

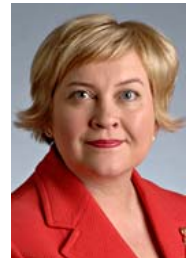
Transport Ministers from **53 countries** met in Sofia on 30 and 31 May 2007 under the chairmanship of Mr. Peter Moutavchief, Minister of Transport of Bulgaria and current President of ECMT.

This meeting marked an important step in the transformation of ECMT into the **International Transport Forum**. The new Forum was officially launched during a special session of the meeting where its new logo was revealed. A *separate Press release* has been prepared for the launching of the Forum.



As part of the reform process decided by Ministers, the meeting in Sofia focused on a single topic of world-wide strategic importance: **Mitigating congestion in transport**. It is the first time that this problem has been at the core of Ministerial discussions. Also in the spirit of reform, Ministers heard from two key leaders from industry, who participated in the discussions and highlighted the need to develop a strategic approach for reducing congestion. The main elements of this strategy are developed in a series of Key Messages, which serve as guidance for policy actions to mitigate congestion. A *Special Press Release* entitled: "Transport congestion: an unavoidable barrier to economic development?" contains more details on the results of the Sofia session.

Mrs. Anu VEHVILÄINEN, Finnish Minister of Transport, was elected as **Chair of the International Transport Forum** for a one-year mandate. She will be assisted in her task by the Turkish Minister of Transport and Communications, as First Vice-Chairman, and the Canadian Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities as second Vice-Chairman.



Under her leadership, the 2008 session of the International Forum will be prepared. This session will be held for the first time from **28 to 30 May 2008 in Leipzig** (Germany), the future permanent venue of the Forum. The topical and highly relevant theme for this first International Transport Forum will be "Transport and Energy: the Challenge of Climate Change".



For more information, please consult
www.InternationalTransportForum.org