



**Statement by Mr. Irmuun Demberel
Advisor to the Prime Minister of Mongolia
23rd Ministerial Conference
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program
7-8 November 2024, Astana**

Your Excellency Mr. Olzhas Bektenov,

Your Excellency Mr. Nurlan Baibazarov,

Your Honorary Mr. Masatsugu Asakawa,

On behalf of the government of Mongolia, I would like to extend gratitude to the government of Republic of Kazakhstan and Asian Development Bank for organizing this flagship event for Central Asian countries that thrive to have deeper connectivity and cooperation with each other.

Within the framework of its "peace-oriented, open, independent and multi-pillar" foreign policy, Mongolia is actively cooperating with CAREC member countries in the economic and infrastructure sectors, including trade, investment, mining, energy, logistics, information technology and artificial intelligence and will continue hard for mutually beneficial cooperation.

Mongolia has underwent Constitutional amendments by increasing the number of parliament members to strengthen its parliamentary government and increase the representative capacity. Consequently, current Parliament has representatives of five major parties, more than 25% of members are women, with largest pool of industry experts.

The newly established government has developed the upcoming 4-year action plan, and the main emphasis would be put on regional development, development of 14 mega projects, and also socio-economic reforms. Most of these projects are aimed at connectivity on the regional level, hence deeper integration of cooperation to our Central Asian colleagues is extremely important. Hence, we would be extremely open to any interest from our fellow colleagues as well as CAREC for investments and project implementations.

Having 7 CAREC countries out of 44 land locked developing countries, we would like to propose to initiate LLDC financial center in Mongolia. The main purpose of this financial center would be to match the pipeline projects to possible feasibility study resources, technical assistances and capacity building.

Now I would like to give the stances regarding the documents this Ministerial Conference is going to endorse.

CAREC Climate Change Action Plan

Echoing both Senior Official Meeting and National Focal Point meeting, we would like to endorse the CAREC Climate change action plan. Furthermore, we hope the previous requests in capacity building of GHG calculations and climate tracking projects would be implemented soonest. We are excited to the upcoming CAREC session in the COP29 and I would like to congratulate Azerbaijan on the COP29 event.

CAREC 2030 Midterm review

CAREC Program helps a lot to adapt and has become the platform that addresses evolving global and regional challenges, including responding to diversity, building resilience to future pandemics, navigating geopolitical developments and addressing climate change.

The program has just newly started with new TA that finances its activity, however, as mentioned in the review, new financing mechanisms and higher engagement from other development partners is needed. We believe that the engagement of private sector both as stakeholders and investors might become the cornerstone of our program.

One of the most important aspects to increase the overall efficient implementation of the program activities is to increase the regional ownership. The government of Mongolia will increase the engagement from all focal points that are present. However, I hope that the Secretariat will do their part in tailoring the program and its strategies where it addresses each country's unique needs, priorities, and capacities to ensure that the program remains relevant and attractive to each member country. Moreover, I would like to once again emphasize the importance of human resource, and request to have another CAREC consultant alongside current one, to increase the above operations, especially at the chairmanship year of Mongolia.

CAREC Institute's reform

We hope that the Revitalization plan for the CAREC Institute would be endorsed and implemented as soon as possible. We still stand firm to have more detailed plan of defined actions before the Ministerial Conference. In that case there would be much more room to discuss and brainstorm during the Governing Council meeting that would be held right after the MC.

Chairmanship of Mongolian in 2026

Before ending my intervention, I would like to bring to attention the 25th anniversary of CAREC program that coincides with Mongolian chairmanship of the country.

We need to first of all get into conclusion if we can plan the CAREC Summit, that involves all presidents of the country. If that would be the case, the best timing would be June-July timeframe. Moreover, in order to conduct this Summit, the program shall present very tangible and fruitful results on the plate, where our Presidents can, for example, sign a document.

In other words, I would like to invite all my fellow colleagues and CAREC team to brainstorm on what can we do that will align to parties interests and also send a message of importance of the regional programs like ours. I am very much welcome to communicate with any of you, my contacts are listed at the CAREC website. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you once again to our Kazakh colleagues and CAREC Secretariat for organizing this event, and I hope to meet you all in a month.