

Ministerial Statement on the Strategic Review of the International Transport Forum

2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE STRATEGIC REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM

The International Transport Forum: From Dublin 2006 to Leipzig 2011

1. The 2005 Moscow and 2006 Dublin declarations transformed the European Conference of Ministers of Transport into the International Transport Forum. The Ministers of the Forum met in Leipzig on 26 May 2011 to review progress in the establishment of the Forum and to set the course for the Forum's future development.

2. Taking note of the **four Forum annual summits** held to date:

- 2008: *Transport and Energy: the Challenge of Climate Change*
- 2009: *Transport for a Global Economy: Challenges and Opportunities in the Downturn*
- 2010: *Transport and Innovation: Unleashing the Potential*
- 2011: *Transport for Society*

as well as the transitional Ministerial session on *Mitigating Congestion*, held in Sofia in May 2007,

Ministers express satisfaction that **significant progress has been made in implementing the 2006 Dublin Declaration**, and note, in particular, that:

- the Forum provides a **unique opportunity for Ministers to engage with other leaders from industry, civil society, research and government** from around the world, and is an important **pre-negotiation platform** to jointly prepare and advance progress on transport issues of strategic, global importance;
- the Forum is **enhancing understanding and exchange** among policy-makers and the wider community regarding the importance of transport for economic and social development, and its environmental and social impacts;
- with heightened priority on communications and dissemination of its work, the Forum is **raising the profile of transport policy**, and **improving public awareness**, as well as **informing Parliaments and stakeholders** within and outside the transport sector about the benefits of transport and the complexity of the challenges facing it; and
- the Forum meets the needs of a globalised world that requires **international solutions and strategies for transport**, underlining the great significance of transport for the economy.

3. Ministers express their gratitude **to Germany for** hosting the annual summit and thank Germany for its commitment to continue hosting the summit in Germany until 2017.

4. Ministers acknowledge the **engagement and commitment of an expanding membership** during the first five years of the Forum and affirm that this has given a new global reach and relevance to the work of the Forum.

5. In addition, they welcome the **accession of India as a Member of the Forum**, which has added a new dimension to the Forum's geographic coverage.

6. Ministers also note the progress made in strengthening the Forum's **links with the private sector**, in particular the transport industry. The additional contacts with, and involvement of, the business community and civil society have ensured a more solid basis for policy recommendations and an improved dialogue on policy challenges.

Looking Forward: 2012 and beyond

7. Ministers acknowledge the **successful establishment of the International Transport Forum**. They reaffirm the aims of the 2006 Dublin Declaration, and underline the **progress made over the Forum's initial five-year period** towards meeting these objectives. Furthermore, they call for preparations to be made over the next year for the **development of the Forum beyond 2012**.

8. Building on the Forum's foundations now firmly in place, Ministers agree that efforts should be focussed on **consolidating the positioning of the Forum** as a key annual Ministerial summit for transport, a think tank, an intergovernmental organisation and a pre-negotiation platform. **The participation of Ministers in the annual summit remains key**, and this event should continue to provide them with an opportunity to engage with one another bilaterally and multilaterally, as well as with other decision-makers, in an atmosphere that is conducive to dialogue on key policy issues.

9. In order to reinforce the important political role of the Forum in influencing transport policy at the global and national levels, efforts should continue **to further enhance the Forum's communication activity and the dissemination of its work**.

10. The recent economic and financial crisis and the ensuing tightening of Forum Members' public budgets have heightened the imperative to pursue Forum aims of highlighting **the vital role that transport plays in societies and economies** and the **need to pay particular attention to the efficient use of resources**.

11. Ministers stress that the Forum should assist in building **a consistent, forward-looking global transport policy** that addresses present and future global challenges, and **encourage continued cooperation with global transport bodies**, particularly those of the United Nations, including IMO, ICAO, and UNECE, as well as with the European Commission, with regional political bodies, and with international financial institutions.

12. Ministers request that the **strengths of the annual summit** established over the last four events in Germany **should be further developed** to continuously improve the event and strive for the maximum relevance for Members and the transport sector as a whole. Each annual summit should **build on the strengths and messages of previous summits**.

13. Ministers request that **efforts to expand the global reach of Forum Membership** should continue, focusing on countries with significant transport policy interests.

14. The Forum should continue to **promote trade opportunities and economic growth**. Links with, and active involvement of **industry and other private sector actors** in the Forum's policy dialogue and annual summit should be further enhanced. The Forum's business Advisory Board should continue to play a key role, and this role should be strengthened, including by the participation of additional high-ranking industry representatives.

15. The **structures of the International Transport Forum** have served well during the initial five years of its establishment. Ministers request that efforts be made to refine these to carry the Forum into its next phase of development, in particular:

- The present **legal structure** of the Forum has provided a practical basis for the initial development of the International Transport Forum. Moving forward, the Transport Management Board is asked to continue to explore means to further clarify and strengthen this structure to ensure long-term institutional stability. In the interim, the General Rules should be updated in preparation for Ministerial discussions in Leipzig at the 2012 Annual Summit.
- The Forum's **funding mechanisms** have been applied according to the provisions of the Dublin Declaration over the past five years and have enabled the financial grounding of the Forum in its initial period. The Transport Management Board should expedite work to develop a sound, stable, equitable and sustainable funding framework that allows for growth and that will carry the Forum forward.
- Ministers **renew the mandate of the Joint Transport Research Centre of the International Transport Forum and the OECD**, and acknowledge the valuable work that it has carried out in support of the Forum and in informing national policy development over the last five years. The Centre's programmes of work should provide for strategic, forward-thinking analysis to support future Forum themes.
- The **Multilateral quota remains an important tool for encouraging an open road transport system in Europe of the highest possible quality**, and should be retained as a part of the Forum's European Activities.
- The **organisational arrangements** of the Forum – comprising the Transport Management Board, Presidents and Vice-Presidents, and thematic Task Forces – has proven to be a solid basis for the organisation and management of the Forum, and should be continued.

16. In conclusion, Ministers note the contributions of the International Transport Forum in promoting and supporting the essential role of transport in economic growth, individual well-being, and sustainability, and look forward to the continued development of the Forum beyond 2012.