CONCEPTION OF PAN-ASIAN TRUNK RAILWAY NETWORK AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE RAILWAY

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ABSTRACT: This paper focuses on the formation of Pan-Asian trunk railway network. Pan-Asian trunk railways will be composed of two railway systems: one is the railway system linking up railways of 19 countries in Middle East, South Asia and Southeast Asia; the other is the cooperative railways system between countries. To realize Chinese railway network connecting with the railway networks of Eurasian countries is the prerequisite and guarantee for developing socialist market economy. The present transport capacity and the overall network level are too low to connect with Pan-Asian railway network, for example, the density of railway networks is low, the structure of railway networks is backward, the distribution of railway networks is unbalanced, etc. In order to match Pan-Asian trunk railway network, China must speed up railway construction, open some new ports, construct railway thoroughfare passing through China and neighboring countries.

KEY WORDS: Pan-Asian railway, railway network, railway construction, Chinese railway

In the 1960s, the Asia-Pacific Economic and Social Council of the United Nations proposed a conception of constructing Pan-Asian trunk railway network as a preferential development plan of the 1960s to the 1990s. This plan’s realization would depend on the support of economic and investment organization in Asia (Asian Development Bank) and local economic and investment organization in technology and finance, as well as materials and finance from countries in Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia and other countries concerned.

I. COMPOSITION OF PAN-ASIAN TRUNK RAILWAYS

Pan-Asian trunk railways will be composed of two railway systems: one is the railway system linking up railways of 19 countries in Middle East, South Asia and Southeast Asia; the other is the cooperative railway system between countries.

(1) The railways system linking up railways of 19 countries in Middle East, South Asia.
and Southeast Asia (Yao, 1991). Railway connection lines between these countries: Iran – Iraq, Iran – Pakistan, India – Burma – Tailand and the railways linking up the main railways of Pan-Asian trunk railways; (Turkey – Iraq, Pakistan – Afghanistan, India – Nepal, India – Bhutan, Tailand – Laos – Vietnam) were planned to construct, so that the Pan-Asian trunk railways consisting of several connected railway sections (Turkey – Bangladesh – India – Burma – Tailand – Malaysia – Laos – Vietnam railways; Singapore – Indonesia (Java) railway ferry; Jakarta – Banyuwangji railway) can be formed. The total length of Pan-Asian trunk railway can exceed 23,000 km, if it includes present feeder railway and linking railway lines; Bangkok – Nongkhai-Viangchan, Bankok – Phnom Penth – Ho Chi Minh City – Hanoi, Mosul – Aleppo – Damascus, Mosul – Kayseri, among which about 10,000 km of railways are in Southeast Asia.

(2) The cooperative railway system between countries. This system includes Hanoi (Vietnam) – Hekou (China) railway, Hanoi – Pingxiang (China), Erzurum (Turkey) – Leninakan (the commonwealth of Independent states-Nakhichevan (the Commonwealth of Independent States) – Tabriz (Iran), the railways along Turkey, Iraq and Syria, and the railways along Russia, China, Mongolia and Korea (Seberia Railway, Baykal – Amur, Druzhba – Ayaguz – Youyi – Uzhou – Lianyungang, Seberia Railway – Ulainbaatar – Jining – Beijing, Seberia Railway – Manzhouli – Harbin – Suifenhe and other connected artery railways and train ferries.

In fact, Pan-Asian trunk railways are part of the trans-continental railway system which connects all Asian countries with Europe (through the Commonwealth of Independent States, Turkey and Syria) and Africa (through Iraq, Syria and Palestine).

II. HARMONIZATION AND CO-DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE RAILWAY AND PAN-ASIAN RAILWAY

To realize Chinese railway network connecting with the railway networks of Eurasian countries is the prerequisite and guarantee for developing socialist market economy, undertaking opening to the outside world, bring our country’s economy into world economic system. The present transport capacity and the overall network level are too low to connect with Pan-Asian railway network. It needs a process of overall transformation and sustainable construction, so as to meet the requirments of Pan-Asian railway network (Qi Qiqin, 1992).

1. The Present Characteristics and Overall Level of Chinese Railway

1.1 Low density of railway networks

The railway kilometer opened to traffic in China is 53,000 km. The railway density is much lower than that of most Eurasian countries. At present 117 countries and regions with railways in the world have totally 1.2 million km of railways, among which, Asian countries have 0.21 million km, making up 17.5% of the total, the density of railway networks is 0.42 km/100 km². European countries have 0.41 million km of railways, making up 34.2%,