



**Statement by Mr. Batkhuu Idesh
State Secretary, Ministry of Economy and Development, Mongolia
24th Ministerial Conference
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program
20 November 2025, Bishkek**

Distinguished Ministers,

President Kanda,

ADB colleagues, Development Partners,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address the 24th CAREC Ministerial Conference and extend my warm greetings on behalf of the Government of Mongolia.

I wish to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic for the warm welcome and hospitality and to the Asian Development Bank for its continued leadership in advancing the CAREC agenda and the excellent organization of this conference under the theme “Green and Digital CAREC.”

We perceive CAREC not just as a framework for connectivity, but as a forward-looking, strategic alliance and an integrated platform for regional transformation. It embodies a holistic approach—uniting infrastructure development, policy harmonization, and investment mobilization—into a single, coherent vision for shared prosperity. CAREC acts as a driver of modernization, competitiveness, and sustainable growth, helping position our region as an emerging hub in the global economy.

First of all, we congratulate CAREC on the successful conclusion of the Medium-Term reviews of the CAREC Transport, Trade, and Digital Strategies 2030. We welcome the recommendations from these reviews, which guide the next phase of implementation, especially in advancing multimodal transport, digital trade, and cross-border e-commerce.

1. Transport and Logistics Integration

Mongolia remains committed to developing infrastructure that strengthens regional and cross-border mobility. We are upgrading key road and rail links along CAREC Corridor 4, while advancing the establishment of dry ports and logistics centers in Zamiin-Uud, Altanbulag, and Bichigt ports to ease bottlenecks and enhance multimodal connectivity.

We also welcome ADB's initiatives under the BUILD Facility and the midterm review of the CAREC Transport Strategy 2030. These mechanisms play an important role in coordinating investments and attracting private sector participation—both essential for land-linked economies like ours.

Trade and Border Modernization

At the same time, improving border performance remains one of our top priorities. Mongolia is implementing electronic pre-arrival data exchange, piloting risk-based customs controls, and aligning with the CAREC Advanced Transit System (CATS). We believe that digitizing border procedures is the most cost-effective way to expand trade and strengthen regional integration. In this regard, we strongly support the proposed CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation Agreement (CARTIF), which can institutionalize these reforms, harmonize standards, and offer the legal certainty that traders and investors need. By embedding these measures into a regional framework, we can accelerate trade flows, reduce transaction costs, and unlock new opportunities for shared growth.

Tourism and Services Cooperation

Tourism is emerging as a powerful driver of economic diversification in Mongolia. Recognizing its regional potential, we have placed tourism high on our national development agenda. Beyond infrastructure and trade facilitation, we see real value in creating joint marketing platforms, simplifying visa procedures, and investing in cross-border tourism clusters that combine natural and cultural assets across member countries.

Together with improved connectivity and streamlined border processes, these initiatives can transform CAREC not only a corridor for goods and services but also a vibrant destination for travelers—strengthening people-to-people ties and unlocking new sources of growth for the entire region.

New Areas – Critical Minerals and Renewable Energy

Looking ahead, Mongolia urges CAREC to deepen its involvement in emerging sectors vital to the region, especially critical minerals and renewable energy. Our region possesses substantial reserves of copper, rare earths, and other resources crucial for the global clean-energy transition. By developing regional standards, fostering information sharing, and establishing responsible investment principles, CAREC can help its members capture greater value from these resources while maintaining environmental integrity.

On energy cooperation, Mongolia continues to explore opportunities to export renewable electricity within the CAREC power network. It strongly supports the development of the Caspian Green Energy Corridor and related interconnections. These initiatives will not only strengthen regional energy security but also position CAREC as a key contributor to the global shift toward sustainable energy. Private Sector and Investment Climate

Finally, we underscore the importance of a predictable, transparent, and innovation-friendly business environment. Mongolia fully supports CAREC's efforts to harmonize and strengthen logistics services markets, while fostering constructive dialogue between the public and private sectors. A more active role for the private sector is essential—not only to ensure the sustainability of our projects, but also to maximize the impact of regional investments and drive long-term competitiveness. As global uncertainties continue to grow, strengthening regional cooperation,

especially in trade and economic development, is becoming more crucial than ever. Within this context, it is essential that our joint initiatives continue to advance and deliver meaningful results for all member countries.

Mongolia will assume the CAREC Chairmanship in 2026, which will coincide with the 25th Anniversary of the Program, we aim to use this opportunity to focus on practical deliverables that link infrastructure, technology, and green transition in ways that directly benefit people and enterprises across the region.

We look forward to working with all member countries and partners to ensure that CAREC remains a platform for shared progress, innovation, and resilience.

Thank you.