

Release Date: online after 11:00, 1 December 2021

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#EARC#Railway#Northeast ASia

Railway Bound for Peace and Shared Prosperity in Northeast Asia

-East Asia Railway Community International Forum 2021-

The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MOLIT, Minister NOH Hyeong-ouk) is holding the “East Asia Railway Community International Forum” online¹ to build consensus on the necessity of creating the East Asia Railway Community (EARC) and discuss ways to promote the EARC Initiative.

The EARC Initiative aims to create a railway community with six Northeast Asian countries including the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, China, Russia, Mongolia and Japan, as well as the United States, in order to stimulate economic cooperation and infrastructure investment centered on railway transport, ultimately building peace and shared prosperity in Northeast Asia.

Since President Moon Jae-in first proposed the EARC Initiative in his congratulatory message on Korea’s Liberation Day in 2018, MOLIT has been working tirelessly to promote and deliver the Initiative. In September 2019, MOLIT held the International Railway Seminar to introduce the EARC Initiative and seek engagement from the global community. At the same time, MOLIT has been enhancing cooperation with relevant organizations in the domestic railway sector (KORAIL, Korea National Railway, Korea Railroad Research Institute, and Korea Transportation Safety Authority) such as by signing an agreement for the promotion of the EARC International Forum in April 2020.

The International Forum, held in Korea under the theme of “Beginning of the Journey towards the East Asia Railway Community”, will indeed be a great step forward in achieving the EARC Initiative. It will be joined by delegates from relevant countries, experts, and officials from international organizations, who will discuss the role and objectives of the EARC.

Beginning with the opening remarks of MOLIT Vice Minister for Transport Seong-kyu Hwang, the Forum will discuss the role of the EARC and its road ahead through the keynote speech by Chairman Chung-in Moon of the Sejong Institute. The Forum will also explore how the EARC could contribute to the development and peace in East Asia and what values it could bring.

The keynote session will be followed by the presentations from transport and diplomacy experts from relevant countries, who will present their expectations on the Initiative and challenges that need to be addressed. The presentations will also elaborate on the method of establishing and operating the

¹ To prevent the spread of COVID-19, a limited number of pre-registered participants will be attending the Forum offline. Other participants, including those overseas, will join the Forum online

International Forum going forward. After the presentations, a panel discussion will be held during which the participants could share their ideas on how to facilitate cooperation among relevant countries to achieve the EARC initiative.

Mr. Hee-up Kang, Assistant Minister for Railway at MOLIT, said, “The very first step in the journey towards achieving the EARC is reaching a consensus among all relevant countries on the need to establish the EARC.”

He added, “I hope that this year’s EARC International Forum will stimulate the global dialogue on the EARC Initiative. Korea will continue making efforts to find concrete measures to realize the Initiative, working together with the relevant countries.”

For further information regarding the above article or request for covers,
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MINISTRY OF LAND, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT

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2021 동아시아철도공동체 국제포럼

**EAST ASIA
RAILWAY COMMUNITY
INTERNATIONAL
FORUM 2021**

December 2021
Seoul, Korea