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## **The Role of Changchun's Outward Communications System in Northeast Asian Economic and Technical Cooperation**

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In the spring of this Year of the Snake, everything looks fresh and bright. Owing to the in-depth economic globalization and the economic cooperation in Northeast Asia, renown political experts, entrepreneurs, financial experts, and scholars have come together in Changchun—known as the “evergreen” city of the north—to discuss more efficient ways of promoting economic and technical exchanges and cooperation in Northeast Asia. The summit must strongly promote the development of Northeast Asian countries. This is also a rare chance for Changchun to participate in Northeast Asian economic cooperation.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce the development of Changchun's outward communications system, which is the basic factor for Changchun to participate in Northeast Asian economic cooperation. I hope to develop your interest in this topic and in cooperating with us in various ways.

As everyone knows, developing a communications system is a prerequisite for exchange and cooperation among Northeast Asian countries. The scale of exchange and cooperation is determined by the development of communications to a great extent. So when entering the 1990s, every country in Northeast Asia already attached much importance to the development of inter-connective outward communications systems. This is regarded as an important factor for exchange and cooperation expansion, and it achieved great results through everyone's efforts.

China's Hunchun railway successfully connects to Russia's Zarubino Port and provides favorable conditions for trade between the two countries. A conference will be held in Hunchun soon by the railway departments of China, ROK, DPRK, Russia, and Mongolia. There, we will discuss how to construct an inter-connective and direct railway communication network. Along with the start of the Jong-Yi railway, which is the main artery of communications in the Korean peninsula, the project for connecting the Jing-Yi railway with the networks in China, Russia, and Mongolia will be raised.

Changchun is in the center of Northeast Asia and is also in the center of China's northeast economic zone. The city is an important distribution center for commodities. It is one of 45 communications hubs in China and a vital communications hub from the Northeast Asian coastal area to the interior. Changchun is also the intersection of a proposed third Eurasian land bridge and

the important supporting base for the UNDP's Tumen River Area Development Programme. Both its macro- and its micro-economic geographic positions are helpful for the gathering and divergence of various markets. Changchun has exchanges with Northeast Asian countries for historic, humanistic, and geographic reasons. Jilin Province (in which Changchun is located) is to the north of the Korean peninsula and has Russia to the east as a neighbor. It faces the islands of Japan as well. Changchun is 700 km from Vladivostok by straight-line distance, 700 km from Manzhouli and Suifenhe Port, 400 km from Hunchun in the east, and can reach Japan by way of the Tumen River.

In order to give full scope to Changchun's advantage of location, sciences, education, and industries, participation in Northeast Asian economic and technical cooperation is very important.

Changchun worked out a strategic plan in 1993 to make Changchun an international city offering economic, trade, sciences, education, and cultural exchanges. The plan's objective is to make Changchun the center of Northeast Asia in 30 years. The municipal government's plan is divided into three stages.

Phase I (1993–2000) has strengthened the construction of urban and rural infrastructure facilities, so as to improve services and capabilities and to make Changchun unique. During these first eight years, Changchun focused on promoting functions of outward divergence and played a leading role. It made great efforts in the construction of outward communication systems with roads as the main system. A comprehensive communications and transportation network system is almost complete. This network connects Changchun, as the base for Jilin Province, with major domestic and foreign centers. It does so through a system of railways and highways, serving as the main communications links, and through air, marine and pipeline systems, serving as auxiliary communications links. Seven arterial railways, including the Ha-Da and Chang-Bai lines, connect Changchun to important cities in the Northeast and other parts of China. The total length of the railway in Changchun is 2,918 km. The railway intensity is 3.3 times the national average. The passenger capacity in 2000 was 27.4 million. The freight tonnage in 2000 was 16.5 million. The development of air transport in Changchun is approved by the State Council and has proceeded rapidly. The mileage open to traffic is 73.7 thousand km, with 36 domestic routes (including routes to Hong Kong) and three international routes to the Republic of Korea and Russia. The passenger capacity is nearly 1 million a year. The marine conveyance project in the second Songhua River area has started. The new harbor in Wukeshu in Yushu city was completed with a total investment of 6.5 million RMB. Its freight capacity is 200,000 tons each year. The pipeline system was also developed rapidly; three natural gas pipelines with a total length of 137 km have been completed. Their capacity is 800,000 cubic meters. The total investment is nearly 100 million RMB.

The highway network in Changchun is almost complete. Its structure is reasonable, and the facilities are advanced. The highway network efficiently connects with cities and villages and provides access to river and sea areas. National and provincial highways serve as the arteries, and county highways serve as feeder roads, with intra-village roads to complete the framework.

Construction began in 1994 on the Changchun–Siping Expressway, the Changchun–Jilin Expressway, the Changchun–Yinlou Expressway, and the Changchun Ring Expressway. This marked a new step in high-class highway development. At the end of 2000 there were 487 highways serving Changchun, with a total length of 6,177 km. Among these, 2,877 km are high-class highways. There are 163.4 km of expressways, 105 km of first-class highways, and 1,902.2 km of third-class highways serving Changchun. The highway intensity is 32.1 km per 100 km<sup>2</sup>. Currently, a high-class highway connects Changchun and surrounding cities and counties, the main highway exits meet first-class highway standards, and asphalt roads connect 150 villages.

Three highways connecting Changchun with neighboring Northeast Asian countries were completed after several years of work. The first is the Changchun–Siping Expressway, to Shenyang, Dalian, and the Bayuquan Harbor of Yingkou, and from there connecting Changchun with the Republic of Korea. The second is the Changchun–Jilin Expressway: to Jilin, Yanbian, and Hunchun Harbor, connecting Changchun with Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The third is a second-class automobile highway from Changchun by way of Songyuan City to Da'an city and harbor, connecting Changchun with Heilongjiang Province and Russia by means of a waterway.

Although the external communication system has been constructed rapidly. Changchun still has a long way to go before being an international city in Northeast Asia. Problems remain. For example, the small airport and the lower-grade roads, slow inland navigation, and still-low volumes of passengers and freight do not fit in with the objectives of the technical or economic cooperation aspired to.

In Phase II the municipal government will try to build Changchun into a vital hub for communications and a passenger and freight transit terminal for the Northeast Asian region. The task will be to speed up the construction of communications infrastructure and other facilities and to establish an outward communications system with adequate volume and capacity, with modern transit terminals and an international airport that operate efficiently and under advanced management. The next phase includes the following:

- Speeding up the construction of the Changchun Longjiapu International Airport and the opening of more domestic and international air routes. The State Council has approved this project. This airport is one of the provincial capital arterial airports located in the center of Changchun City

and Jilin City, north of the Changchun–Jilin Expressway. The first stage of the project is the 4D class with 300 hectares of floor area. The airport will be in service in 2004 and will take three years to build. At that time, direct international lines to main cities in other Northeast Asian countries and other main cities all over the world will be opened, one after the other. By 2010 the passenger capacity will be 2 million per year.

- Speeding up the technical reform of railway transport and hub expansion to improve passenger capacity and marshaling capacity. The main activities for this include completing the electrification and starting the electric locomotive drawing project in the Changchun section with the Harbin–Dalian line, in cooperation with the national department; planning and constructing the second Datun marshaling station; constructing two double-track railways, the Changchun–Jilin line and the Pingqi line; upgrading the Harbin–Dalian line, the Changchun–Tumen line, and the Changbai line to express railways or quasi-express railways, in cooperation with the national department; and solving the bottleneck in railway transport.
- Giving full play to the advantages of the Second Songhua River to develop inland navigation projects. With a total length of 188.2 km, the Second Songhua River flows in the area of Jiutai, Yushu, Dehui, and Nong'an, which are under the jurisdiction of Changchun City. It is the major inland river passageway in Changchun with potential. Based on the improvement of Wukesong Harbor, Changchun will construct three new fifth-class harbors in Songhuajiang in Dehui City, Santai in Jiutai City, and Qishan in Nong'an County, in cooperation with the Jilin Provincial Government, and Changchun will dredge the channel from Changchun to Songyuan Harbor as soon as possible to reach the sea. Changchun will work hard to complete the Second Songhua River project by the year 2010, and construct it as a fourth-class channel with the capacity to carry vessels of 600 tons, to make it a waterway to Heilongjiang Province and Russia.

Phase III focuses on expressway and high-class highway construction to improve traffic and outward radiation functions, the main activities are the following:

- Complete the network of five north-south highways and seven west-east highways, in cooperation with the national department; complete the 112.8 km section of the Changchun–Lalinghe expressway, including the Tongjiang–Sanya line; and finish the route to Harbin and Tongjiang, connecting it to Russia.
- Complete the network of four north-south highways, three west-east highways, and two ring highways, in cooperation with the Jilin Provincial Government; complete the Changchun Ring Expressway; complete the

construction of the 37.3 km second-class highway of the Changchun–Yinmahe section and the 98.46 km of the first-class highway of the Changchun–Liukiadian section within the Hunchun–Ulanhot national highway, thereby finishing the passageway to Ulanhot and connecting to Mongolia.

- Complete the network of four north-south highways, three west-east highways, and two ring highways, in cooperation with the Jilin Provincial Government; complete the construction of the 56 km first-class highway of the Changchun–Taiping section within the Changbai highway west line; finish the passageway to Tonghua City and Baishan City; and finish the Changchun Ring Highway by connecting five counties with high-class highways.

By the year 2005 there will be 275.86 km of expressways, 183.18 km of first-class highways, and 1,360 km of second-class highways in Changchun, and all national and provincial highways will be above second-class. At the same time, Changchun will speed up the construction of hubs for both passenger and goods transport, complete the construction of four passenger stations and three goods transport stations, and develop special, speedy, and large-scale assorted transport vehicles for the development of highways.

In our opinion, the speedy construction of Changchun's outward communications system is not only helpful to the economic development of Changchun, but also helpful to economic and technical exchanges and cooperation among Northeast Asian countries. Changchun warmly welcomes the support and participation of Northeast Asian countries in the construction of Changchun's outward communications system. Changchun will provide all necessary conditions to make sure that investors can secure a reasonable profit. I believe that Changchun's outward communications system will be greatly improved and that Changchun will make an even greater contribution to economic and technical exchange and to cooperation in Northeast Asia with support from Northeast Asian countries.