



Draft Info Note
Regional Consultation Meeting on
Corridors for Vital Connectivity in the Arab Region
Beirut, UN House, 23 April 2018

The Regional Consultation Meeting on “Corridors for Vital Connectivity in the Arab Region” is organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB). The Meeting is scheduled on 23 April 2018 at the UN House in Beirut.

Introduction

Achieving inclusive and comprehensive development depends on the operation of efficient and resilient infrastructure networks to support vital flows of people, energy, materials and goods and information. These include transport and logistics, oil and gas, electricity and other renewable energies, water and telecommunication networks. Various challenges continue to hinder inclusive development in many parts of the Arab region. A profound investigation on the role of regional integration in addressing these challenges is therefore necessary, through equitable and balanced cooperation based on a common agreed vision of the future.

This Regional Consultation on “Corridors for Vital Connectivity in the Arab Region” is an opportunity for dialogue between experts from various regional organizations on the most effective ways to promote regional connectivity despite political, economic, and security challenges. Issues raised will address connectivity opportunities in the areas of transport and logistics, electricity and renewable energies, in addition to the integration of the segments of these networks as improved corridors for comprehensive development.

The Regional Consultation meeting is being organized by ESCWA and the Islamic Development Bank as a follow-up to the IDB consultative forum with Regional Cooperation Organisations (RCO), held in Jeddah on 14-15 May 2017. It will bring together experts from the United Nations System, the League of Arab States (LAS), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Maghreb Bank for Investment and External Trade (BMICE), the OPEC Fund for

Development, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the Arab Planning Institute, and other regional financial institutions and development banks.

Objectives of the Consultation Meeting:

The Regional Consultation's overall objective is to identify priority actions and joint initiatives that promote regional connectivity and that can be pursued in the future by the participants.

More specifically, the meeting will focus on:

- The review of the present status of some networks in the Arab region (transport, electricity and energy), and the potential benefits from their inter-connectivity and integration into corridors for vital connectivity that might bolster inclusive economic and social development at the level of the Arab region.
- The obstacles preventing the inter-connectivity and the integration of Arab networks, and the ways to overcome these obstacles considering lessons learned from successful cases of connectivity worldwide.
- The benefits of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a tool supporting the analysis of the operation of different networks and to reveal the potential advantages of the inter-connectivity and integration of the networks.
- Possible innovative solutions to neutralize the corridors of vital connectivity from the effects of conflicts and political disputes between Arab countries, and to promote these corridors as triggers of stability and peace contributing to the prevention of future conflicts.

Participants

Key note contributions are expected from high-level officials in charge of the related networks and corridors in the Arab region, in additions to experts and stakeholders representing the concerned International and Regional Development Organizations.

Expected Key Speakers:

- Ministry of Transport in Jordan.
- Ministry of Transport in Saudi Arabia.
- Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy in Egypt.
- Islamic Development Ban, IDB.
- Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, ESCWA.
- Economic Commission for Europe, ECE.
- European Union, EU.
- League of Arab States, LAS.
- Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC.
- Arab Maghreb Union, AMU.

Other potential participating organizations:

- Economic Commission for Africa, ECA.
- Asian Development Bank, ADB.
- World Bank, WB.
- Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, AFESD.
- Maghreb Bank for Investment and Foreign Trade, BMICE.
- Arab Union for Land Transport, AULT.
- International Road Transport Union, IRU.
- Union of Arab Chambers, UAC
- Center d'Etudes des Transports pour La Méditerranée Occidentale, CETMO.
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, EBRD.
- Japan International Cooperation Agency, JICA.
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, SIDA.
- Opec Fund for International Development, OFID.
- Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, AASTMT.
- ESCWA Experts in relation with the subject of the meeting.
- Arab Technical Unions and Organizations related to Transport and Logistics

Language

The languages of the meeting will be English and Arabic, with simultaneous interpretation.

Logistics

The meeting is organized by ESCWA in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) at the UN House (ESCWA Headquarters) in Beirut, Lebanon.

For confirmed key speakers, IDB is sponsoring travel and lodging in Beirut on 22 and 23 April.

For other participants, we recommend making a reservation at one of the hotels in Beirut with which ESCWA has discounted rates. Please contact the organizers for the list of hotels with reduced rooms rates that are exclusive to delegates attending the event.

Correspondence and Information

All meeting-related correspondence should be addressed to:

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