

MINUTES
of the First Meeting of Coordination Council
of International "North-South" Transport Corridor

According to Article 6 of the Inter-Governmental Agreement on the International "North-South" Transport Corridor the Ministers of Transport of the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Russian Federation at their Meeting in Saint Petersburg on the 21st of May 2002, established the Coordination Council of the International "North-South" Transport Corridor. Representatives of three countries attended the Meeting. The list of delegations is enclosed in Annex 1.

The Coordination Council of the International "North-South" Transport Corridor agreed on the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the Statute of Coordination Council.
2. Setting up of Expert Groups.
3. Procedure of accession of new members to the Agreement on International "North-South" Transport Corridor.
4. Consideration of requests for new memberships.
5. Place and date of the next Coordination Council Meeting.

1. The Coordination Council adopted the Statute of Coordination Council of the International "North-South" Transport Corridor, which had been finalized in January 2002 in New Delhi by the Deputy Ministers of Transport of the three Parties to the Agreement (Annex 2) and signed by the representatives of these Governments in the presence of Ministers on the 21st of May 2002.

2. The Council agreed to set up two expert groups to consider and recommend solutions to the following issues:

- a) Commercial and Operational matters (speedier container movement, review of bonded warehousing facilities, common liability regimes, multiple visas, rational and minimum service and other taxes, and joint venture possibilities for promoting freight forwarding services)
- b) Documentation, Customs matters and related issues (harmonizing documentation and information sharing systems, relaxing of customs supervision and inspection by avoiding breaking of seals while containers are in transit)

Each State Party will nominate an appropriate number of experts to these two groups. The expert groups could meet once each in the Republic of India, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation before the next meeting of the Council and finish their work during these meetings. The inaugural meetings of these groups will be held in India. Representatives of each country will participate

in these meetings at their own expense. It was also agreed that the competent authority in India will be notified by the other two Parties to the agreement about the names, addresses etc. of their nominees within one month from the first meeting of the Coordination Council. The next meeting of the Council will consider these recommendations with a view to their adoption.

3. Members of the Council recalled that Article 10 of the Agreement on the North South Corridor deals with accession. Any country wanting to accede to the Agreement should first notify the Depository State, i.e. Islamic Republic of Iran. This should be done in writing, and the country wishing to accede to the Agreement shall give brief details of the route it plans to use for linkage with the Corridor and the perceived advantages.

If a country other than the Depository state receives any such request, it should immediately be transmitted to the Depository state for further action.

The Depository state will then circulate the request for membership so received to other countries Parties to the Agreement. This must be done well before a meeting of the Coordination Council so that each of the Parties have enough time to consider the request for membership. These communications will be addressed to the competent authority designated by each State Party.

The request will then be listed for consideration at a meeting of the Coordination Council following the requirement of Article 5 of the Statute of the Coordination Council, particularly regarding consultation of agenda items.

The Coordination Council will consider the request for accession and make a recommendation to accept or reject it. The governments of the Parties to the Agreement will consider the recommendation and convey their final views to the Depository State.

Once all such final views of governments are received by the Depository State and there is no disagreement, the Depository State will convey to the country concerned the acceptance of the request and proceed further with the accession formalities as per Article 10 of the Agreement. In case there is no agreement among the Parties to the Agreement, the application will be rejected and this will be conveyed to the country concerned by the Depository State. Article 10.1 of the Agreement lays down that accession by a new member will be with the consent of all the Parties to the Agreement.

4. The Iranian side informed about the receipt of diplomatic notes concerning the desire to access the Inter-Governmental Agreement on International 'North-

South” Transport Corridor from five countries, namely the Republic of Kazakhstan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Azerbaijan, Bulgaria and the Republic of Belarus. The Coordination Council recommended further consideration by the Parties of this issue as soon as possible.

5. Delegation of Iran suggested to hold the Second Meeting of the Coordination Council of the International “North-South” Transport Corridor in the first quarter of 2003 in Tehran. It was also agreed that in the interim the Coordination Council will meet more often to discuss the provisions of the “North-South” Corridor Agreement with a view to crystallizing decision making powers for new accessions with the original States Parties to the Agreement.

Done and signed in three originals in Saint Petersburg on 21st of May 2002 in English language.

For the Republic of India



For the Islamic Republic of Iran



For the Russian Federation

