

**Minister Nabiyev's Speech at 2nd Global Sustainable  
Transport Conference**  
*October 15-16, 2021*

**Your excellences,**

**Dear participants,**

**Ladies and gentlemen!**

The development of the sustainable transportation system is a priority on the political agenda of our government. We work to ensure **safe, accessible, reliable and environmentally friendly transportation system.**

The pandemic has magnified the already existing **challenges of regional transportation system integration** and has driven the countries and the businesses to make their supply chain more resilient, collaborative and networked.

Over the past decades considerable efforts have been put into development of sustainable transportation and transit corridors in the region. Many initiatives such as **Belt and Road Initiative, Lapis Lazuli transit corridor, TransCaspian International Transit Route, TRACECA** have aimed at increasing regional transport connectivity and integration.

Our country has invested billions of dollars in its transport infrastructure.

In October 2017, the **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway** was put into operation, connecting the Trans-European and Trans-Asian railway networks. With a throughput capacity of

6.5million tons of cargo per year, the railway makes it possible to reduce the time of transportation between China and South-Eastern Europe by 70%.

Azerbaijan has also been undertaking **reconstruction in the lands liberated** from Armenian occupation and investing heavily in restoring transport infrastructure. The reconstruction of railroad corridors will not only help to widen South Caucasus railroad network integration, but also will ensure the shortest route from Western China to Turkey's Mersin port.

But this development comes with some challenges and at an expense.

Infrastructure upgrades increase public debt and may be difficult to sustain. Underutilization of transport infrastructure and ineffectiveness of regional transport system integration put extra pressure on the efficiency of these projects.

So, what actions can be taken to deal with the challenges?

**First**, country-specific **reforms** shall be initiated. Many countries have **trade policies and border management** practices that create hindrance in cross-border trade and impact time, cost, reliability and flexibility of transportation networks.

**Second**, the countries should consider the benefits of both **in-country and cross-border digitalization**. This could potentially change the way cargo and traffic flows are organized and managed, generate business opportunities and pave the way for innovation.

At the end I want to highlight that it is important to intensify our efforts to facilitate transit, digitalize transactions and remove regulatory and procedural barriers to transport and trade.

Thank you!