25TH CAREC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Ulaanbaatar I 29 September 2026

Session 2:
Almaty–Bishkek Economic Corridor



Presenter

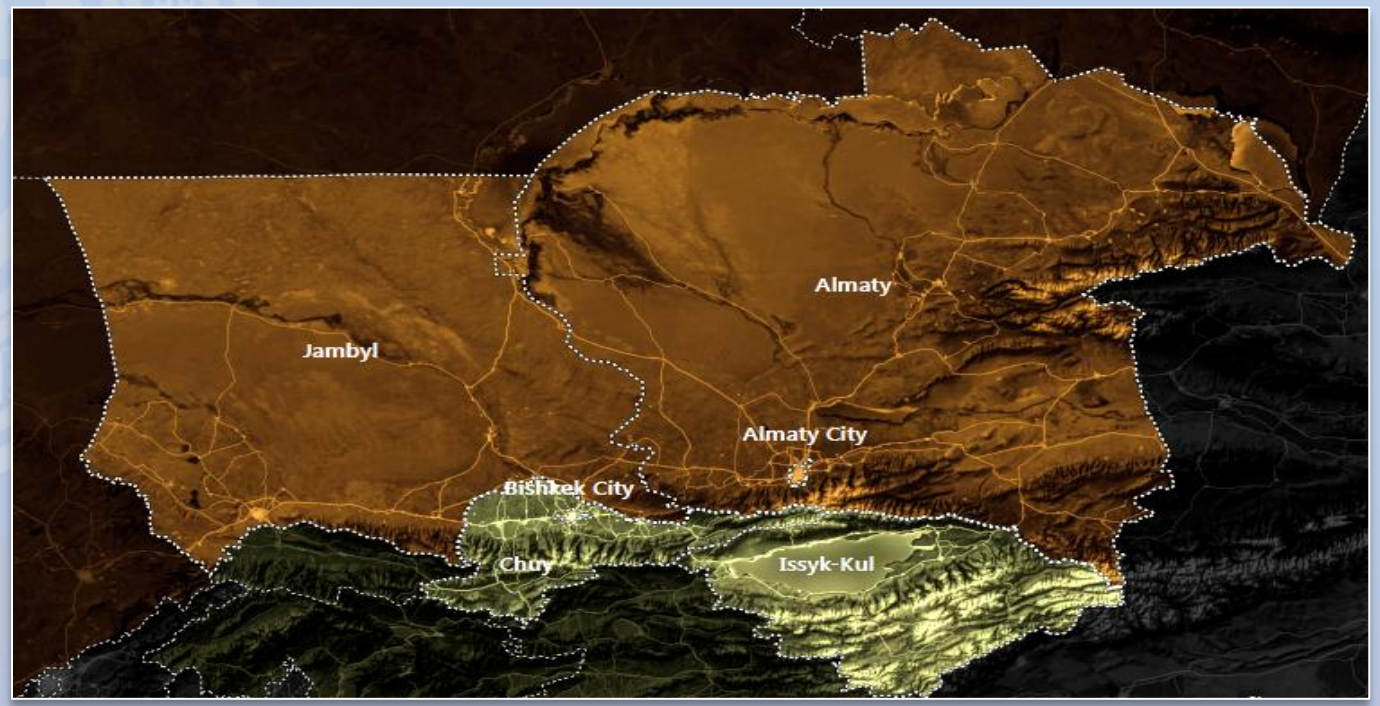
Mr. Sultan Akhmatov

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Economy and Commerce (MEC) and CAREC National Focal Point for the Kyrgyz Republic

Almaty–Bishkek Economic Corridor

From Connectivity to Regional Competitiveness

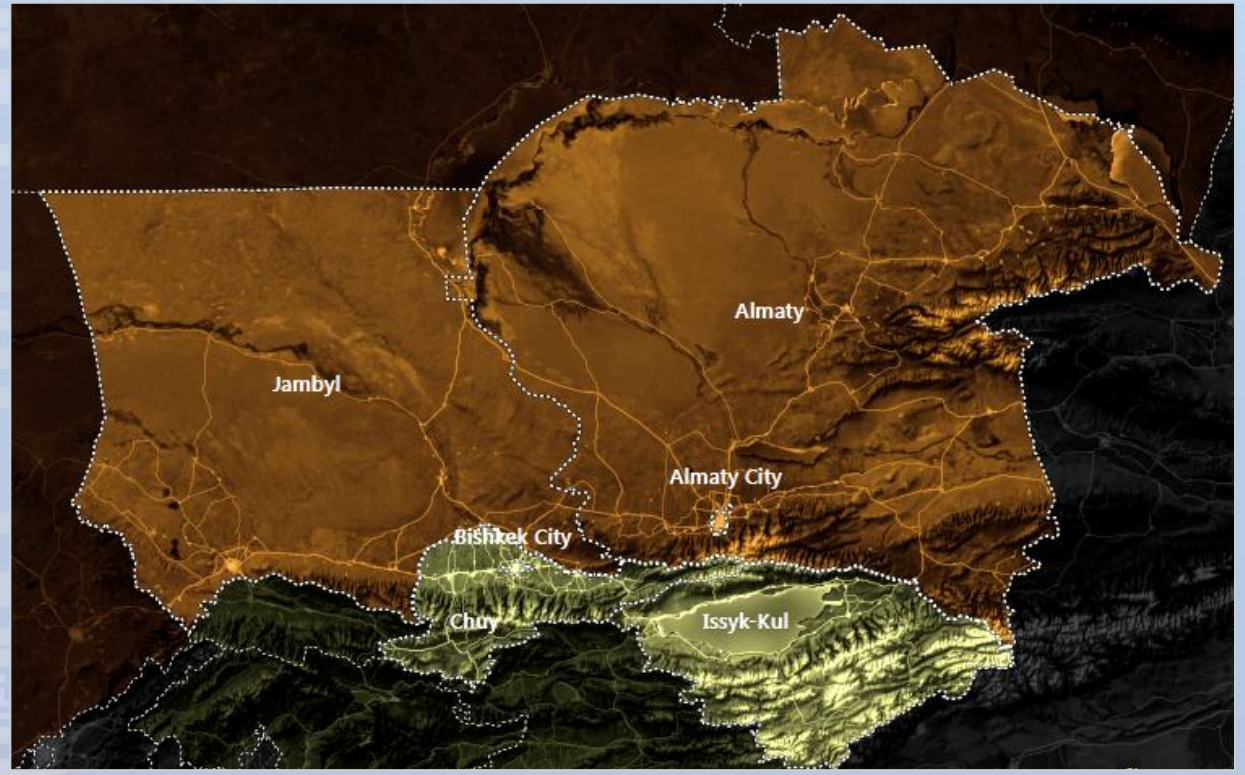
2 Cities • 4 Regions • 2 Countries • 1 Economic Space



Mr. Sultan Akhmatov
Deputy Minister of Economy and Commerce of the Kyrgyz Republic

25 CAREC
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation

One Shared Space: Why Almaty and Bishkek Work Together



ABEC covers the cities of Almaty and Bishkek and the Almaty, Jambyl, Chuy and Issyk-Kul regions

WHAT THE TWO SIDES SHARE

Roads & Borders
240 km apart, yet about five hours' travel; border posts at capacity

Trade & Food
Farmers in both countries can reach a wider market across the corridor

Tourism
Almaty's mountains and Lake Issyk-Kul: one destination, two countries

Environment & Disasters
Winter smog in both cities; shared disaster and climate risks

Health
Disease outbreaks do not stop at the border

Digital
Both countries participate in the CAREC Digital Corridor feasibility study

Investment
One larger market attracts more private investors

More Than a Decade of ABEC: From an Idea to Real Projects

Corridor Concept & Analysis → **Regional Institutions & Coordination** → **Sector Initiatives & Investments** → **Integrated Development Portfolio**

RESULTS SO FAR

- **Border crossing upgrades**
  2 border posts modernized, 6 under way
- **Tourism**
  Joint tourism plan, hotel classification and professional standards approved; Issyk-Kul tourism infrastructure under way
- **Clean air**
  100 air-quality sensors in Almaty and Bishkek; projects for heat pumps in Bishkek and a low-emission zone in Almaty
- **Health**
  Regional health security project under way

PROJECTS IN PREPARATION

- **Almaty–Issyk-Kul alternative road**
  Tourism beyond the summer season
- **Almaty–Bishkek electric bus**
  Cleaner travel between the two cities
- **Wholesale distribution center**
  Connecting farmers to both city markets
- **Disaster Risk Management**
  Regional cooperation on disaster risk management

Where ABEC's Growth Will Come From

Three cross-border opportunities, each unlocked by a regional project

Tourism

WHERE
Almaty's mountains and Lake Issyk-Kul

FOUNDATION IN PLACE
Shared hotel classification and professional standards; Issyk-Kul tourism project under way

WHAT UNLOCKS IT
Almaty–Issyk-Kul alternative road
A more direct route that helps tourism beyond the summer season

Farm & Food

WHERE
Farm regions on both sides and the two city markets

FOUNDATION IN PLACE
WDC initiated by both governments and developed with ADB support
Border posts being upgraded

WHAT UNLOCKS IT
Regional wholesale distribution center
Storage, sorting and sales to connect farmers with markets across the corridor

Daily Travel

WHERE
The Almaty–Bishkek road and its border crossings

FOUNDATION IN PLACE
Priority border crossing for regular buses reaffirmed.
Next step: streamlined procedures and new technologies.

WHAT UNLOCKS IT
Almaty–Bishkek electric bus
Clean, regular trips between the two cities

None of these can be done by one country alone.

ABEC Phase 3: From Pilot to Next-Generation Economic Corridor

Built on more than ten years of joint results, three steps turn ABEC into one shared economy

1 Advance joint regional projects

Almaty–Issyk-Kul alternative road
Tourism beyond the summer season

Almaty–Bishkek electric bus
Clean, regular travel between the two cities

Regional wholesale distribution center
Farmers reach buyers in both countries

WHY IT TRANSFORMS ABEC

Success requires both countries to work together. People, tourists and food cross the border as if it were one region.

2 Set up a joint ABEC Fund

A dedicated financing platform jointly owned by both countries.

Jointly select and finance priority cross-border projects

WHY IT TRANSFORMS ABEC

From one-off projects to a lasting, jointly owned way to choose and pay for shared investments. One clear channel that development partners and private investors can join.

3 Link ABEC with the CAREC Digital Corridor

Integrate physical and digital connectivity

Pilot digital border solutions, trade and cross-border digital services

Use ABEC as a practical pilot for CAREC digital solutions

WHY IT TRANSFORMS ABEC

Combines transport, trade and digital connectivity - creating a smarter economic corridor.

THE RESULT

One economic space
Almaty and Bishkek work as one market

Jointly owned
Both countries choose and fund together

A model for CAREC
An approach other corridors can follow

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