

Information on Trade- and Trade-Facilitation-Related CAREC Meetings on 3-5 June 2026

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Overview of the Activities

Events

- On 3 June 2026, the CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation Partnership (CARTIF) Zero Round Negotiations
- On 4 June 2026, the Joint Meeting of the CAREC Regional Trade Group (RTG) and Customs Cooperation Committee (CCC)
- On 5 June 2026, 25th Meeting of the CAREC Customs Cooperation Committee

Key topics

- Launch of CARTIF negotiations
- The CAREC Trade Sector Report 2025-2026
- CITA Midterm Review recommendations
- Possible deliverables for the 25th Ministerial Conference in September 2026
- Support to the World Trade Organization (WTO) accession and other trade policy support to CAREC countries
- Modernizing border crossing points and trade facilitation measures
- Accelerating digital trade
- Expanding investments and trade in services
- Scaling investment projects for the CITA Rolling Strategic Action Plan

CARTIF Zero Round Negotiations

- Participants – People’s Republic of China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan represented by Chief Negotiators
- Subject – substantive deliberations on the architecture of the CARTIF agreement and the framework to guide subsequent negotiations
- Key achievement of the meeting – endorsement of the Negotiation Modalities and Terms of Reference
 - Negotiations operational rules, categorization of protocols and formation of thematic Working Groups, identification of low-divergence policy areas, and approaches to addressing sensitive and complex issues
- First review of the CARTIF Framework Agreement initiated
 - Written comments on the Framework Agreement and all protocol texts to be submitted by 3 July 2026
 - Virtual negotiation sessions
 - In-person Chief Negotiators’ Meeting in September 2026 to advance discussions on the Framework Agreement and seek agreement on protocols with limited areas of divergence

Joint Meeting of the RTG and CCC

- Key Developments under CITA 2030 (2025–2026)
 - Midterm Review of CITA 2030 endorsed
 - Documents signed during the 24th CAREC Ministerial Conference (Nov 2025)
 - Series of trade-related dialogue and capacity-building activities
 - New ADB Operational Approach for Revitalizing Regional Cooperation and Integration (March 2026) with trade among the priority areas
- Trade facilitation measures
- Border Upgrades for Integration, Logistics, and Development (BUILD) Facility
- Pilot Project on e-exchange and mutual recognition of conformity certificates
- Aligning e-commerce framework with best practices
- Regional tourism development
- Analytics on trade in services and FDI, establishing the Regional Alliance of Foreign Investment Councils
- Overview of trade-related investment projects in CAREC

The 25th Meeting of the CAREC CCC

- CCC Key Activities (2025-2026)
- CAREC Advanced Transit System (CATS)/Information Common Exchange (ICE): evolution, current status, features, and future development roadmap
- CATS/ICE Memorandum of Understanding
 - signed by pilot countries, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan in Nov 2025
 - new countries: Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, and Pakistan
 - Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in progress
- Studies on CAREC Border Crossing Points and Corridor Performance Measurement and Monitoring (CPMM)
- Building the foundations of digital trade for CAREC customs modernization
- Country experience in emerging technologies as enablers of digital trade transformation

Additional Slides



Midterm Review of CAREC Integrated Trade Agenda 2030

Highlights

- CITA 2030 remains **relevant**, responsive and aligns with national priorities of countries
- **Trade-technology-sustainable development** nexus highlighted
- Between 2018–2024, ADB approved 5 trade-related **investments** (\$759 million) and 16 **TA projects** (\$23.9 million) supporting trade reforms, capacity-building, policy dialogues
- Need for **longer-term** and **programmatic** approach (e.g., PBL for post-accession reforms), prioritize impactful interventions.

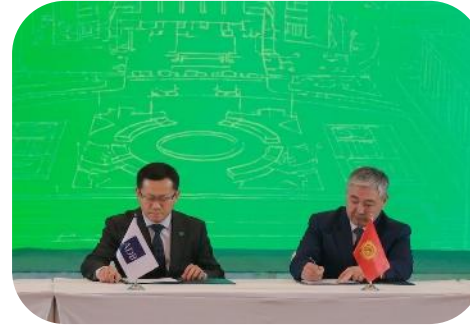
Recommendations

1. Modernize **BCPs** and trade facilitation measures
2. Advance **digital trade** and promote cross-border e-commerce
3. Adopt a **formal framework** through CAREC Trade and Investment Facilitation Partnership Agreement
4. Increase support in **trade in services** and cross-border investment
5. Mainstream **innovation** and **climate action** in CITA priorities
6. Strengthen CITA **institutional** framework
7. Strengthen **coordination** with Development Partners, South-South cooperation
8. Deepen **private sector** engagement
9. Improve **tracking of CITA**'s progress and effectiveness

Documents signed during the 24th CAREC Ministerial Conference



Bishkek Ministerial Declaration on the Launch of Negotiations for the CARTIF Partnership Agreement



Loan Agreement: Almaty–Bishkek Economic Corridor Regional Improvement of Border Services Project



MOU on Implementing the Testing Phase of the Expanded CAREC Advanced Transit System and Information Common Exchange



MOU on Pilot Project on Electronic Exchange and Mutual Recognition of Conformity Certificates



MOU on CAREC Regional Tourism Development



MOU on the Kyrgyz Republic–Uzbekistan Cross-Border Sustainable Tourism Cluster Development

CAREC Advanced Transit System (CATS) and Information Common Exchange (ICE)



CATS system as the user interface

The CATS system provides a user-friendly interface for customs officials, insurers/guarantors and trade operators to interact within the pre-defined transit process.



ICE system as the orchestrator

The ICE system acts as the central hub, orchestrating the exchange of information and messages related to transit process between CATS users.



Harmonized message exchanges

The ICE system ensures standardized and harmonized message exchanges between the participating CAREC member states, facilitating seamless information flow.