18TH OSCE ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM
Concluding Debate
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Phase II Project

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Concluding Debate and Closing Statements

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2nd February 2010

Opening Session Remarks by The Republic of Kazakhstan

- Need for good governance at border crossings
- Need for better trade facilitation
- Good trade faciltation contributes to regional stability
- Need for high management practices and less integrity issues
- Need to involve public and private involvement
- Share good management practices

Forum summary

- Borders should not create barriers to legitimate trade: the question is how to identify legitimate and illigitimate trade without treating each truck with the same border procedures
- Too many border inspections slowing transport flow
- So, we know the challenges and we know the list of solutions

Forum summary

- UNECE has 57 transport and border conventions
- UNECE has 33 Recommendations describing transport and border crossing good practice
- UNCTAD has a Compendium of trade facilitation recommendations
- OSCE with UNECE are making a handbook on good practices at border crossings
- So, there is no need to reinvent the wheel
- No country has trade facilitation heaven
- Many countries trying to improve the balance between security and trade facilitation
- Each country needs to find its own path to striking the right balance

Forum summary

- Harmonising procedures at all borders along transport routes can reduce truck trip times
- Need to address road permit issue
- Accession and full implementing UNECE leqal instruments
- Use UNECE good practice examples
- Use joint border crossing procedures
- Create transport and trade facilitation user groups

Forum summary

- Why countries need to solve border crossing point bottlenecks? Because countries lose trade if there are bottlenecks
- Some speakers mentioned the need for predictability because transport operators choose the routes of least challenges; sea
- We know reducing time to market increases export volume

Forum summary

- Road transport has an important opportunity to further develop intra Central Asia transport and also further developing road transport links with Europe, China and others
- The opportunity gets realised if delays at border crossings get reduced and procedures get further reduced
- Customs staffs need training improving their daily operation skills
- How to achieve this? Develop a Border Management Strategy using annual action plans and using mutual administrative assistance in Customs issues

Forum summary

- Traditional Customs and other border agency controls seem reactive based on mutual distrust between officials and traders instead of a pro-active approach based on compliance and selecting legitimate traders
- Using IT helps get compliance, selectivity, simplification and striking the right balance between security and trade facilitation

Forum summary

- Need for trained staffs using sustainable training programmes
- Need for intgrated border management using IT, agreement between different border crossing agencies, risk management, Single Window Systems
- Need for more use of containers
- Rotterdam Rules should help give more supply chain predictability and transparency

Forum Summary

- OSCE Afghanistan Cross Border trade initiative promoting exports and helping further modernising Customs
- Many Afghanistan road transport challenges; landlocked, long distance to market, lack of route and BCP infrastructure and services, BCP procedure issues and delays and lack of international conventions, BCP delays take up 40% of total journey times, BCP costs take up about one third of total freight costs, lack of transit freedom along road transit routes, APTA needs signing, some ferry seaports do not recognise giving predictable scheduled ferry services as an important issue

Forum Summary

- Afghanistan road transport solutions include: safe and secure transport standards, transparent delivery routes, developing transport corridors, shipment guarantee method, IT information exchange, using TIR system, cargo and truck tracking, harmonised and simplified BCP procedures, getting predictable scheduled ferry services across Black Sea and Caspian Sea using RO RO ferries, simplifying truck driver Visa formalities, using One-Stop-Shop BCP method, getting more international and institutional coordination between transit countries and BCP agencies

Forum Summary

- WCO: improved security made trading across borders faster not slower
- Using SAFE Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade should help create more secure supply chains using risk management, using non intrusive inspection equipment, AEO, Advance Electronic Cargo Information and Outbound Security Inspections
- UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme (CCP), using inter agency units profiling containers identifying narcotics, precursor chemicals and contraband and counterfeit goods

Forum Conclusions

- Customs and other border agencies need to be part of the solution and not part of the problem
- Users know the challenges and where and how delays and costs might get reduced
- Many changes made reducing delays and reducing border crossing procedures but as many speakers described more needs doing
- Good practice examples show how extra improvements might get achieved
- BCP delays caused by lack of harminization

Forum Conclusions

- We know the challenges
- We know the solutions
- We understand it is possible to strike the right balance between border crossing security and trade facilitation
- BCP security and trade facilitation are not exclusive
- Solving trade facilitation issues gives increased BCP security

Forum Conclusions

How to get BCP security and trade facilitation implementation and changes?

-Develop 5-year BCP Management Strategy with annual actions plans

-Create public sector and private industry partnership using formal forums such as SITPRO in UK because lobbying and Committees not enough

-Develop national Customs and other border crossing agency staffs and management and train national broker, freight forwarding and transport operators staffs to international standards and give international qualifications

-Start national Customs low risk due diligence compliance programmes with traders and business intermediaries identifying legitimate importers and exporters

-Start Single Windows Systems (SWS) and integrated border management

-Get Government commitment, willingness, resources and budget

-List what needs doing, benchmark performance, describe benefits and value, describe how, list who and allocate responsibilities, monitor implementing progress and measure results