

## **Press Release**

Paris, Berlin, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2009

# **“New Thinking in the Face of the Economic Downturn Required” Presentation of the 2009 International Transport Forum Programme, the World’s Leading Transport Sector Meeting, bringing together 52 Ministers and Top Business Leaders in Leipzig**

“Difficult times require new thinking”, said the Secretary General of the International Transport Forum (ITF) **Jack Short** in Berlin on Friday, “because in the face of the current economic downturn, global transportation faces major challenges.” But at the same time, Mr. Short added, there are also opportunities for sustainable change. Together with the German Minister of Transport **Wolfgang Tiefensee** and the Turkish Minister of Transport **Binali Yıldırım** the Secretary General presented the programme of this year’s International Transport Forum, which will be held in Leipzig from 26-29 May 2009 under the theme “Transport for a Global Economy: Challenges & Opportunities in the Downturn”.

Minister **Tiefensee** reinforced: “The globalised world in particular requires linkage and cooperation of states. The financial crisis made this alarmingly clear. The present economic downturn results in plummeting shipping rates which affect the former growth and success sector transport and logistics. The International Transport Forum provides a unique opportunity for the transport sector to discuss concepts for positive action. Because we do not want to be driven by the changes, but reshape them in cooperation.”

As the President of the 2009 Forum the Turkish Minister of Transport **Binali Yıldırım** came to Berlin. “There is no doubt that transport as a critical component of the global economy, is one of the sectors most gravely affected by the current downturn. As the International Transport Forum, we should take lessons from the current crisis and serve as a guide to our sector in designing and implementing necessary measures to overcome the current challenges. Having the Presidency of the forthcoming Forum, which will gather all actors of the sector together with policy makers, we believe that it is a well-timed opportunity to collaboratively draw up resolves and commitments for fighting this crisis”, stressed Mr. **Yıldırım**. Yet, even within the difficult context, there are also new possibilities for positive action, Mr. Short added. “The revitalisation of international trade is certain: the question is not if - but how and when?”

To address the situation, policy-makers everywhere are employing instruments to engage an economic recovery process, many of which are already showing tentative results in national economies. “Transport can and will play an important role in these stimulus packages”, the Secretary General, the Host as well as the President of the ITF are convinced. “At the same time, actions to speed economic recovery should ensure a major rethinking of transport programmes to prepare global mobility in the 21st century.” More efficient transport can create a significant boost to support economic growth and create new confidence in the economic future. Yet, protectionist and purely national responses risk accentuating the

problem in the medium-term, and solutions need to be found at an international level. “The 2009 Forum in Leipzig is an opportunity to be part of this cooperative impetus for change.”

Alongside the Ministers of the Member countries the economist and writer Jacques Attali and the Vice President of the European Commission Antonio Tajani will deliver keynotes in Leipzig. Amongst others taking an active part in panels and workshops will be the CEOs Peter Bakker, TNT, Tim Clark, Emirates, Stélios Hagji-Ioannou, Easyjet, Joachim Hunold, Air Berlin, Leif Östling, Scania, Scott Price, DHL Europe as well as Ron Widdows, NOL.

A unique platform for strategic thinking on the essential role played by transport today and in the future, the International Transport Forum is a global inter-governmental platform which presently brings together 52 Ministries. Together with senior representatives from government, industry and the scientific community, the 2009 Forum is an opportunity to review some of the most pressing questions posed by volatile global developments.

For registration to the Forum and further information go to [www.internationaltransportforum.org/2009](http://www.internationaltransportforum.org/2009)

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