

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL  
WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORTATION  
AND TRANSIT FACILITATION



REGIONAL INITIATIVE ON TRANSPORT INTEGRATION  
SOUTH ASIA REGION



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# REPORT OUTLINE

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## *Foreword*

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“To fight poverty with passion and professionalism for lasting results.” This is the very essence of the World Bank’s Mission Statement that has a special place in South Asia, a region that harbors a lion’s share of the world’s poor. Development strategy for poverty alleviation must be rooted in transformation of society by the society. For this, individuals in society must be energized with a vision for their own betterment, and through shared knowledge, resources and capacity building, be helped to translate the vision into reality. Societies that have discovered the magic of individual and collective empowerment are the ones that have discovered the link between political and economic stability and poverty alleviation.

We are rapidly moving to an era of globalization where countries are increasingly connected by markets, trade, finance, resources, transport and communications. South Asian economies face a unique opportunity to participate competitively in this global production and trading system on competitive terms. However, this opportunity will be realized only if they can offer an efficient and integrated transport and communication systems. The World Bank’s South Asia Regional Initiative on Transport Integration aims to support economic collaboration among the concerned countries through effective trade

facilitation and transport systems, and through increased public-private dialogue, as well as private sector-led investments within a supportive policy environment.

The World Bank in partnership with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) sponsored the Regional Technical Workshop on Transport and Transit Facilitation under the Initiative. Participants included public and private sector representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal. The genesis for the workshop lies in the requests from the sub-region for global case studies and experiences that may provide insights as South Asia moves towards increased integration in its transportation and trade.

This report highlights the discussions, and in particular, the recommendations made by the country delegates in improving their transportation, trade facilitation and customs systems and in examining innovative options for effective public-private partnerships in transportation and logistics improvement. This report captures the hard work and collaboration of many individuals including our partners in client countries who made the workshop a success.

Let’s continue to strive through these and other on-going efforts in the region to attain our mission to fight poverty.

Mieko Nishimizu  
Vice President, South Asia Region  
The World Bank

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We would like to thank our ESCAP partners, Messrs. M. Rahmatullah and

John Moon for their active and substantive participation and for providing the logistics support for the workshop. We would like to extend our thanks to the panel of experts, resource persons and the institutions that participated in the workshop.

The efforts of several World Bank staff were critical in making the workshop a success. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the core team involved in the Regional Initiative: Mmes./Messrs. Uma Subramanian, Shunso Tsukada, John Tillman, Ron Kopicki, Marc Juhel, Mohammad Iqbal Karim, Surendra Joshi, Harald Hansen, Alok Bansal and Gladys Stevens. Special thanks are extended to Ms. Frannie Leautier who provided the management leadership for the initiative and generously shared her vision on challenges facing the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to Mr. Lorne Blackman for his expert guidance on procedural aspects and for his masterful facilitation of discussions at the workshop.

Mr. Lakshmanan, Ms. U. Subramanian and Ms. G. Stevens deserve special thanks for making the deliberations of the workshop available to a wider audience through these proceedings.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The Bangkok Workshop: Objective

The main objective of the Workshop was to provide a forum at which key government and private sector representatives of South Asian countries might review global experiences in transportation and regional trade arrangements, discuss transportation and trade facilitation issues within South Asia, and identify the principal bottlenecks and constraints encountered in the movement of commodities within and outside the region.

International experts presented papers on global experiences in the area of transportation, logistics and regional trading groups (such as the Mercosur, NAFTA, Southern African countries) as well as on regional transportation networks, trade facilitation, and customs reform. Case studies with potential relevance for South Asia were included.

Senior delegates of the government and private sectors from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal participated in the workshop. The key ministries/departments represented included transportation, shipping, commerce, industry, customs and finance. Private sector participants represented chambers of commerce, freight forwarders' associations, truckers and associations, and other industries involved in transportation and trade facilitation. The

list of participants is presented in Part II of this Report.

## 1.2 Scope of the Report

This report presents an overview of the discussions held at the workshop. It does not attempt to elaborate on the entire content of the presentations. Instead, it presents highlights of the international case studies and thematic presentations and the discussions that followed. In particular, it focuses on the recommendations made by the participants regarding three key thematic areas:

- Trade Facilitation and Customs Reform
- Transportation Corridors and Operations
- Public/Private Partnerships in Transportation and Logistics Improvement

These recommendations provide the basis for subsequent activities under the South Asia Regional Initiative on Transportation Integration. Most immediately, they include a series of national Consultative Meetings to disseminate the findings of the workshop to a larger audience and discuss its recommendations to identify key areas for follow up activities. The detailed papers presented at the workshop are available on the World Bank internet site.

*(<http://www.lite.worldbank.org/fpsi/infra/tr-facil/present.htm>)*

## 2. TOWARD A STRATEGIC VIEW OF TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT FACILITATION

The Workshop was opened by Mr. Adrianus Mooy, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP and Ms. Frannie Leautier, Sector Director, World Bank, who presented strategic views of transportation and transit facilitation. Mr. Mooy viewed the current globalization trend as an opportunity for the South Asian economies to promote greater economic integration and rapid growth through improved transportation and communications. Technical advances in these areas, he noted, are continually driving down unit costs, shrinking distances, making possible new types of logistical and information services, and rapidly expanding flows of goods, services, finance, and factors of production, all of which in turn lead to wealth creation in the region.

In her keynote address to the workshop, Ms. Frannie Leautier, Sector Director of the South Asia Infrastructure Unit of the World Bank, continued and elaborated on the theme of one world linked by transportation and communications, by markets and trade, and by resources and finance. Economic performance of a country, she continued, is increasingly shaped by both technological advances and

by its capacity to participate in the global production system characterized by extensive outsourcing, 'just-in-time' deliveries, and the ever-more common shipment of semi-manufactured goods, spare parts and final goods between production and assembly centers scattered across the globe.

To meet this challenge, South Asian economies need to develop a regional transportation and transit system that offers efficient transportation options and low 'transaction costs' that are competitive with those found elsewhere. She outlined the elements of a strategic view of transportation and transit facilitation that takes these evolving pressures and challenges into account. The elements are guiding values, enabling processes and objectives to direct regional transportation and transit facilitation. The speed at which countries are becoming urbanized is also related to the process of regional trade and transportation. The competitive edge of countries is affected not only by the efficiency of its transportation and transit systems, but also by the efficiency of the cities and services they offer to potential manufacturers and traders. The quality of city management is a critical factor in a globalized world, she added.

## Towards a Strategic View of Transportation and Transit Facilitation

### Box 1

#### A. World Trends and Trade and Transportation Challenges

1. Recent technical advances and institutional innovations in transportation and communications are shrinking distances, eroding time and borders and creating a knowledge-rich global production system.
2. Global markets with extensive outsourcing and 'just-in-time' deliveries are increasing demand for 'on-time' shipments of semi-manufactured products, components, spare parts, and final goods between production and assembly centers scattered over the globe.
3. As the 'half life' of many new products becomes shorter and shorter and the spatial distribution of supply and demand points changes rapidly in such a system, **what is** transported, **how** it is transported, and **to where** and **from where**, are all rapidly changing.
4. Wealth generation is becoming increasingly tied to the **capacity** to participate in this emerging 'Knowledge Society' and global production and trading system. The price of admission for a country or region to this dynamic global system is a transportation and transit system that offers an exporter short time spans between order and delivery, and predictable and reliable deliveries. In order to be plugged into this wealth-creating machine, South Asian economies must develop a transportation and transit facilitation system that will greatly reduce current physical and non-physical barriers to transportation and transit—by means of both physical infrastructure (such as multi-modal corridors and terminals) and non-physical infrastructure (reformed policies and procedures, regulations, and incentives for efficient transportation and transit).

### Box 2

#### B. Regional Actions to Address Challenges

1. Systemic, holistic approaches to transportation and transit facilitation: focus and improve the entire supply chain networks.
2. Develop multi-modal corridors and terminals, and efficient transit processes.
3. Technology development and capacity building.
4. More inclusive stakeholder participation: partnerships and 'coalitions of resources' among national, sub-national governments, private sector and (potentially) civil society.
5. Liberalization and deregulation of the transportation systems.
6. Learn from and apply to local conditions the experience gathered in other regions of the world.

### 3. EXCHANGE OF GLOBAL EXPERIENCES

While transportation and transit facilitation issues have definite country-specific characteristics deriving from regional social and cultural values, historical factors, and institutional aspects, the workshop participants saw the value of learning from experience already accumulated within the region and in other regions of the world. In recent decades, North America, Europe and other large trading regions have developed efficient transportation systems and cross-border goods flows in support of the evolving global trading system. In the process, valuable knowledge about transportation and infrastructure technologies, logistical services, systemic improvements in the entire supply chain network, and efficient customs processing has been gained in those countries.

Lessons from international experience were drawn from five case studies of major transportation and transit integration in quite different contexts: North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA); Southern Africa Transportation and Communication Commission (SATCC); Southern African 'Development Corridors;' Mercosur, the South American customs union; and Rotterdam Port.

The first four case studies focus on the evolution and the current status of trade and transportation integration in trading blocks in different parts of the Americas and Africa. The fifth case study--the Rotterdam

Port--is not only a showcase of the sophisticated capabilities of the world's largest port, but also reveals a dynamic strategic institution that scans the economic environment for future-shaping factors, develops appropriate infrastructure, including the complementary information technologies, reinvents its freight handling procedures, engages in hinterland-building activities, and offers new value-adding services to its customers.

#### 3.1 NAFTA

Mr. T.R. Lakshmanan presented the first case study. He surveyed the trade and transportation integration experiences of the North American Free Trade Agreement [e1](NAFTA), with an eye for its lessons for the Asian region. Created in 1994, NAFTA includes the United States, the largest trading nation, and its two heavily trading neighbors, Canada, and Mexico, with a total population of 393 million and a GDP of US \$ 8,622 billion in 1998. He noted that the current high volumes of trade in North America are not the outcome of a single trade agreement but are a culmination of a three-decade-long evolutionary process of trade liberalization. Pre-NAFTA arrangements for tariff-free goods movement within one sector (automobiles) between Canada and the US, and within designated border states between Mexico and the US (the Maquiladora system) had promoted industrial complexes that span the Canadian-

US and the US-Mexican borders. This has resulted in mutually beneficial intra-industry trade of high value-added goods. Among the lessons learned from this case is that the benefits of integration can take time but are sufficiently important to warrant immediate action. Consonant complementary policies in transportation deregulation and privatization in the last decade or more have helped to further lower trade barriers. The thrust of NAFTA was to remove as many as possible of the remaining barriers to the cross-border movement of goods, and expand and extend trade relationships that were already well established.

Mr. Lakshmanan underscored the fact that, despite the favorable history leading up to NAFTA and the elimination of tariffs and administrative non-tariff barriers, the cross-border movement of goods is still not 'truly free' given that it incurs additional procedural, time and monetary costs compared to intra-country freight transportation. Such barriers derive from several sources:

- a. residual economic regulation, especially in the form of cabotage rules and restrictions on the movement of certain goods and on specific modes of transportation, increase the cost of cross-border movement;
- b. lack of harmonization of technical standards such as truck size and weight regulations increases cross-border movement costs; and the complexity of these regulations defies quick or easy solutions;

- c. barriers resulting from non-transportation policies, such as the interdiction of drugs, illegal immigrants, and pests; and
- d. insufficient state-level resources for border inspection.

Mr. Lakshmanan described the passage to full transportation integration as an evolutionary process that requires that countries be patient, pay attention to details, tinker at the edges, and alertly seize opportunities for technological and organizational reform.

He concluded by noting that factors that cause delays at borders not only increase transportation costs but, more importantly, make it impossible to reap the economy-wide productivity benefits associated with the timely and rapid delivery of goods.

### **3.2 Southern African Development Community**

Mr. Smak Kaombwe presented the second case study. He highlighted the history and ongoing efforts of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to promote trade and transportation integration and facilitation. SADC is an association of 14 countries whose goal is to achieve economic and social development and regional integration. In 1998, it encompassed a land area of nine million square km. and a population of 180 million residents.

Mr. Kaombwe set the stage for a discussion of the current status and major issues of the

regional transportation system by presenting an overview of the historical, political and economic background of SADC. In a region where GDP and intra-region trade is expected to grow between 3.6 percent and 6.8 percent, Mr. Kaombwe noted that the limited extent and neglected maintenance of the physical infrastructure, as well as the policy, institutional and organizational impediments of the transportation system, required serious attention. He reviewed the policy context of reforms, which has been defined in a SADC Transportation Protocol, and detailed a range of policy measures and concrete investments that have been agreed upon as necessary to drive the reform process forward. He also made a plea for strategic transportation systems development with improved planning tools based on the development of models, databases, and multiple criteria for project selection. Finally, he assessed the status of implementation of the reform processes needed to support an improved and efficient regional transportation and trade system.

### **3.3 Maputo Corridor**

In the third case study, Mr. Stephan von Klaudy focused on the concept of ‘development corridors’ and its application and progress in the Maputo Corridor. This is the most advanced development corridor to date in Africa and is located in the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Mr. von Klaudy’s presentation began with a summary of the political and economic context in which the regional trade and transportation policies are being fashioned in Southern Africa. He then described the scope of the SADC

Transportation Protocol. He depicted the main traditional transportation corridors as the axes along which transportation activities are being revitalized to enhance transportation efficiency, promote intra-regional trade, and increase regional cooperation and integration. Mr. von Klaudy outlined the concept of ‘development corridors’ in which transportation improvement is used as a tool to create integrated regional development that enhances manufacturing, resources, services, and infrastructure with strong linkages to the local economies. In this context, he described the history and progress in the Maputo Corridor and highlighted its initial elements such as a cross-border private toll road, and proposed private sector participation in port and rail development.

### **3.4 Mercosur**

Mr. Ron Kopicki presented the fourth case study, in which he provided a preliminary assessment of the capacity of the current transportation infrastructure to support the efficiency of supply chains in Mercosur, the South American customs union established in 1991. Mercosur aims to reduce and eventually eliminate internal tariffs and establish common external tariffs. Its members include Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. Chile and Bolivia were recently admitted as Associate Members. Since intra-regional trade has more than doubled and exports to non-Mercosur countries have climbed by over 60 percent in six years, the adequacy and efficiency of transportation system to sustain continued growth of trade are of great interest.

Mr. Kopicki reviewed the current capacity and limitations of the dominant mode of motor transportation as well as those of rail, and inland waterways in support of region-wide supply chain management. In this context, he detailed physical and non-physical constraints to regional trade and transportation integration, e.g., different gauge railroads, non-standardized codes and pallet sizes, excessive inspection and documentation requirements. Mr. Kopicki offered an example of a global corporation's gains as it rationalized its production and distribution operations over an entire supranational trading area. Engaging in high value-added production, Kodak replaced its nation-specific supply chains by an efficient and information-rich region-wide warehousing and thereby lowered inventory costs and taxes.

### **3.5 Rotterdam Port**

Mr. Lou Bracco Gartner presented the last case study on the port of Rotterdam as an example of not only as the world's largest cargo handler but also a dynamic transportation system that is locating itself strategically in the emerging knowledge-rich global production and trading society. In doing so, it is developing the appropriate technology and physical infrastructure, engaging in regulatory reform and privatization to promote efficient transit facilitation processes, and creating new services in support of current and emerging markets. Centrally located in Europe and accessible to 350 million customers via inter-modal rail shuttles, excellent roads, extensive inland waterway fleet, frequent feeder ship services to 110 ports within the European area and

endowed with sophisticated cargo-handling capacity, Rotterdam is the main port in Europe.

He noted that the port management is cognizant of and preparing itself for emerging trends in trade and development. Shipments are shifting from large to small, from irregular to regular frequency, from concentrated to dispersed destinations, from long to short order times, and from large to small inventories. In this context, he outlined the strategic developments in Rotterdam's multi-modal transportation system and the concept of 'district parks'. The latter offers distribution companies a variety of transportation-related (low cost, just-in-time delivery) services and value-added services. Given that about ten percent of the port's cargo stays temporarily in district parks in the Netherlands, value can be added by customers through these district park services, leading to more traffic to Europe. Finally, Mr. Bracco Gartner described other strategic activities such as training (of staff members of ports and stevedoring companies), port management and consulting activities that Rotterdam conducts in 40 countries.

A productive discussion followed the presentation of the five case studies, as workshop participants gleaned lessons applicable to their situations. The major conclusions from this and later sessions are contained in the framework of the broad lessons to be drawn from the workshop in Section (5) below. It is useful, however, to highlight some valuable comments that emerged from the exchanges below.

One participant, who noted that a common feature of NAFTA and SADC is the presence of one dominant economy (USA and South Africa, respectively), inquired about the political and economic stresses in such a situation. Since all countries (big and small) in NAFTA appear to realize gains from the high value-added trade across border-spanning industrial complexes, the situation was described as stable and further helped by the patient, collaborative working out of details of relevant problems and impediments among the three countries.

Another clarification made in response to a participant's question was that several

supporting activities need to go hand in hand for successful transportation and transit integration to occur: investments in key corridors, integration and harmonization of transportation and transit, and helpful initial conditions such as regulatory reform and liberalization. Finally, the group learned about the innovative ways in which Rotterdam organizes its hinterland markets and functions and develops financial partnerships with domestic and foreign banks and transportation companies to make strategic investments for future markets for Rotterdam.

## **4. CRITICAL ISSUES IN TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT FACILITATION**

### **4.1 The South Asian Case**

Drawing upon the critical lessons gleaned from the case studies, Ms. Uma Subramanian outlined the transportation issues and options confronting South Asia. She extracted three broad themes from the global case studies that can provide strategic guidance to South Asian transportation policy formation.

First, she pointed to the need for a regional strategic vision/framework to ensure effective and efficient corridors by highlighting the criteria for corridor selection and the variety of transportation options for consideration. Second, in a region where the transportation and transit indicators suggest a weakly performing system, regulatory and procedural problems and constraints are even more critical than physical infrastructure deficiencies.

The former problems, such as the lack of harmonization of technical standards, excessive documentation requirements, and inefficient customs procedures impose transit delays and transaction costs that make the regional transportation and transit system less competitive than those in other world regions. She offered a variety of options to reform and revitalize the present system.

Third, public/private partnerships play a critical role in the process of developing physical infrastructure and non-physical infrastructure (e.g., regulations, procedures and policies). Noting that public/private partnerships are needed to address a variety of coordination, investment mobilization, and social challenges, she saw the coalition of policymakers and the business community as creating the conditions for building the knowledge base and competencies to support an efficient transportation and transit system.

Two presentations of the business perspective on the key issues and options in the transportation and transit situation in South Asia followed. Mr. R.B. Raunier, Managing Director of Interstate Multi-modal Transportation Limited, offered the Nepalese perspective and a comprehensive list of physical, procedural, regulatory, and coordination barriers that impose delays and costs on regional multi-modal freight carriers. He called for adequate multi-modal links and terminals, implementation of EDI and other information technologies, region-wide standardization and harmonization of documentation and inspection procedures, risk reduction initiatives, and improvement of the capability of the transportation labor force.

Mr. Sengupta, Managing Director of I-WIN, introduced the workshop participants to an innovative experiment in public/private partnership in an infrastructure corridor development in West Bengal. The ICICI-West Bengal Infrastructure Development Corporation, Limited (I-WIN) is developing a 600 km. north-south multi-modal corridor intended to provide transportation connectivity and stimulate economic development within South Asia. It is primarily an expressway with suitable links to canals, railroads, and inter-modal terminals--additionally there is an optic fiber network to serve as the basis of an Information Superhighway.

Mr. Tom Maxwell explored the various impediments to export activity in what he described as a traditionally inward-looking South Asia. The region is relatively new to liberalization, to reduction or simplification of tariffs and to offering strong export incentives. As the large export markets in North America and Europe now demand short order, predictable, and on-time deliveries, the physical delays and the transaction-intensive procedures for documentation, inspection, and customs clearance severely handicap South Asian exporters as compared with the competition in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. Mr. Maxwell pointed out the notable exception of the Indian software industry that generates an intangible product with a short 'half-life' and escapes the debilitating procedures.

The South Asian presentations generated a productive discussion. Clarifying his notion of an 'inward-looking' region, Mr. Maxwell

said that the evolutionary passage to free trade from the liberalization programs, which began during the last decade in South Asia will take time. He noted that the Canadian decision to get access to the world's largest (US) market was not easy but was made (in spite of the strong political resistances) to gain the productivity benefits of the larger economy.

Lowering and simplifying tariffs in Sri Lanka has led to new export markets for bicycle frames, dry cell batteries, and razors. Such developments, he noted, will generate momentum for continued liberalization. Responding to the discussion, Ms. Subramanian made a plea for a strategic view of corridor development, and for arriving at criteria for selecting development possibilities that enhance sub-regional interests.

#### **4.2 Legal and Institutional Framework**

Mr. Rahmatullah described seven international conventions that lower the barriers to international movements of goods and vehicles over land. These conventions, forged over five decades of European experience, facilitated international road traffic, increased road safety, standardized road signing and markings, simplified and harmonized border administrative formalities and control of goods, permitted the temporary importation of commercial vehicles, and facilitated the international road carriage of containers and freight, thereby enabling signatory countries to participate in the international production and trading system. He noted that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia

and the Pacific (ESCAP) recommends similar conventions for Asian countries in view of the many advantages he felt they entailed. Finally, he provided a summary of the next steps the countries may wish to consider taking to accelerate their progress toward adopting these conventions.

Mr. Michael Lane provided a provocative view of how an old function (and associated processes), such as customs, can be reinvented to become an efficient performer in the transportation and transit facilitation system. This can be done, he noted, by taking advantage of new information technologies, and new management approaches that emphasize outcomes, performance measurement, risk management and other knowledge technologies. At a time when cross-border movements of goods and people are growing exponentially in size and complexity, while businesses demand faster clearances, and governments require more protection from transnational crime, the challenge to customs, according to Mr. Lane, is to develop a new paradigm and reengineer itself into an agency that facilitates both efficient goods flow and compliance with all laws. For this purpose, he encouraged customs agencies to clarify and define missions, introduce enabling processes, require accountability and conform to measures of customs performance.

The key to success is for customs to become an information-based organization replacing transactions and manual processing with information, risk management, and actions based on data analysis and knowledge. In improving customs performance, he

encouraged the countries to utilize international organizations in the area of customs standards, and to engage in regional cooperation. Reviewing a Peruvian case study of a five-year customs modernization effort that doubled imports and quadrupled collections while reducing cargo release times (from 30 to 1-2 days) while reducing staff by 30 percent, Mr. Lane contrasted traditional and modern customs practices in detail.

Mr. Barry Cable described the ESCAP Multi-modal Framework Agreement, concluded among ASEAN nations, as a possible basis for harmonized upgrading of national multi-modal transportation legislation, and qualifications for operators of cross-border multi-modal transportation in the participating countries. In view of the role and importance of multi-modal transportation in enhancing international market access, reducing costs, and facilitating trade, he noted the need for adequate legal and regulatory protection for private transportation operators. He also pointed to the need to adopt appropriate harmonized supporting legislation, which is crucial to the efficient operation of logistical providers. Mr. Cable highlighted the essential role of human resources development and ESCAP's experience in helping develop human capital in the private and public sectors through the delivery of seminars, workshops and advisory services. His view was that, in many countries, the transitional upgrading of the freight forwarding industry to the status of a multi-modal operator can be an indigenous source of necessary competencies. He concluded with an integrated approach to the further

development of multi-modal transportation, including legislative, regulatory and human capital priorities.

In the discussion that followed, Mr. Lane and two participants noted that the creation of an enabling environment for the free flow of human resources in support of multi-modal transportation operations in the ASEAN or South Asian regions is pending the resolution of issues related to restrictions on the use of labor in another country. Responding to a query, Mr. Lane drew on his experience in Peru and elsewhere to express his reservations about the pre-shipment inspection process currently in practice. He reiterated that, in the interests of enhancing efficiency with transparency, customs staff salaries should be increased to both attract competent personnel to this increasingly knowledge-intensive activity and discourage corruption.

Mr. Rahmatullah described to the group the uniform legal system created by international conventions for rail and water transportation and the technical harmonization possible through the adoption of common standards and technical operating rules. Prompted by a question, he described the current status of the Asian Highway in the South East Asian region. Responding to a query on risk coverage for multi-modal operators and freight forwarders, Mr. Barry Cable described approaches such as risk pooling, revolving insurance funds, and the qualification and certification of multi-modal transportation operators.

#### **4.3 Integrated Approaches to Transit Facilitation**

Mr. Ron Kopicki explored the role of government in fostering the development of efficient supply chains, which determine access to global markets and characterize what he called ‘high quality service economies.’ Supply chains link buyers and sellers of goods via a vast array of intermediaries--wholesalers, brokers, transporters, owners/managers of warehouses, and freight forwarders--who act jointly to increase goods flow through the supply network, reduce costs, enhance capital turnover, and increase process productivity within the supply channels. An economy that has invested in broadly distributed competence within its supply chains and in a ‘pro-service’ culture, has acquired systems and institutions that are flexible and agile in responding to customers’ changing needs with lower logistical costs. He argued that such a ‘high service environment’ has the attributes of a public good. Since supply chains are built on foundations that are significantly determined by government policy, regulations, and investment, there is a role for governments to create conditions under which pro-service efficient supply chains can emerge in developing countries. He viewed the governmental role in this regard as consisting of:

- a. defining and enforcing the rules that allow buy/sell/deliver transactions to be completed at a minimum cost;

- b. creating a commercial environment in which competition is based on logistics innovation and diverse forms of service (fostering competition on this basis leads to progressive reduction of logistics costs and creates incentives for third party risk arbitrage);
- c. improving distribution network connectivity through the development of inter-modal transportation service, logistical information services, and investment in micro-infrastructure related to transit facilities; and
- d. creating orderly and enforceable mechanisms to finance inventories, securitize trade, and share transaction risks.

Mr. Carlos F. de Castro examined the relationship between the nature and quality of a country's container logistics, on the one hand, and its export competitiveness, export service revenues, and level of logistics costs on the other. In international trade logistics, a container serves as a tool to unitize a load of traded goods and move it from origin to destination by means of a network of supporting facilities and services. Yet containerization, which is ubiquitous in Europe, North America, and Japan, is poorly developed in South Asia, where it has failed to penetrate domestic and regional trade--the life-lines of international trade--to any significant extent.

He pointed out that the lack of regional penetration, particularly in the land-locked countries (where only 30 percent of production for exports in South Asia is containerized), coupled with rudimentary container support facilities and poor public

administration responsiveness to the needs of an international 'just-in-time' system, increase the time and cost of the export transaction and handicap the region's export competitiveness. Further, he noted that the state of container logistics lowers the region's access to the economies and revenues generated by the growing group of 'non-vessel-operating-common-carriers.' Such carriers provide physical and financial control of freight services, secure economies of scale and scope for their multi-national clients, and generate a much larger share of export-related transportation and insurance revenues for exporters.

Finally, Mr. de Castro linked the inadequate quality of the region's container logistics to its high cost of logistics and the high CIF (Cost Insurance and Freight) share of non-factor services. He documented meticulously his conclusions from his many logistics studies in Pakistan and Nepal, contrasting those experiences with those in the Philippines, Rwanda, and Burkina Faso. Reacting to a query about the proper phasing of policy steps in building an efficient integrated process to transportation and transit facilitation, Mr. Kopicki compared such a process to 'draining a swamp.' That implies patient efforts at reforming rules, regulations and incentives so as to support efficient transportation and transit facilitation, alert monitoring of changes and redesign in the light of feedback, and plain attention to details and adaptation to the local context. Another suggestion made during the discussion was a plea for the systematic liberalization of the regional insurance industry (in the light of relevant international conventions) in order to expand risk coverage for the full range of activities involved in transportation and transit facilitation.

## 5. TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT FACILITATION: KNOWLEDGE GAINED AND NEXT STEPS FOR SOUTH ASIA

The valuable knowledge about transportation and transit facilitation gained from the workshop presentations and discussions was further enriched by the interactive deliberations of all participants (from the sub-regional public and private sectors, international agencies, and the academic sector) organized into three breakout sessions. The breakout groups were invited to discuss the issues raised at the workshop in the South Asian context in three thematic areas:

- a. Trade facilitation and customs
- b. Transportation corridors and operations
- c. Creation of an environment for effective private/public partnership in transportation and logistics improvements.

Each group was to: 1) identify priorities for attention; 2) define medium and long term actions needed; and 3) specify immediate actions needed.

Clearly energized by the workshop, where fresh perspectives and technical and organizational knowledge underlying efficient transportation and transit facilitation were presented and discussed, the breakout session participants undertook collaborative explorations of their thematic areas as applied to South Asia. It would be a futile effort to capture here the richness

and mutual stimulus of these interactions, the fellowship resulting from the recognition of shared problems and frustrations, and the intellectual process by which dominant issues were framed and immediate and longer-term actions agreed upon.

What follows is necessarily a selective summary of the deliberations of these breakout sessions and the concluding session, arranged in two parts. First, the emergent consensus in each breakout session on the key issues and the action steps relevant to the theme is reviewed below, taking into account the many amplifications and suggestions made during the sessions. Second, this report concludes with a summary of the overall value of the workshop in the form of gains in technical knowledge (or know-how) and knowledge about the attributes of an efficient transportation and transit facilitation process, and the next steps for sub-regional action.

### 5.1 The Challenge of Trade Facilitation and Customs Reform

There was a general agreement that the cross-border movement of goods in the region was hampered by a number of physical and non-physical barriers. The group focused on the more pressing impediments, which it classified in four groups:

- ***Administrative Procedural Inefficiencies***

*The governmental procedures involved in revenue collection (e.g., customs duties, import fees), agricultural and veterinary inspections, and the cumbersome and time-consuming documentation requirements in the region were described as imposing additional and excessive transit costs on business enterprises. The excessive paperwork, multiple layers of decisions, lack of procedural transparency, and incoherence of procedures in the region, were described as adversely affecting its goods movement efficiency and competitiveness.*

- ***Infrastructure Inadequacies***

*One type of inadequacy discussed by the group pertains to lack of investment in micro-infrastructure--the poorly developed physical facilities (handling, parking, storage, etc.) in customs areas --leading to delays in customs clearance. The second type of inadequacy derives from lack of regional investment in information technologies (EDI, data bases, automated clearance systems) which would vastly improve the speed of cross-border inspections, shipping, and banking.*

- ***Knowledge and Competency Shortfalls***

*Many participants noted that the process of trade facilitation and customs management is knowledge- and human capital-intensive. The workforce must acquire the knowledge of what is good practice as well as the competencies to implement what is desired to support*

*efficient public and private enterprises. Developing professionalism and instituting pay increases (to promote motivation and lower corruption) were considered necessary.*

- ***Other Issues.***

*These include the restrictions on cross-border travel by trucks, poor supervision and monitoring of cross-border trade, and customs clearance practices.*

In light of the above discussions, the breakout groups identified a variety of actions aimed at combating the deficiencies in the trade facilitation process. First, the participants proposed immediate actions--some of these described as 'plucking the low-hanging fruit.' Immediate action proposals included:

- *simplification of documentation and clearance procedures;*
- *harmonization of tariff restrictions, and customs clearance,*
- *potential for 'one stop service,'*
- *Motivation of public/private partnerships and 'national committees' in the service of cross-border trade;*
- *professional training of customs officials, multi-modal operators, etc.*

Second, the group offered medium- and long-term action proposals to develop a strategic plan for customs reform, based on a national assessment of customs performance, in collaboration with the private

trade and transportation community; standardize documentation and procedural requirements based on international best practice; establish joint offices for customs and cross-border goods processing; and introduce risk analysis and lower sample checking.

The group supplemented its action proposals with a discussion of implementation issues, and stressed the need for a strategic plan to guide action plans.

## **5.2 Transportation Corridors and Operations**

The second breakout session viewed the South Asian sub-region as an integrated entity for the reduction of logistical constraints, in particular the physical constraints of potentially cost-effective corridors linking neighboring countries. Such constraints are numerous. The prevalence of different gauges in the rail system, physical bottlenecks in road networks (e.g., missing links, narrow bridges, ferry crossings) and poor maintenance, inadequate dredging, lighting and positioning of navigation aids leading to inefficient inland waterway services, and deficient transshipment/storage and container facilities to serve transit traffic at main border points.

The group decided that the first priority was to agree on a comprehensive list of criteria that would make it possible to choose preferred corridors from a regional perspective. After productive discussions on issues related to trade facilitation, transportation and transit efficiency, strategic development flexibility, development-enhancing potential

of transportation corridors, and environmental sustainability, the group arrived at the following corridor selection criteria:

- *Cost-effective access to sea/final destination*
- *Fostering economic activities*
- *Realization of development potential*
- *Potential for lower transit costs based on present and expected future traffic flows*
- *Environmental sustainability/public health*
- *Spatial development*
- *Population and social development considerations*
- *Flexibility or/and choice: Need for alternative options/routes*

The group proceeded to identify a time-phased program of the next steps towards regional transportation corridors. In the short term, the recommendation, based on the agreed criteria, was to identify gaps, constraints and needs for further improvement of the existing transportation links and to initiate action to remedy the situation. The suggestion was offered that advantage should be taken of the studies already carried out in this regard. The 'next steps' suggested for the medium term were to accelerate work on the development of the agreed upon corridors--rail, road, and waterways, and multi-modal—and take

advantage of international conventions to address regulatory and operational weaknesses at critical corridor nodes (such as ports and border crossing points), and at sites of multi-modal transportation activities.

The group also recommended a long-term action agenda consisting in:

- *developing a sub-regional transportation network on the basis of the existing and potential future trade flows, costs of logistics, and investment requirements.*
- *broadening the composition of the stakeholder constituency and institutionalizing the consultation of stakeholders, which act as an inter-country steering group to guide the organization conducting the studies.*
- *establishing suitable mechanisms to coordinate the work of the regional bodies, multi-lateral and bilateral agencies, chambers of commerce, transportation sector professional associations, and non-governmental research institutions.*

### **5.3 Sustaining Public/Private Partnerships in Transportation and Logistics Improvements**

The focus of the third breakout group was to understand how a vibrant environment for effective private and public partnerships in transportation and logistics improvements can be created and sustained in the South Asian sub-region.

Emerging from an era of limited (if any) participation in transportation policy formation and a highly circumscribed role in transportation service provision, the private sector in the region recently has become an increasingly important stakeholder. In that capacity, it provides consultation and inputs in formal institutional settings where policy is determined and, in today's liberalizing context, takes on new responsibilities in transportation service provision. Many examples of such success stories in consultation with project partnerships were offered from Bangladesh (private sector development of BOT/BOO road links and ports), Bhutan (transportation investment and operation), India (private airport development and operation), and Nepal (private inland container depots).

While celebrating this progress, the participants proceeded to an exploration of the challenges ahead in moving the process in the region towards an environment that can offer policies, incentives, and organizational arrangements to support private/public partnerships in the creation of world-class transportation and logistical systems. The issues discussed ranged from the immediate and practical, to the medium-term issues of redefining the role of the government in transportation and transit facilitation and of the evolving public 'mind set' on transportation privatization.

The many practical issues requiring immediate attention include: the reduction of the regulatory burden on the transportation industries; the lack of consultation with the private sector in concluding multi-lateral and bilateral

agreements/treaties that have far-reaching effects on private sector costs and on the competitiveness of transportation corridors; the need for refining the framework and incentives for private participation and attracting needed investment in a broader range of transportation construction, operation, and management projects, and the need for regional sharing of existing knowledge about various modes of private/public sector co-financing, risk sharing, and joint sponsorship of transportation projects.

Aside from the above immediate practical issues, the group noted that the ambiance surrounding regional trade and transportation discussions could be greatly improved in two ways. First, a coherent 'vision' for the development of a Common South Asia Market is still missing, as is the development of a unified institutional platform in the private sector from which to advocate and promote this vision. Second, the need for the development of region-wide strategies to uncouple politics from business in order to promote private/public partnerships was recognized.

The group acknowledged that in the uncertain world of rapid technological change and an evolving knowledge economy, the need to redefine the roles of the government and the private sector in transportation and trade activities is crucial. If the critical resource for economic empowerment in this economy is knowledge and its application, South Asian societies will need to build new partnerships and the social capacity for building, acquiring, and using that knowledge base creatively to

develop efficient trade and transportation systems. The role of government, which builds on its institutional strength, is that of facilitator of transportation and transit activities, while unleashing the strengths of the private sector as an investor, operator and a user. New partnerships are needed in this economy to address a variety of coordination, investment mobilization, and 'public interest' problems in the emerging global environment.

The coordination and mobilization roles of the government are important in supporting new forms of market facilitation, introducing effective regulatory regimes, promoting stakeholder partnerships and 'coalitions of resources,' and developing policies that foster the acquisition and use of knowledge for creating an efficient and dynamic transportation and transit system. The counterpart private transportation operators in that redefined context would become dynamic partners in this knowledge-based development process, offering transportation services that are competitive in quality, variety, and price. Clearly, the group saw the evolution of such redefined roles as taking place in the medium term.

#### **5.4 Value of the Workshop**

As the workshop drew to a close, Ms. Leautier and Mr. Rahmatullah reflected on the entirety of workshop presentations, discussions, and exchanges and the informal interactions among the participants in Bangkok. They presented their inferences as a concluding presentation that identified the value of the workshop and the next steps agreed upon among the participants.

The thrust of the Bangkok workshop was to promote in South Asia the awareness, acquisition, and use of knowledge and competencies underlying efficient transportation and transit facilitation systems in the world. It was clear that the workshop format of exchanging information at a sub-regional level and tapping into international experience was a low-cost approach to acquire and adapt to the local context such valuable knowledge--about transportation infrastructure and information technologies that allow high physical connectivity at low cost, and about new organizational knowledge in the form of reformed procedures, regulations and policies that support efficient cross-border flow of goods.

It was generally acknowledged that the acquisition and creative use of such knowledge and competencies in the service of the transportation and transit system would make it possible for regional enterprises to participate in the global production and trading system on competitive terms, help in the creation of a modern and dynamic regional economic structure, and economically empower the region to greater prosperity. The group understood that such a knowledge-intensive economic evolution would require a new 'mind set' on the redefined role of public and private sectors, and on the 'regional views' on issues.

Three other noteworthy developments at the workshop were:

- *agreement among participants in the breakout groups to continue and enhance the dialogue in their own countries;*
- *the identification of short-term, medium-term and long-term priorities that build on*

*existing patterns of trade and transportation, while recognizing the potential for the future;*

- *the recognition that in this knowledge-intensive process of transportation and transit facilitation, there is the need to combine national and sub-regional dialogue with objective information and analysis.*

## 5.5 Next Steps

The participants agreed to the following next steps:

- to continue and build on the knowledge acquisition and sharing process begun at the Bangkok workshop in several ways:
  - a. support national level dialogue to share the findings from this workshop;
  - b. share broadly the findings from other studies and research work; and
  - c. support regional fora similar to the Bangkok workshop jointly with representatives from the countries in the region and agencies;
- ensure that the next steps chosen for implementation from among those agreed upon at the Workshop are included in the ongoing national program and activities;
- to continue and build on the momentum created at the Workshop by the successful experience of private and public (stakeholder) collaboration in the transportation sector.

**WORLD BANK/ESCAP REGIONAL TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORT  
AND TRANSIT FACILITATION**

**BANGKOK, 19 – 21 APRIL, 1999**

**List of Participants**

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# WORLD BANK/UN-ESCAP REGIONAL TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORT AND TRANSIT FACILITATION

BANGKOK, 19-21 APRIL 1999

## *Programme Schedule*

### Monday, 19 April 1999

0830-0900 hrs.	Registration
	<b>Opening Session</b>
0900-0915 hrs.	Inaugural address: Dr. Adrianus Mooy, Executive Secretary, ESCAP
0915-0930 hrs.	Keynote address: Vision for South Asia: Ms. Frannie Leutier, Sector Manager, South Asia Infrastructure Unit, World Bank
0930-0945 hrs.	Overview of Workshop: Mr. L. Blackman
	<b>Lessons of International Experience</b>
0945-1015 hrs.	Institutional Barriers to Transit and Transportation Integration in South Asia: Lessons from the North American Experience: Mr. T.R. Lakshmanan, Professor, Boston University
1015-1045 hrs.	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>
1045-1115 hrs.	Transport Integration and Facilitation in Southern Africa: SADC Strategy: Mr. Smak Kaombwe, Planning Coordinator, Southern Africa Transport and Communications Commission (SATCC)

- 1115-1145 hrs. Southern Africa Transport Corridors:  
Mr. Stephan von Klaudy, Africa Region, World Bank
- 1145-1215 hrs. Discussion
- 1215-1345 hrs. **LUNCH HOSTED BY ESCAP**
- 1345-1415 hrs. Rotterdam Port: Implications for West Europe,  
Mr. Lou Bracco Gartner, Rotterdam Municipal Port  
Management
- 1415-1445 hrs. MERCOSUR: A Preliminary Assessment of the  
Transportation Infrastructure Supporting Supply Chain  
Efficiency: Mr. R. Kopicki, World Bank (paper prepared  
by Walter Zinn, University of Miami)
- 1445-1515 hrs. Discussion
- 1515-1545 hrs. **COFFEE BREAK**
- South Asia Region: Transport and Transit Facilitation -  
Issues and Options**
- 1545-1615 hrs. South Asia: Transport Issues and Options:  
Ms. Uma Subramanian, World Bank
- 1615-1645 hrs. Comments from a private sector user perspective:  
by Mr. Aminur Rashid Khan, Chairman, East-West Marine  
(pvt.) Ltd.; Mr. R. N. Rauniar, Managing Director,  
Interstate Multimodal Transport (pvt.) Ltd.; Mr. Mumtaz  
Ahmad, West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation
- 1645-1715 hrs. Impediments to Exporting: Mr. Tom Maxwell, World  
Bank
- 1715-1800 hrs. Discussion
- 2000-2130 hrs. **DINNER HOSTED BY THE WORLD BANK**
- Presentation by Mr. J. H. Meijer, Managing Director,  
Dynamar Consultancy BV, the Netherlands

**Tuesday, 20 April 1999**

- 0845-0900 hrs. Opening remarks by Ms. F. Leautier, World Bank
- Thematic Issues and Options I: Legal and Institutional Framework**
- 0900-0945 hrs. International Conventions: Dr. M. Rahmatullah, Director, TCTIDD, ESCAP
- 0945-1015 hrs. The Impact of Customs on Transport and Transit Facilitation: Mr. M. H. Lane, Global Customs Advisor
- 1015-1045 hrs. **COFFEE BREAK**
- 1045-1115 hrs. Multimodal Framework Agreement: Mr. Barry Cable, ESCAP
- 1115-1200 hrs. Discussion
- 1200-1315 hrs. **LUNCH**
- Thematic Issues and Options II: An Integrated Approach**
- 1315-1400 hrs. Government Support of Efficient Supply Chains: Mr. R. Kopicki, World Bank
- 1400-1430 hrs. Containerization, Logistic Cost and Facilitation: Mr. C. F. de Castro
- 1430-1500 hrs. Discussion
- 1500-1515 hrs. Remarks by Dr. M. Rahmatullah, ESCAP
- Priorities for South Asia**
- 1515-1530 hrs. Framework for break out sessions: agenda, procedure, output

1530-1600 hrs.

**COFFEE BREAK**

1600-1800 hrs.

Breakout Discussions on the following themes:

- Transit facilitation and customs
- Transport corridors and operations: constraints and options
- Creating an environment for effective public/private partnership in transport and logistics improvements

**(To continue over dinner)**

**Wednesday, 21 April 1999**

**Priorities for South Asia (cont'd)**

0900-1030 hrs.	Plenary presentations by each break out group
1030-1045 hrs.	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>
1045-1130 hrs.	Discussion
1130-1230 hrs.	Transport and transit facilitation - next steps: - Ms. Frannie Leautier, The World Bank - Dr. M. Rahmatullah, ESCAP
1230-1245 hrs.	Closing remarks
1245 hrs.	<b>LUNCH and departure</b>

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# WORKSHOP ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT FACILITATION

## SOUTH ASIA REGION BANGKOK, APRIL 19 -21, 1999



ESCAP



INDIA



BHUTAN



BANGLADESH



NEPAL



