

A word of welcome
from A. K. Karimov, Director of the Container Transport Department at KTZ
Express JSC

Dear friends and partners, allow me to greet you on behalf of NC KTZ JSC and KTZ Express JSC.

In September last year, the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Finland facilitated a meeting between the Kazakh multimodal logistics company KTZ Express and the Finnish company Kouvola Inovation Oy which resulted in a decision to carry out joint work and implement a project regarding the launch of a container train service from Northern Europe to China.

This year, a series of meetings and negotiations were held, seminars were organised, as well as stations and terminals in the PRC were visited where acquaintances were made with Chinese partners and representatives of the city of Xi'an, who in turn provided support and assistance in introducing a container train service on the route between Kouvola and Xi'an.

As a result of this successful cooperation of all the parties involved, the first container train on the route connecting Kouvola, Buslovskaya, Altynkol and Xi'an is being launched today. This route passes through the territory of Finland, Russia, Kazakhstan and China, and the transshipment is carried out at Altynkol station by a subsidiary of KTZ Express JSC, KTZE Khorgos Gateway, which operates the Dry Port, a logistics and industrial area in the *Khorgos Eastern Gate* special economic zone at the border with China.

The train will cover a distance of more than eight thousand kilometres in 10 days. The Kazakh section of the route is more than three thousand kilometres long and the route's cargo potential exceeds one million tons per year.

The organisation and launch of a transit container train both from China to Finland and from Finland to China via Kazakhstan railways will be a landmark event for all participating countries.

So far, the cooperation with Finland in the field of railway transport has been successful and we intend to further develop our cooperation. There is still potential to make our cooperation even closer in order to increase the flow of goods between our countries.

Allow me to express the hope that this project to transport goods on the Kouvola-Buslovskaya-Altynkol-Xi'an-Altynkol-Buslovskaya-Kouvola route will help strengthen economic ties and intensify business contacts between our countries.