

Press Release

Paris, Leipzig, 26 May 2009

International Transport Forum 2009 “Transport for a Global Economy: Challenges & Opportunities in the Downturn” has Opened

The Secretary General of the International Transport Forum, Jack Short, opened the International Transport Forum 2009 in Leipzig on Tuesday with a tour of the accompanying exhibition.

The International Transport Forum (ITF) with more than 700 attendees from politics, industry, science and civil society is the most important high level global platform focusing on today’s key transport issues. The consequences of the present downturn on the transport sector and the contribution of the sector in overcoming the crisis are the key topics being discussed at the four-day event in Leipzig. “The transport and logistics sector is facing enormous challenges and these difficult times require new thinking from the sector”, said the Secretary General of the International Transport Forum **Jack Short** on Tuesday at the opening of this year’s Forum in Leipzig. He opened the concomitant exhibition in the Congress Centre Leipzig, where around 25 exhibitors from industry, business and administrations are displaying their contributions relating to the theme of the Forum.

Transport Ministers of the 52 Member Countries of the Forum, which is part of the OECD family, will be participating, offering the opportunity for decision makers of both the private sector and public bodies to devise strategies and actions contributing to policy-making on a national and international level. The Forum welcomes to Leipzig this year, as keynote speaker, Jacques Attali, and, on his first visit to Europe, the new US-Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood. The Vice President of the European Commission, Antonio Tajani, will add the EU perspective. “The fact that the new CEO of Deutsche Bahn, Rüdiger Grube, accepted our invitation to participate in a high-ranking panel discussion underlines the special position of this Forum for the transport sector in general”, stressed the Secretary General. Other industry leaders participating in the Forum are CEOs Peter Bakker, TNT, Stelios Haji-Ioannou, Easy Group, Joachim Hunold, Air Berlin, Leif Östling, Scania, Scott Price, DHL Europe Express, as well as Ron Widdows, Neptune Orient Lines, to name a few.

Side events of this year's Forum are visits to the DHL Hub, the BMW plant and the Quelle Mail Order Centre in Leipzig. A "special highlight" for the Secretary General is the Children's University, which will be held at the New Townhall of Leipzig on Wednesday afternoon, where children will have the opportunity to dialogue with Ministers Tiefensee from Germany and Leuenberger from Switzerland.

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