

Yanbian Declaration (2014)

15th Meeting of the GTI Consultative Commission
17 September 2014, Yanji

The 15th Meeting of the Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI) Consultative Commission was concluded on the 17th of September 2014 in Yanji, China with the participation of senior officials representing from the GTI Member-Countries: the People's Republic of China, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, and the representatives of international organisations, investment institutions and local governments of Northeast Asia.

On the occasion of the 15th Meeting of the GTI Consultative Commission (CC), we, representatives of the GTI Member Governments, gathered in Yanbian, Jilin Province, China, to envisage the prospects of regional economic cooperation and development in Northeast Asia (NEA) and deliberate on strategies to further promote the GTI cooperation.

We review with satisfaction the substantive development progress achieved by the GTI since the 14th CC Meeting, and acknowledge the continuous strong support provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other GTI partners.

1. Strategic Review

We reaffirm our commitment to further enhance the GTI as a member-country driven platform with the vision to promote multilateral economic cooperation for sustainable development and common prosperity among neighbours in NEA and marshal great partnerships for the future. Having reached a broad understanding on the strategic directions of GTI's future development to become an independent intergovernmental organization, we reaffirm our pledge to take actions to expedite the legal transition process, with the aim to complete the process by May 2016. To this end, we endorse the Concept Paper on Legal Transition, and direct National Coordinators (NCs) and the GTI Secretariat to implement the concrete steps stipulated in the transition roadmap, and to present and endorse the constitutive documents at the next CC meeting in 2015.

We envisage the GTI to transit into a strategically focused, pragmatic and result-oriented organisation to enhance mutual benefits, and accelerate economic growth as well as sustainability in the priority areas of: transport, trade and investment, tourism, energy, environment, and other areas such as, but not limited to, agriculture.

The new organization will fulfil its functions with organs of a Ministerial Council, a Board of Senior Officials, a Committee for each priority sector and a Secretariat. Furthermore, we agreed to maintain cooperation at ministerial level currently and consider upgrading the level in 2-3 years after the legal transition.

We encourage the participation and accession of Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in GTI's concrete activities of common interest with a view to promoting the mutual prosperity in the NEA region. We extend partnerships with national and local governments, international development agencies, financial institutions and the private sector to mobilise support for regional economic cooperation.

2. Cooperation in the Priority Sectors

We welcome the substantial progress and outcomes resulting from the implementation of the GTI projects, and agree that the GTI should further increase its collaborative efforts in the priority sectors in order to continue its tangible contributions to promoting common prosperity in NEA.

Transport

We reaffirm that the cooperation on transportation infrastructure for regional connectivity is one of the top GTI priorities and serve as the foundation for the development of other sectors.

We welcome the outcome of the 4th GTI Transport Board Meeting which was successfully held on the 19th of June 2014 in Manzhouli, China in conjunction with the Seminar on Transport Cooperation in NEA. We consent the two new project proposals, i.e., Seminar on Promotion of Sea-Land Multimodal

Transport in GTR, and Marketing Research of Zarubino seaport project development in Primorsky province

We note with satisfaction the successful completion of the GTI Transport Projects, including the Study on Software Support to the Operationalization of Transport Corridors in the Greater Tumen Region; the Trans-GTR Transport Corridors: Financing Infrastructure development; Evaluation Study of Sea-Land Routes in Northeast Asia; and the interim seminar on the Rajin (DPRK) – Khasan (Russia) Railway and Port Study Project. We believe the projects deliverables will provide impulse to advance the development of regional transport corridors linking major sea-land routes, railways, roads and ports in GTR.

We agree to further promote comprehensive connectivity and build Economic Corridors in NEA based on the transport corridors. To this end, we will cooperate in developing, maintaining and renewing our infrastructure in the region. We will improve investment climate, promote public-private partnerships, and enhance government capacity and coordination in playing, prioritizing, structuring and executing infrastructure projects.

Trade and Investment

We share a common understanding on the importance of trade facilitation to create jobs and promote greater economic prosperity in the region. We continue our commitment to support trade facilitation activities and to reduce barriers to trade and investment in the GTR. We expect a successful conclusion of the 4th Meeting of the Trade Facilitation Committee together with the 4th International Seminar on Trade Facilitation to be held on the 18th of November 2014 in Vladivostok, Russia. We acknowledge the need to evaluate the TFC's existing situation in order to restructure it with a broader mandate. We task the GTI Secretariat to prepare a draft document on the future directions of the TFC to be submitted to the first NC meeting in 2015.

We agree to make concerted efforts to encourage more businesses to participate in the GTI Trade & Investment Expo, and look forward to the 2nd Expo to be held in Gangwon Province in October 2014. We acknowledge the successful organisation of the annual International Capacity Building Programme on Trade Facilitation for NEA in the ROK, and welcome the designation of Korea Customs Services Training Centre as a GTI Trade Facilitation Capacity Building Institution.

We agree to revitalise the GTI Business Advisory Council and strengthen the NEA Economic Cooperation Forum through establishing the NEA National Chambers Association. We welcome the respective chambers of member countries to join the Association and look forward to its official launch in 2015.

Tourism

We reaffirm the importance of tourism cooperation among the GTI members and all NEA countries, and agree that GTI should continue its efforts to promote the GTR as a globally attractive tourism destination and increase the cross-border tourist flows in the region.

We notice the successful conclusion of the 7th GTI Tourism Board Meeting on the 18th of May 2014 in Vladivostok, and wish the success of the 3rd NEA Tourism Forum on the 19th of September 2014 in Hunchun. We welcome the formal establishment of Multi-Destination Tour (MDT) Promotion Centre in Jilin Province of China. We welcome Hunchun of Jilin Province to be the base of the NEA Tourism Forum and encourage other cities to conduct similar activities.

Energy and Environment

We stress the need to further develop and conduct more practical and result-oriented cooperation activities in the Energy and Environment sectors. We note with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the 3rd GTI Energy Board Meeting & the 1st Consultation Workshop for the Energy Capacity Building Project on the 5th of June in 2014 in Ulaanbaatar with the approval of the GTI Energy Action Plan 2014-2015.

We acknowledge the positive progress made in the GTI Energy Capacity Building Project. We approve four energy projects proposals: 1) Power Generation and Transmission project: Preliminary Economic Analysis of Power Generation and Transmission through Korean peninsular; 2) Feasibility Study of

Cooperation on Coal to Synthetic Natural Gas in Northeast Asian Region; 3). Industrial Energy Efficiency Experience Exchange Workshop; 4) Post-Workshop Research on Regional Industrial Energy Efficiency Cooperation.

We attach great importance to enhance the GTI's cooperation in the green growth and environment protection. We agree to carry on the cooperation activities in the fields of green technology, public awareness on environment protection, enterprises' social responsibilities, green investment and green finance, as well as bio diversity, and to select flag GTI environment projects to consolidate support from various environment institutions in NEA.

We wish the successful conclusion of the 2nd GTI Environment Board Meeting which will take place in November in 2014 hosted by the Mongolian government. We task the GTI Secretariat to update the short and mid-term plan for the environmental cooperation and commence its implementation as early as possible.

Agriculture

We recognize the importance of the regional agriculture collaboration in overcoming geographical limitations of the GTR's agricultural environment, and fully utilizing the potential strength of the GTR's agriculture industry. We support the establishment of the GTI Agricultural Board. We appreciate the ROK government's support in funding the Study Project for Agricultural Cooperation in NEA. We wish the study results could serve as the solid foundation for the GTI agricultural cooperation.

3. Partnership Development

We highly value the involvement of other international organisations, NEA local governments, and the private sector in GTI activities for regional cooperation and development. We acknowledge the significant progress on partnership building.

We express appreciation on the UNDP's long-standing support for the GTI, especially to the operation of the GTI Secretariat, and activities on local cooperation, trade facilitation and partnership building. We appreciate the technical assistance on GTI activities provided by other international partners such as the GIZ, UNESCAP, UNIDO and ADB. We welcome the renewal of the GTI-GIZ Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding until June 2015 to further enhance the cooperation between the two Parties. We commit to continue enhancing cooperation with partners to promote synergy for regional development.

We recognise the significant roles of NEA local governments in regional cooperation. We welcome the successful conclusion of the 2nd Meeting of GTI NEA Local Cooperation Committee (LCC) and Local Development Forum on the 6th of August 2014, Tottori with endorsement of the Tottori Declaration among 11 participating NEA local governments. We envision the further enhancement of coordination and exchanges with NEA local governments to build regional synergy for prosperity. We note that the 3rd LCC Meeting will take place in 2015 in Mongolia.

We fully support the establishment of NEA Exim Banks Association, and congratulate its Inaugural Meeting on the 18th of September 2014. We believe the signing of the NEA EXIM Banks Association Framework Agreement will generate significant momentum for an effective resource mobilization mechanism to implement GTI projects. To facilitate the Association's operation, we urge the GTI Secretariat, together with the sectoral Boards and Committees to compile a list of feasible regional projects, to be examined and selected by the Banks Association as pilot projects.

We endorse the establishment of the GTI Research Institutions Network to serve as a brain trust to promote the economic cooperation and integration in NEA. We welcome the designated institutions to join the network and provide consulting advice to the GTI for its directions and strategies.

4. Administration and Finance

We endorse the GTI Work Plan (2014 – 2015), as well as the corresponding budgets. Given the expanding GTI cooperation activities, we understand the necessity for increasing the financial contributions to the GTI Common Fund.

5. The Way Forward

The Governments of Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation extend their appreciation to the Government of the People's Republic of China for its Chairmanship since the 14th Meeting of the Consultative Commission, and for the successful hosting of the 15th CC Meeting.

We commend the GTI Secretariat for its excellent performance and effective implementation of the decisions of the Consultative Commission.

We look forward to the 16th Meeting of the GTI Consultative Commission to be held in Republic of Korea in 2015.