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## Joint Declaration

### Future of Eastern Partnership transport cooperation

Ministers responsible for Transport of the EU Member States and Partner countries of the Eastern Partnership and representatives of the European Commission (hereinafter "the Participants") have met in Luxembourg on 9 October 2013 back to back with the formal TTE Council to discuss cooperation in transport and logistics, with special emphasis on the improvement of transport connections between the EU and its closest neighbours.

*The Participants,*

**Reiterating** in particular the principles of a comprehensive approach to Eastern Partnership transport cooperation as agreed in the Council Conclusions of 6 October 2011 and adopted in the Joint Declaration at a ministerial meeting in Kraków, Poland on 24-25 October 2011,

**Welcoming** the progress of cooperation between the EU and the Partner countries since the ministerial meeting in Kraków in 2011 and the results achieved by Eastern Partnership Transport Panel as an efficient framework aiming to strengthen transport dialogue,

**Recognizing** the achievements of the Partner countries in regulatory approximation and market integration with the EU in all transport modes based on actions set out by the European Commission and welcomed at the Krakow Ministerial in 2011,

**Highlighting** the importance of facilitating movement of people and goods; and to ensure safe, efficient and sustainable transport between the EU Member States and the Partner countries,

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**Agreed:**

*to continue* close cooperation and dialogue between the EU and the Partner countries covering all transport modes, including through exchanges of best practices on making transport connections more efficient;

*to progress gradual* regulatory approximation with EU legislation in all transport areas in the Partner countries;

*to endorse* the indicative map of the Eastern Partnership regional transport network along with the attached list of priority road and rail border crossing points, priority ports and airports, showing how the Partner countries join up between themselves and connect with the Trans-European Transport Network. The Eastern Partnership regional network serves as guidance for the investments by the International Financial Institutions and by the European Union, including the Connecting Europe Facility for border crossing points of the Core Network, for the deployment of traffic management systems and for the promotion of maritime transport and Motorways of the Sea;

*to recommend* the European Commission to include the indicative map into the Union guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network and to promote coordination between EU's core network corridors and key transport corridors in the Partner countries;

*to endorse* the list of priority projects located on the Eastern Partnership transport network as first concrete steps in improving transport and logistics connections that support a more efficient movement of people and goods in a pan-European transport area;

*to accelerate* the implementation of infrastructure projects along the Eastern Partnership transport network through existing EU programs and instruments, seeking closer involvement of International Financial Institutions, and prioritising projects that improve connections with the TEN-T core network;

*to entrust* the Eastern Partnership Transport Panel with the task of updating priority actions for transport cooperation and to follow them up, as well as to update the Eastern

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Partnership regional transport network whenever required; to include inland waterways into the network; and to update the list of projects as existing priorities get implemented and new ones defined;

to *recognise* the benefits resulting from comprehensive air services agreements following the successful examples recently concluded with Georgia and Republic of Moldova; ongoing negotiations on a similar agreement between the EU and Ukraine should be finalised at the earliest opportunity; negotiations should continue with Republic of Azerbaijan, and negotiations should be opened with the remaining Partner countries that are ready and interested;

to *accelerate* the ratification of comprehensive air services agreements that have already been signed;

to *focus* priority actions in rail transport on increasing the quality, technical compatibility and attractiveness of rail connections between the EU Member States and the Partner countries including through simplified administrative procedures at border crossings, and through fostering cooperation between rail corridors such as the EU Rail Freight Corridors, the OSJD Rail Corridors and those defined under TRACECA cooperation; in maritime transport on improving the safety levels through the ratification and strict implementation of international Conventions and harmonization with EU standards; and on making shipping more efficient through simplification of procedures; in air transport on increasing the safety and security standards; in road transport on making roads in the Eastern Partnership region safer and securer; and in intermodal transport on deployment of innovative technologies and cooperation under the framework of GNSS programme;

to *enhance* cooperation in all international fora dedicated to transport;

to *take* stock of progress in cooperation and give new guidelines at their next meeting that will be organised on the initiative of the European Commission and the Presidency of the Council in cooperation with the Partner countries.

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