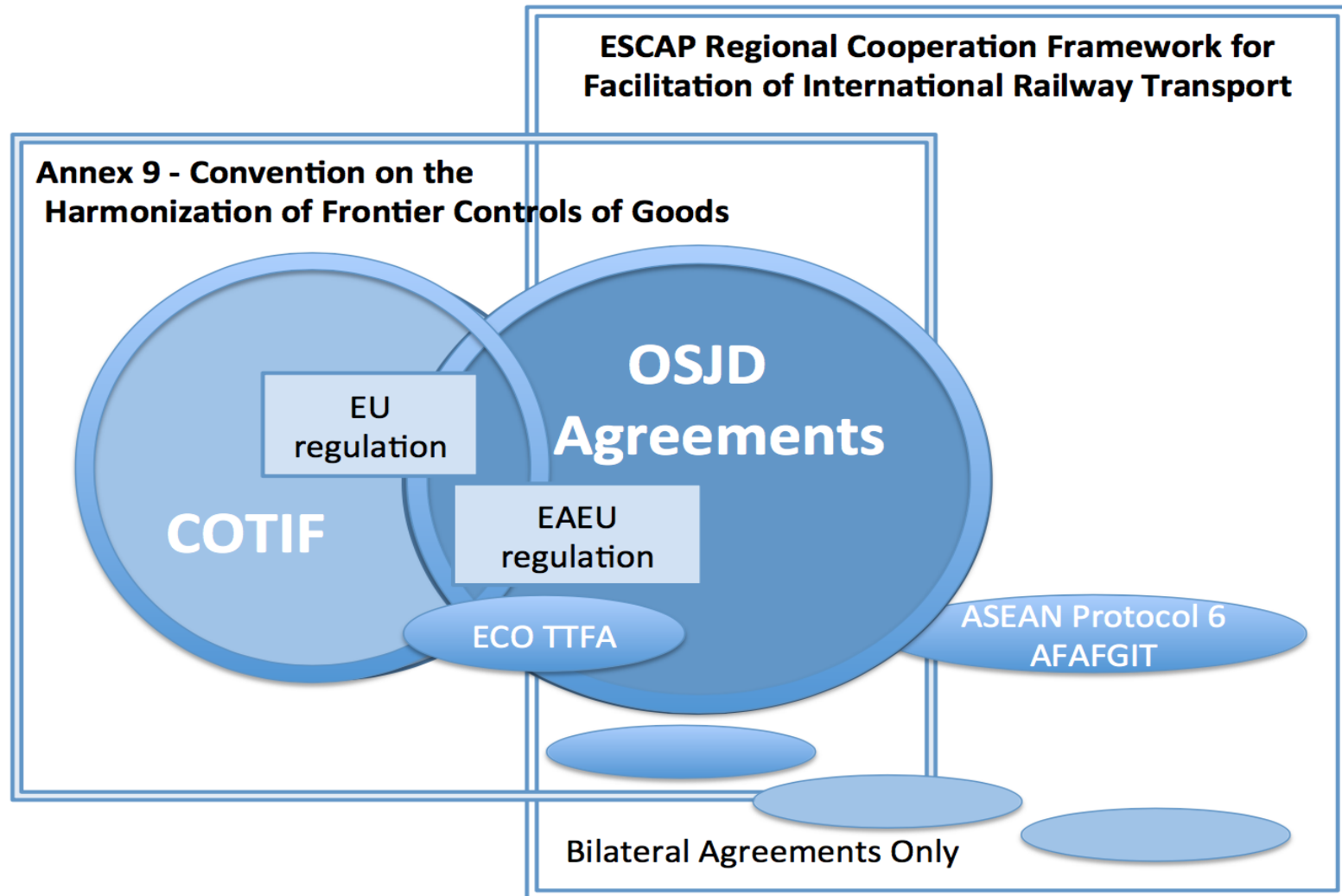**Complexity of railway border crossings**

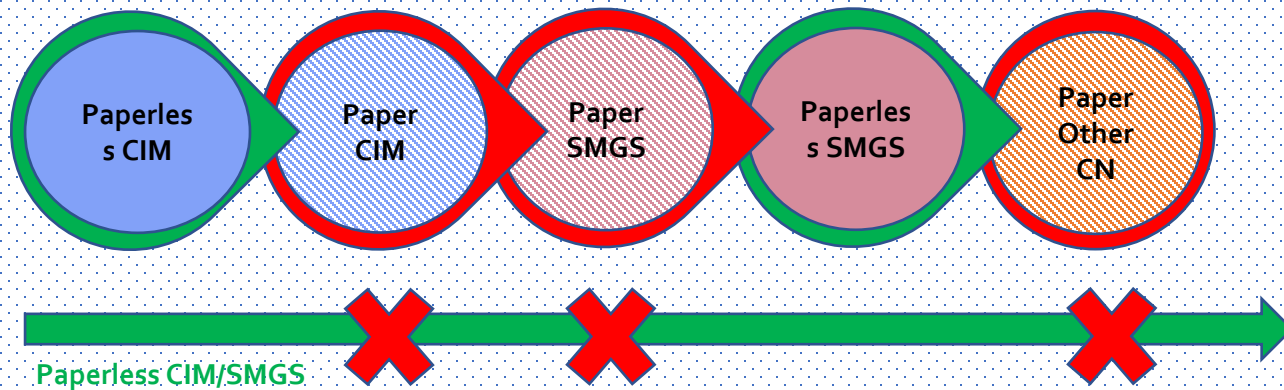# Existing situation on electronic information exchange between railways

Three electronic exchange systems have been developed by **EU, OSJD and CIS** railway organizations that are being used to support Eurasian rail traffic

TAF
(EU, COTIF)

EDI, SMGS
(OSJD)

**MESPLAN,
train handover
sheet, tracking**
(CIS CRT)

Fragmented legal environment along Eurasian rail corridors

ESCAP Regional Cooperation Framework for Facilitation of International Railway Transport

Annex 9 - Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods

OSJD Agreements

COTIF

EU regulation

EAEU regulation

ECO TTFA

ASEAN Protocol 6 AFAFGIT

Bilateral Agreements Only

Lack of seamless information flow along the international railway corridors

Paperless CIM → Paper CIM → Paper SMGS → Paperless SMGS → Paper Other CN

Paperless CIM/SMGS

New Annex to intergovernmental agreement on Trans-Asia Railway network

Proposed by Iran at the seventh meeting in 2021 and adopted at the **eighth meeting** held in 2023

Annex on Guiding principles on electronic information exchange among railways and between railways and control agencies
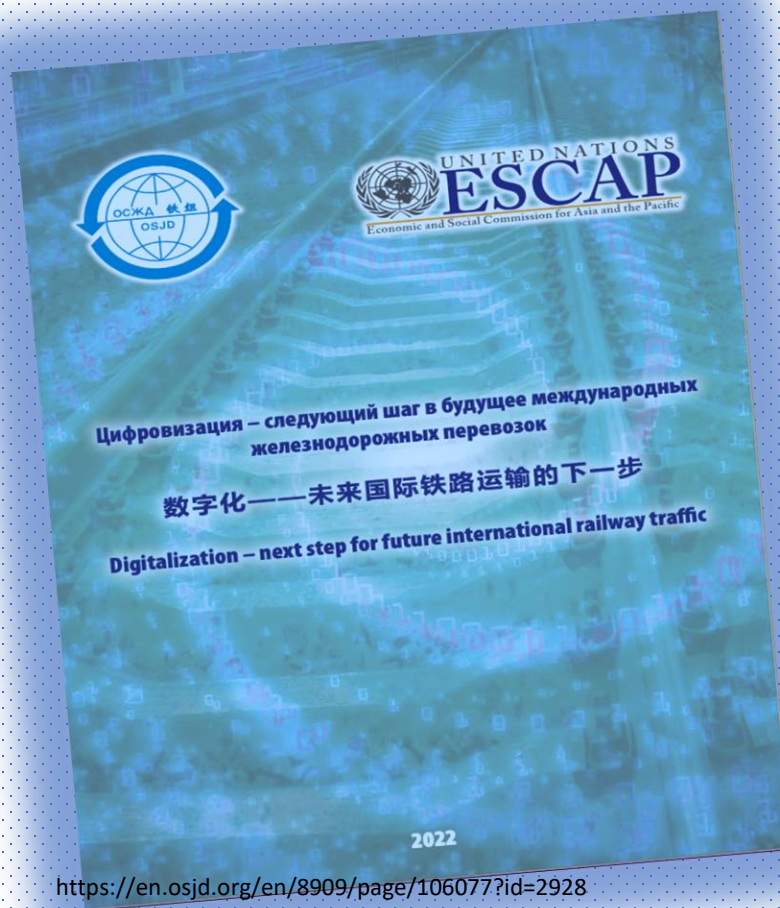
Encourages contracting parties to electronically exchange data required for completion of rail border crossing

Aims to encourage compatible electronic information exchange practices so that the information flows seamlessly among the rail stakeholder for completion of regulatory formalities and operational requirements

New Annex to intergovernmental agreement on Trans-Asia Railway network

- ✓ Aim to provide grounds for the further harmonization of electronic information exchange/data interchange among railways and between railways and control agencies

- ✓ Main objective of the principles is to provide general guidance to the Parties

- ✓ Encourage use existing standards and practices on electronic information exchange/data interchange

- ✓ Could also serve as a basis for developing plurilateral, multilateral and regional agreements

ESCAP-OSJD Joint document on potential of electronic information exchange to streamline customs formalities in international railway transport

Цифровизация – следующий шаг в будущее международных железнодорожных перевозок

数字化——未来国际铁路运输的下一步

Digitalization – next step for future international railway traffic

2022

Potential of electronic exchange of information for streamlining customs formalities for rail

1. **Recognition of railway consignment note as customs transit declaration**

2. Use of new technologies in collecting information required for regulatory controls and increased cooperation among border agencies behind the border and across the border

3. **Implementation of joint control measures customs and other regulatory controls**

4. Electronic pre- arrival intimation can facilitate integrated risk assessment

5. **Electronic interface between railway and border agencies for streamlining customs formalities**

6. Facilitated customs formalities for rail transit including simplified procedures for authorized rail operators (AROs)

New Annex to intergovernmental agreement on Trans-Asia Railway network

Next steps for entry into force on new annex

- ✓ Annex Adopted at the eighth meeting of the Working Group

- ✓ As per article 7, paragraph 5 of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, the annex shall enter into force twelve (12) months after they have been _accepted_ by two-thirds of the Parties.

- ✓ An instrument of acceptance has been sent as enclosure to NV issued by secretariat on 27 December 2023

Analysis of rail data electronic interchange between China- Mongolia and Russian Federation has found

- ✓ R-to-R electronic data interchange exists, the initiatives appear to be fragmented and there seems gaps in rail-to-third parties and customs-to-customs interchanges, especially for the cargo in transit

- ✓ Several initiatives as well legal instruments at international, trilateral, and bilateral level on electronic data interchange exist between railways of three countries

- ✓ However, there was no common legal document on electronic data interchange among railways and between railways and customs that all stakeholders could refer to

Simplified electronic rail transit system

Electronic pre-arrival information on goods and rolling stock

Digital exchange of messages for transit by rail

Reduced guarantees for transit by railway

Minimum and common documentary requirements for transit formalities

Electronic transit system for rail

Recognition of railway consignment note as transit declaration

Use of new technologies such as dynamic scanners and nonintrusive inspections and sharing of inspection results

Joint controls based on risk assessment

Single window facility for railway transport at the railway border crossings
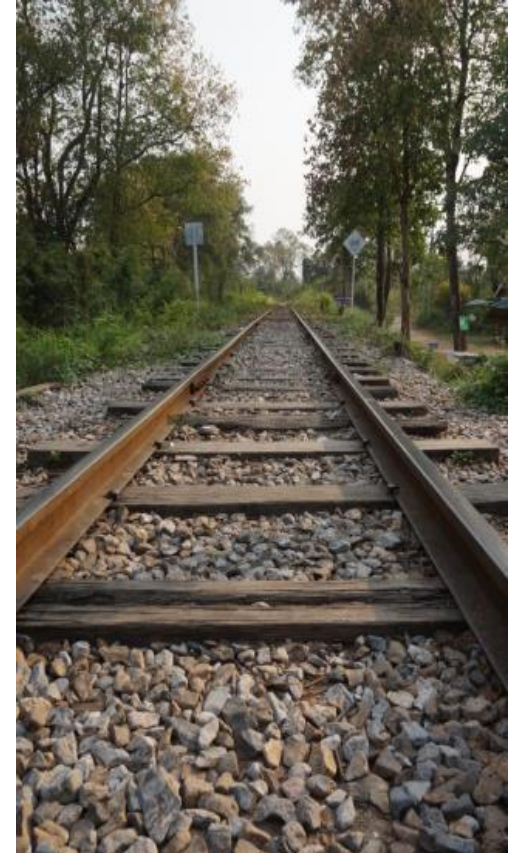
Strategy 2030 on Accelerating Rail Digital Transformation in the Asia-Pacific region

The Strategy 2030 on Accelerating Rail Digital Transformation in the Asia-Pacific region adopted at the eighth meeting of Working group on Trans-Asian Railway network in 2023 aims to provide coherence and momentum to rail digitalization initiatives.

The strategy comprises of a guiding vision, six objectives, eight priority areas and five enablers, as well as implementing arrangements, including for measuring progress in rail digitalization.

Implementation of the Strategy 2030 would enhance rail competitiveness in region over medium to long term, facilitating a shift towards rail and reducing carbon emissions, traffic congestion and air pollution.
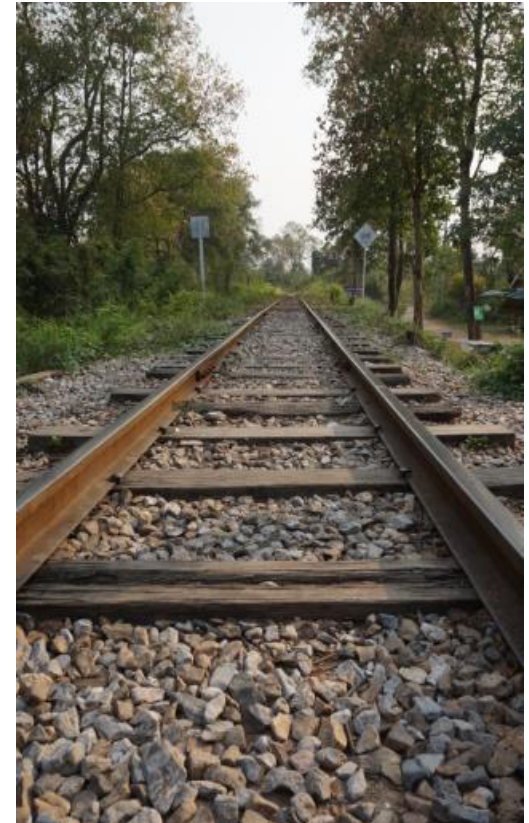
For more information on the strategy please visit https://www.unescap.org/kp/2023/strategy-2030-accelerating-rail-digital-transformation-asia-pacific-region

Outcomes of ninth meeting of Trans-Asian railway

- ✓ Regional Framework on Strengthening Rail Cybersecurity in Asia-Pacific- (establishing informal group of experts)

- ✓ Railway Connectivity Standards Scheme (task force is being set up on rail connectivity standards)

Thank you
for
your attention

http://www.unescap.org/our-work/transport