



Statement by Mr. Aidar Abildabekov
Vice Minister, Ministry of Trade and Integration, Kazakhstan
24th Ministerial Conference
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program
November 20, 2025, Bishkek

Dear colleagues!

Dear Bakyt Tolomushevich!

(Minister of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic)

Dear Mr. Yingming Yang!

(Vice President, ADB)

On behalf of the Government of Kazakhstan, I would like to welcome everyone and express my sincere gratitude to ADB and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for the warm welcome and for hosting this conference.

I am confident that the CAREC Program documents to be approved at the Ministerial Conference will contribute to further **deepening cooperation between our countries** and **enhancing the effectiveness of CAREC**.

The countries of the Central Asian region have **enormous potential** across all economic sectors, particularly in transport and digital connectivity, trade, human capital, and climate resilience, which form the basis of a **“green and digital CAREC”**.

Thus, in January-August 2025, trade turnover between Kazakhstan and the CAREC countries amounted to USD27.4 billion, which is 9.7% higher than in the same period of the previous year (*USD25.0 billion*).

Exports amounted to USD14.3 billion, an increase of 2.9%. Imports amounted to USD13.1 billion, an increase of 18.3%.

Kazakhstan fully supports these areas of cooperation, especially as they align with our own national strategies and development plans.

1. Developing **transport and logistics potential** remains a **constant priority** for Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan plays a leading role in developing the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor (TCTC), which is now being transformed into a digital logistics ecosystem connecting Asia and Europe.

In recent years, **cargo delivery times along the Middle Corridor (TCTC) have been more than halved**: from 38-53 days in 2022 to **12-18 days in 2024**, and on some routes to 9-11 days.

Furthermore, in 2025 we have significantly accelerated transit along the TCTC, reducing delivery time from 53 to 17 days, with volumes **in the first half of 2025 increasing to 2.3 million tons (+7% compared to the same period in 2024)**.

Thus, the TCTC is evolving into a modern, digital, and integrated route, with Kazakhstan promoting the standardization of procedures and a shift to paperless formats.

In parallel, we are completing work on key railway bottlenecks: the second track on the Dostyk-Moiynty section and the bypass of Almaty station, which will further increase the capacity of the main overland link between Asia and Europe.

Our country is implementing a number of projects to modernize roads and railways, serving as a **Trans-Eurasian corridor**. For example, work is currently underway to construct the **Kazakhstan–Russia–Mongolia highway**, which will **shorten the route** between Kazakhstan and Mongolia by 800 km and could **increase trade turnover by up to \$500 million**.

2. **The Almaty–Bishkek Economic Corridor** project is being implemented in a consistent manner, in partnership with the Kyrgyz Republic and with the support of ADB. We thank the Bank for its assistance in preparing projects in **transport and tourism**, as well as in developing the concept for a **Wholesale Distribution Center in the Almaty region**.

3. Another key area is **energy**, encompassing **energy security**, the transition to **clean and renewable energy**, and the joint management of water and energy resources.

Here, Kazakhstan's national priorities are fully aligned with CAREC's goals. Kazakhstan is firmly committed to achieving its emission reduction and renewable energy development targets. Concrete steps have already been taken. **The National Development Plan until 2029 is being implemented, which includes strengthening the emissions trading system to better control and reduce greenhouse gases. A roadmap for implementing the Low-Carbon Development Strategy until 2060** is currently under development. These measures complement CAREC's climate agenda, and we welcome regional initiatives in this area.

Let me take this opportunity to invite representatives of CAREC countries and development partners to the **International Environmental Forum**, which will be held in **Astana next April**.

4. Regarding **trade and “soft” infrastructure**, I would like to note the following. The **CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda** was adopted in 2018, aiming to expand market access, increase export diversification, and strengthen trade institutions.

For Kazakhstan, as an open economy and a transit hub, **trade issues are a priority**. We are actively implementing WTO trade facilitation agreements, introducing digital services at borders, and improving logistics.

Our internal development guidelines, including the National Plan, are focused on **increasing non-resource exports, attracting investment into the manufacturing sector, and expanding transport and logistics services.**

To further simplify trade procedures, Kazakhstan **supports launching negotiations on the CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation Partnership Agreement (CARTIF)**

5. Regarding **human development and healthcare**, I would like to note that for Kazakhstan, as for any country, **human capital is the key to sustainable growth**. We will discuss this topic further today, but I would like to emphasize our support for the focus on “green” skills, the CAREC Agricultural Universities Acceleration Program, and the strong health-climate nexus as part of the overall regional agenda.

In conclusion, I would like to particularly highlight the importance of our international partners, who play a crucial role in supporting the CAREC program’s regional initiatives.

Kazakhstan is ready to continue active cooperation with our neighbors and international development institutions to achieve the development goals of our shared region.

Thank you all for your attention, and I wish us all a successful and productive day!