

## Seoul Declaration

The 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Greater Tumen Initiative Consultative Commission  
December 16, 2020

We,

representatives of the GTI Member States: the People's Republic of China (hereinafter "China"), Mongolia, the Republic of Korea (hereinafter "ROK"), and the Russian Federation (hereinafter "Russia"), on the occasion of the 20th Meeting of the GTI Consultative Commission (CC) on December 16, 2020 via video conference with main venue in Seoul, ROK, reaffirming goals of regional development and prosperity have reached the following decisions and consensus, to

### 1. Strategic Development

*recognize* that member states have responded swiftly and effectively to the outbreak and spread of the COVID-19 with appropriate measures including border controlling, social distancing, early and massive testing, and rapid treatment in comparison with other regions and countries. *appreciate* that GTI has been maintaining and managing well most activities online even though offline face-to-face activities were inevitably postponed. *urge* the GTI Secretariat jointly with member states to take necessary measures to revitalize the postponed events in the COVID-19 era through upgraded communication ICT skills & solutions, administrative capacity, and other flexible methods.

*express* concerns about rising protectionism during amidst the pandemic, *recognize* that maintaining resilience of supply chains, free, inclusive, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable and stable trade & investment environment in the region are much more essential than any other time. *strive* to reinforce state-level cooperation to facilitate trade flow, consolidate infrastructure connectivity and enhance industrial cooperation, with an eye to converge NEA regional development strategies of members states and foster a dynamic and sound cooperation environment for the stronger economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. *reiterate* our commitment to build up an open, free and inclusive NEA economy and realize regional integration through resilient supply & chains and prosperous trade & investment including in rural and remote areas by fully utilizing its cooperation channels such as Trade Investment Committee (hereinafter "TIC"), Local Cooperation Committee (Hereinafter "LCC"), Exim Banks Association (Hereinafter "EBA"), Business Association (Hereinafter "BA"), etc. *welcome* the renewal of GTI Strategic Action Plan 2021~2024 focusing on action and outcome-oriented goals and projects which will provide mid-term guidance towards future GTI cooperation.

*recognize* the significance of common intentions to enhance the GTI's role, as a well-designed cooperation platform in dealing with developing infrastructure projects and fostering economic prosperity in the region, *reiterate* the importance of continuing negotiations on the GTI's transformation into an intergovernmental economic cooperation institution and *strive* to make further efforts to reach consensus on the pending issues.

*note* regional interconnectivity as the main driver for regional economic cooperation and integration before or after the pandemic, encourage the Member States, local governments, private sector, Exim Banks, and research institutes under GTI cooperative framework, to promote policy coordination, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds through maximizing the synergy between GTI and the Member States' regional cooperation initiatives, such as "Eurasian Economic Union" and its outreach initiatives, "Belt and Road Initiative", "Northeast Revitalization Strategy", "Steppe Road Program", "New Northern Policy", "New Southern Policy".



*acknowledge* the continuous endeavor of the leaders of two Koreas to enhance peace and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula and hope that DPRK considers rejoining the GTI at its earliest convenience.

## 2. Development in Priority Sectors

### Transport

*reiterate* the importance of ensuring smooth operation of transport corridors in NEA by harmonization and facilitation of border-crossing formalities, and elimination of existing barriers in intermodal transit transportation; *recognize* the significance of information exchange in international logistics and transportation to reinforce logistics quality and efficiency, and stay willing to cooperate on enhancing information exchanges in NEA cross-border transportation through effective mechanisms including NEAL-NET, *note* the commencement of the GTI-KRRI (Korea Railroad Research Institute) collaborative project “Research on Empirical Strategy of Dual Gauge Bogie in the Greater Tumen Region”; *welcome* intensified coordination and exchanges with UNESCAP in transport sector and organization of the first joint International Seminar on Transport Issues in NEA; encourage further joint GTI-UNESCAP activities in transport sector as well cross-sectoral cooperation in Transport and Trade sectors, *encourage* further cooperation in the transport education and knowledge exchange among the GTI Member Countries and note with satisfaction the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the GTI Secretariat and the Maritime State University named after admiral G.I. Nevelskoy (MSUN).

### Trade and Investment

*emphasize* the importance of trade and investment cooperation in GTR; acknowledge, with high esteem, the successful implementation of ‘Policy Dialogue on Industrial Parks responding the pandemic’; also *note* the outcomes of the 8<sup>th</sup> Trade Facilitation Capacity Building Program on AEO, and the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> GTI Trade and Investment EXPO; *welcome* the new project on ‘the Inward and Outward Processing Procedures in NEA’; encourage TIC and CSC to envisage the next phase of the roadmap; continuously emphasize the crucial role of the private sector in promotion of regional cooperation and *believe* that TIC and CSC may actively develop joint activities with NEA EBA, NEA BA and other stakeholders.

### Tourism

*commend* the joint efforts of GTI member countries in building capacity for regional tourism cooperation using the accessible means, including online; in this regard, encourage further efforts by the GTI Secretariat and GTI Tourism Board aimed at creation of a regional tourism promotion platform; *look forward* to continued cooperation with UNWTO, international development agencies and other stakeholders in NEA, as well as in other regions, in knowledge exchange, sharing of best practices and other forms of joint activities for supporting the recovery and sustainability of regional tourism; *note* with satisfaction the organization of the 9<sup>th</sup> GTI NEA Tourism Forum.

### Energy

*welcome* the Regional Report of Research on Regional Cooperation in Industrial Energy Efficiency (IEE); *expect* the project idea on Workshop: “Distributed Generation for Remote Communities in the GTI Region” as a follow-up project to be further developed based on the concept paper; and *encourage* to enhance the energy connectivity among GTI members, to develop environmentally friendly and resource-saving technologies for the production, transportation, storage and use of energy resources to attain, and to strengthen partnership activities of Energy Board including the involvement of all kinds of investment sectors to seek commercial cooperation and enhance energy trade.

## Environment

*acknowledge* the significance of regional cooperation in promoting environment protection and sustainability as well as reducing the negative effect of climate change through cross-sectoral cooperation; *note* the discussion on potential new areas of cooperation with respect to the water management, and the training of young leaders in climate change awareness with an expectation of development of future concrete projects, and hope to expedite the progress on implementation of the study on GTI Environmental Cooperation Strategy.

## Agriculture

*appreciate* the endeavor of Agriculture Committee members in developing new projects in agriculture cooperation and encourage continued actions in exploring ways to initiate and implement different activities and projects in line with the Agriculture Cooperation Strategic Action Plan to further strengthen collaboration for the effective control of trans-boundary animal and plant diseases, facilitate coordination in addressing barriers to cross-border trade, build capacity at regional and local levels utilizing different training schemes, promote investments and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) and enhance regional science and technology transfer etc., as a priority, actively utilizing GTI's network and partner relations; *commend* successful completion of the Report on Good Practice of Agricultural Cooperation in GTR and *believe* outcomes of the Research on Enhancing Smart Agriculture in Greater Tumen Region proposed by the ROK could provide practical recommendations on implementing the goals and objectives of Agriculture Committee, *emphasize* the importance of cooperation for food security in the GTR in case of emergency due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, *look forward to* the 6th meeting of the GTI Agriculture Committee which will be held tentatively in Russia in 2021.

### **3. Partners' Collaboration and Partnership Development**

*value* NEA EXIM Banks Association (EBA) members' efforts in serving as a resource mobilization mechanism for GTI projects; *appreciate* the continuation of efforts made by NEA EXIM Banks Association (EBA) members to actively explore additional Joint Projects in paralleled with the current Zarubino Port Project, the construction of 15 gas carriers for Arctic LNG 2 project; "the Land of Leopard" ecotourist cluster; LH's Korean Industrial Complex in Russia. Also *note* VEB.RF's suggestion to sign MOU between NEA Eximbanks and the Eastern Grain Gate project (Zarubino Port project).

*commend* the progress made by the GTI Research Institutions Network (RIN) members in 2019-2020 and acknowledge their contribution as a think tank; *welcome* the research results of "Evolution of Regional Value Chain and Logistics Networks in Greater Tumen Region" as the second joint research projects of the RIN which provides an update on the current state of the GTI Transport Corridors and contribute to the revision of the Regional Transport Strategy and Medium-Term Transport Action Plan and commit our continuous support for looking for new joint research projects.

*note* the endorsement of LCC's Khentii and Beijing Declarations and the guiding significance of LCC Technical Guide for member provinces, also *review* the TORs and the establishment of the Marine Cooperation Sub-Committee and appreciate the successful conclusion of two Pilot Transport Testing Projects, *acknowledge* the plan of LCC members for the development of block trains and sea-land routes, *welcome* Incheon Metropolitan City as a new member of LCC, Kemerovo Region of Russian Federation as an observer of LCC.



*appreciate* the significant progress made in creation of North East Asia Business Association (NEA BA); *expect* that NEA BA should become a robust platform for private sector development and cooperation and facilitate B2B and B2G policy dialogues and exchanges.

*welcome* with appreciation the joint activities and initiatives covering diverse policy areas with partner organizations, including UNESCAP and its ENEA office, UNWTO, ERINA, TCS, ADB and AIIB, GIZ, as well as the longstanding supports on administration and fund management provided by the UNDP. *highlight* the significance of reinforcing the existing collaboration framework and extending the potential development partners, initiatives and platforms, and *anticipate* the continuation of partnership building and engagement adopting flexible modalities in cooperation, with more extensive and concrete joint achievements.

#### **4. Administration, Finance and Project Management**

review and endorse the 2020/2021 Work Plan, 2019 Expenditure, and 2020 Budget Proposal.

#### **5. The Way Forward**

The governments of China, Mongolia and Russia extend their gratitude to the ROK government for its chairmanship since the 19th GTI CC Meeting and the successful hosting of the 20th GTI CC Meeting via video conference with main venue in Seoul, ROK.

*appreciate* the GTI Secretariat for its effective implementation of the directives of the Consultative Commission.

*look forward to* convening the 21st GTI CC Meeting in 2021 hosted by the government of Russia.