

Beijing Declaration

The 8th GTI Northeast Asia Local Cooperation Committee Meeting
October 13th, 2020, Video Conference

1. Introduction

The 8th Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI) Northeast Asia (NEA) Local Cooperation Committee (LCC) Meeting was concluded on 13 October 2020 by video conference, with the participation of senior officials from Heilongjiang Province, Dornod Province, Jilin Province, Liaoning Province, Tottori Prefecture, Gangwon Province, Sukhbaatar Province, Busan Metropolitan City, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Khentii Province, Jeju Island, Yingkou city and member cities of the newly established Marine Cooperation Sub-Committee (MCSC); representatives from observer provinces of Primorsky and Zabaikalsky Krai, representatives from private sector, research institutions and international organizations, including the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) from Germany, Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA), Changchun International Land Port Development Co., Ltd.(CCILP) from Jilin Province, Sinotrans Liaoning Co., LTD Shenyang Branch and SWIFT Transport Group from Heilongjiang Province, etc.

The LCC members reviewed the progress achieved in local cooperation since the 7th GTI NEA LCC Meeting held on July 24th, 2019, in Khentii Province, Mongolia. The LCC members recognized that during the past 10 months the COVID-19 pandemic had tremendously impacted global economy, multilateral cooperation and regional cooperation in all areas had been tested. However, the LCC members have successfully organized many activities and are confident in overcoming negative interference caused by the COVID-19 and other political and economic factors. By reviewing the level of cooperation they have achieved since the establishment of LCC in 2011, the enthusiasm and efforts of each host province of the LCC Meetings, recalling deeper understanding after every exchange between them, smooth settlement of different issues with their partners, unforgettable local specialties and folk dance in different provinces they have experienced together, the LCC members believed that these will enable them to have a broader vision and enhance their common willingness for closer interaction.

The LCC members expressed their determination to utilize the resources of this platform to further strengthen cooperation and enhance the connectivity of the members. They firmly stated that they will become smarter, more optimistic, more united, more cooperative in order to have more efficient actions, more innovative cooperation ideas, and more fruitful results.

The LCC members emphasized the importance of the Logistics Sub-Committee (LSC), appreciated the operation of the block trains from China to Russia and Europe, and the development of sea-land transportation routes connecting Japan, ROK, China and Russia. The LCC members congratulated on the successful conclusion of the trial of "Pilot Transport Testing Project" (Changchun - Hunchun - Vladivostok - Donghae - Sakaiminato) and called on all relevant parties to jointly remove obstacles in logistics and customs clearance. The LCC members supported the Master Plan for the Construction of Multimodal Transportation Network of Gangwon Province, which aims at establishing a more efficient multimodal transportation network and a horizontal logistics network on the Korean Peninsula by connecting the railroad network and inland transportation network of Korea, China, and

Russia with the maritime route, and looked forward to the successful implementation of the Master Plan in three steps.

The LCC members acknowledged the cooperation direction and activities proposed by MCSC members at the Inaugural Meeting of the Marine Cooperation Sub-Committee, mainly including encouraging marine investment facilitation, strengthening the upgrading of harbors and border ports, promoting the fishery industry and exploring the development of marine aquaculture, and deepening marine cultural exchanges by holding seafood festivals, developing maritime tourism products and organizing forums on maritime economy. The LCC members called on MCSC members to identify the areas of greatest need and stimulate the potentials for cooperation.

2. Review on LCC progress and perspectives from local governments

The LCC members shared their policies and actions taken in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and put forward valuable suggestions and perspectives on local cooperation in Northeast Asia during post-COVID-19.

In response to the continuation of the epidemic, the LCC members seek digital development, by expanding online communication channels and carrying out various forms of online activities such as video conferences, online negotiations and promotion. It was suggested to build big data platform for investment promotion and a cloud exhibition platform to effectively integrate exhibitors and exhibits, and provide trading companies with efficient carriers for product display, brand promotion, trade consultation and online transactions, to promote international and domestic trade cooperation.

The LCC members reemphasized the importance of trade and investment facilitation during and post COVID-19, and expressed that LCC members must continue to strengthen the docking of development strategies, actively explore trade and investment system innovation, shorten the approval process and upgrade cross-border e-commerce.

The LCC members expressed willingness to increase investment to further strengthen the infrastructure construction of roads, railways, harbors and border ports, upgrade harbors and border ports facilities, so as to improve logistics efficiency. It was suggested to deepen the cooperation in the development of sea-land multimodal transport routes, optimize and integrate various sea-land transport routes, enrich the variety of goods and ensure the freight volume of sea-land transport routes.

The LCC members also stressed that agriculture, energy and tourism cooperation among LCC members need to be further promoted in cooperation with Energy Board, Tourism Board and Agriculture Committee of GTI.

3. Project proposals

The LCC members reviewed the project proposal raised by Busan Metropolitan City titled "Facilitation of New Northern Multimodal Freight Routes" which involves Busan Haerang1 sea-land route (Suifenhe of China - Vladivostok/Vostochny of Russia - Busan Port) and Busan Haerang2 sea-land route (Busan Port - Zarubino - Hunchun of China) connecting Busan, Jilin and Heilongjiang province of China and Primorsky Krai of Russia, with the purpose of encouraging export/import cargo companies and shippers to use these two sea-land routes by providing incentives and exemption of port charges, so as to ensure the stability and development of the routes, increase freight volumes and re-invigorate regional trade. The LCC members affirmed Busan's efforts to promote sea-land multimodal freight routes in the region and approved the project.

The LCC members welcomed ERINA's willingness to join the project in a certain form and noted the suggestions from private sector about the extension of these sea-land routes to Japan and the expansion of the scope of companies which could benefit from incentives policy of Busan. The LCC members also noticed the concerns of private sector about the impact of inefficient facilities of related ports on international business.

4. Approval of New Membership Application

The LCC members reviewed the membership application of Incheon Metropolitan City for the GTI NEA LCC member. With the consensus of the LCC Members, Incheon Metropolitan City of Republic of Korea was approved to be an official member of GTI NEA Local Cooperation Committee.

The LCC members expressed their appreciation and expectation for Incheon's participation in local cooperation in the fields of environment, trade and investment, tourism, logistics and agriculture and believe that Incheon's participation will contribute to expanding horizon for economic cooperation in Northeast Asia and accelerating regional economic integration.

5. Approval of the TORs of Marine Cooperation Sub-Committee

The LCC members reviewed and approved the TORs of the Marine Cooperation Sub-Committee of NEA LCC (MCSC), a platform for marine industrial cooperation, marine environmental protection cooperation and marine culture exchanges among provinces and cities around the Japan Sea (East Sea of Korea).

The LCC members asked the members of MCSC to jointly explore more cooperation activities and develop more concrete projects, and formulate a work plan for next year.

6. Partnership of LCC

The LCC members welcomed representatives from the private sector and international organizations to share their insights and viewpoints on local cooperation.

GIZ, a German development agency, shared its approaches on how to support micro, small, and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) to improve participation in regional value chains. From the project context, GIZ suggested to provide services or support to MSMEs by setting up traceability systems for (agricultural) goods, compiling respective information and conducting training on how e-commerce works and building risk resilience for MSMEs. It is proposed to address these issues within small scale exchange activities among LCC members to find out the best practices in the region.

Changchun International Land Port Development Co., Ltd (CCILP) from Jilin Province elaborated on its North China-Europe Express Service which include the current service line of Changchun - Manzhouli/Zabaikalsk - Brest/Malaszewicze - Europe and the target service line of Changchun - Hunchun/Mahalino - Zarubino or Slavyanka - Europe, as well as its European Hubs and Northeast Asian Hubs. CCILP also reported on the first full container testing block train implemented in 2019 from Novosibirsk/Kleshchikha to Changchun through Mahalino/Kamyshaovaya, analyzed the bottlenecks in transloading and customs clearance capacity on the Russian side and suggested to enhance cooperation and coordination with Russia.

Sinotrans Liaoning Co., LTD Shenyang Branch from Liaoning Province introduced the efficient operation of Sino-Europe Block Trains (Shenyang). At present, the Shenyang - Manzhouli - Europe block trains can directly reach 6 European destinations in Mala,

Duisburg, Hamburg, Warsaw, Enns, and Berrelast, covering more than 10 countries and more than 40 regions along the line, and radiating the whole Europe and the entire territory of Russia by multimodal transport. Through the block trains, Japan, ROK, Southeast Asia and other countries have also realized interconnection with Europe and Russia. It is pointed out that a comprehensive service system for Shenyang - Manzhouli - Europe block trains with abundant products, complete facilities, stable transportation volume, convenient and efficient services has been basically established, the international logistics costs of the companies have been significantly reduced and an industrial ecosystem has been initially formed.

7. Next Steps

Busan Metropolitan City expressed its commitment to hosting the 9th LCC Meeting in 2021.

Gangwon Province invited all LCC Members to the online 2021 GTI International Trade & Investment Expo, and LCC Members pledged their full support.

This Declaration will be presented at the 20th GTI Consultative Commission Meeting for the consideration of central governments, thus to further facilitate inter-governmental policy coordination between GTI Members.

The LCC Members expressed their gratitude to the GTI Secretariat for organizing the online meeting for the 8th GTI NEA LCC Meeting and appreciated the GTI Secretariat for its diligent efforts in maintaining support to the regional platform for local governments within the region.

13 October 2020

Beijing, China