

# Armenia Accedes To Railway Agreement Under European Neighborhood Policy

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Armenia, among the other countries participating in the Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia (TRACECA) has acceded to an agreement on expansion of railway communication with neighbors under the European Neighborhood program.

RA Minister of Transport Gurgen Sargsyan pointed out that the Armenian delegation participated in the jubilee meeting of the TRACECA Ministers of Transports in Baku on December 4. The Armenian delegation was led by Head of the Foreign Relations Department, RA Ministry of Transport, RA Permanent Representative in TRACECA Gagik Grigoryan.

"Armenia is a full TRACECA member and signed a number of agreements, particularly the ones on the expansion of rail junctions with neighbors under the European Neighborhood program," Sargsyan said.

He pointed out that the meeting discussed two major issues: the importance of TRACECA program for the expansion of the trans-European network toward the neighboring countries, particularly the development of the south-east corridor; and the implementation of a relevant program of action.

The representatives of the participating countries signed a resolution of the jubilee meeting and discussed the issues related to the regular meeting to be held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, next year, G. Sargsyan said.

TRACECA (the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia) - an international organisation of economic cooperation. Intergovernmental Commission of the 14 member States of the Eastern European, Caucasian and Central Asian region.

Permanent Secretariat based in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Established in 1998, upon signing of Multilateral Agreement on International Transport for the development of the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia.

The following states participate in the TRACECA program: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan.

A total of 45-45mln tons of cargoes are transported yearly through the TRACECA communication lines in various directions. Besides, every year, the European Commission initiates four or five projects (mostly technical ones), to the amount of 13-15mln.

Specifically, a total of 10-12mln tons of oil and oil products are transported from Central Asia to Europe During TRACECA's 10-year activities international institutions have invested over 1bln in the projects.

During 15 years the European Commission has funded 15 investment and 61 technical projects to the amount of 157mln.

The corridor development work made the freight turnover increase from 3mln tons in 1993-97 up to 9mln tons in 1998 and 53mln tons in 2007. A total of 150mln tons of cargoes have been transported through the corridor since 1998.

