



Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program 24th Meeting of the Customs Cooperation Committee

3-4 September 2025, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic



24th Meeting of the CAREC Customs Cooperation Committee Meeting Statement

1. The 24th Meeting of the CAREC Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC) was held on 3–4 September 2025 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, and attended by high-level customs officials from Azerbaijan, the People’s Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.
2. The CCC reaffirmed its commitment to advancing the CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda (CITA) 2030 and emphasized the importance of customs modernization, digital connectivity, and cross-border cooperation in supporting trade facilitation and regional integration. The CCC welcomed ADB’s technical assistance in supporting trade expansion, digitalization, and green initiatives, noting achievements such as adoption, the CAREC Advanced Transit System (CATS) pilot, and the Information Common Exchange (ICE). The CCC acknowledged that successful implementation requires sustained political commitment, adequate resources, and strong institutional coordination.
3. The CCC recognized the synergies between transport, trade, and border crossing points (BCPs) modernization, highlighting the *Borders Upgrades for Integration, Logistics and Development (BUILD)* initiative. The Committee supported the establishment of a financing facility for modernizing and digitalizing BCPs, which integrates both physical infrastructure and procedural reforms using advanced technology, including risk-based inspections, electronic documentation, and interoperable systems. The Committee cited the joint BCP pilot between Azerbaijan and Georgia and recognized this as a potential model for other CAREC countries. The Committee emphasized the importance of digital solutions, single-window systems, and joint border management arrangements to strengthen connectivity and trade efficiency.
4. The CCC expressed appreciation for updates on the Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM), the studies derived from its data, and its role in strategic decision-making, as well as regional trade and transit analysis. The Committee underscored the importance of accurate, verifiable data and welcomed efforts to enhance data transparency, validation, including sharing the draft reports and private sector engagement to improve analysis and evidence-based policymaking. It will also cooperate with ADB’s endeavors by responding to surveys that collect information on the infrastructure, inspection procedures, and throughput of CAREC BCPs. The survey findings will help supplement outputs and findings of CPMM in assisting authorities address identified bottlenecks.
5. The CCC noted significant progress in the implementation of the CATS pilot and acknowledged the valuable contributions of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, and other members towards advancing live operations. The Committee also welcomed the prospective expansion of CATS/ICE, following expressions of interest from new members wishing to participate in subregional transit initiative, with formalization expected at the

upcoming 24th CAREC Ministerial Conference on 20 November in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. The Committee recognized the potential for alignment with EU and ASEAN systems and endorsed the development of an accession guide to encourage broader participation. Members concurred that active engagement with the private sector, further development of legal and technical frameworks, and operational preparedness are essential for the success of the system.

6. The CCC commended each country's customs modernization efforts aligned with the CCC priority areas of work, including adoption of technological innovations and infrastructure developments to reduce delays at borders and automation of BCP processes, and improvement of customs administration's capacities to serve its stakeholders better.
7. The CCC endorsed the CCC 2025-2026 work plan under the CITA 2030 three-year rolling strategic action plan (RSAP) 2025-2027. The CCC noted additional proposals from member countries for ADB to develop projects and capacity-building activities, aligned with priority areas, including BCP modernization, digitalization of customs operations, strengthened risk management, implementation of CATS/ICE, green customs, leveraging modern technology, smart customs, and e-transit systems. The CCC further supported cooperation and collaboration with the Korea Customs Service, with a proposed regional workshop and a site visit in South Korea in Q4 2025. The Committee emphasized the importance of bilateral and regional cooperation, knowledge sharing, and replication of successful pilots across the CAREC region.
8. The CCC expressed its appreciation to the State Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic for hosting the 24th Meeting and for its active leadership in advancing regional customs cooperation. The Committee noted that Mongolia will assume the role of CAREC host country following the 24th Ministerial Conference, which will be held in November 2025 in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.