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## Jack Short: The Bottom has been Reached

“There are signs that the bottom has been reached”, said **Jack Short**, Secretary General of the International Transport Forum, at a meeting of Nordic and Baltic Ministers of Transport in Riga, Latvia. But it is too early to speak of recovery, he warned at the same time, as the sector has been hit very badly by the collapse in consumer confidence and in trade. The global fall in transport freight volumes has been “far greater than the decline in economic activity or trade and companies and employment have been very seriously affected”, Mr. **Short** explained.

For the transport sector to emerge stronger from the crisis, the Secretary General said three conditions had to be met:

First, “investment is needed but priorities need to be revised.” Stimulus packages are working, delivering quick improvements and protecting jobs. But according to Mr. Short, “they are still needed.” Priority needs to be given to longstanding bottlenecks. At the same time he said that “a resumption of growth to previous levels is not certain”.

Secondly, “protectionism must be resisted.” Political pressure to protect national companies or operators is from his point of view not surprising in the circumstances. “But giving in will lead to other problems and can postpone benefits.”

Finally, “opportunities for innovation and greener growth must be grasped.” Stimulus packages and investment need to be reviewed and investment should support the innovation the sector needs. This is why the International Transport Forum 2010 will focus on “Transport and Innovation”. The 2010 Forum will take place in Leipzig, Germany, from 25 to 28 May, and will provide a unique opportunity both to explore innovation in transport and to build upon the outcomes of the 2008 and 2009 Forums, making linkages between climate change, the global downturn and innovation.

For further information on the 2010 Forum: [www.internationaltransportforum.org](http://www.internationaltransportforum.org)

The International Transport Forum is the leading global platform and meeting place for transport, logistics and mobility. It attracts key figures from government and politics, business and industry, research and civil society, coming together to discuss a transport topic of worldwide strategic importance. The involvement of more than 50 Ministers of Transport offers many direct links to policy-making and business at both national and international levels.

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