



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**INFORMATION NOTE**

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from: Commission

to: Council

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Subject: Ministerial meetings with Eastern and Southern neighbouring countries  
- Letter from the Commission

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Delegations will find attached a letter from Vice-President Kallas on the above-mentioned subject, to be circulated at the meeting of the Council (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) on 11 March 2013.

SIIM KALLAS

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Dear Ministers,

I would like to draw your attention to two ministerial meetings this autumn respectively with our Eastern and Southern neighbours that I hope that you will be able to attend.

In July 2011 the European Commission gave a new boost to better transport connections with the European Neighbourhood Policy countries through its Communication "*The EU and its neighbouring regions: A renewed approach to transport cooperation*". This approach was endorsed by the Council on 6 October 2011. In its conclusions, the Council encouraged the EU to continue its cooperation in the EuroMed transport framework and recognised the establishment of the Eastern Partnership Transport Panel as a way to ensure a more structure cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries.

Since autumn 2011, priority actions on improving transport connections with the European Neighbourhood Policy countries have been followed up by the Eastern Partnership Transport Panel and EuroMed transport groups respectively. To endorse results and give guidance for future cooperation, two ministerial meetings involving Transport Ministers of EU Member States and of the European Neighbourhood Policy countries will take place.

Firstly, a meeting of EU and Eastern Partnership Transport Ministers will be organised under the Lithuanian EU Presidency on 9 October 2013 in Luxembourg, back-to-back with the EU Transport Council on 10 October 2013. Secondly, a second Euro Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on transport is scheduled for 14 November 2013 in Brussels.

On 13 February this year, I participated in the informal Eastern Partnership transport dialogue meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia. At this meeting, Transport Ministers of the partner countries agreed to

work on three key deliverables for the meeting with EU Ministers in October 2013: i) progress in regulatory approximation and market integration (notably aviation agreements); ii) defining the Eastern Partnership transport network that shows how TEN-T connects with the key infrastructure in the partner countries; iii) endorsing a list of priority projects.

The Senior Officials Meeting of the Union for the Mediterranean agreed on 27 February 2013 that a second Euro Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on transport will review the implementation of the Regional Transport Action Plan for the Mediterranean region 2007-2013 as well as the priority projects. The meeting should identify main guidelines for the Euro-Mediterranean cooperation for 2014-2020, including definition of the Trans-Mediterranean Transport network that connects with TEN-T through maritime links.

All preparatory work for the two ministerial meeting will be done respectively under the Eastern Partnership Transport Panel and the EuroMed transport cooperation frameworks. The two frameworks involve experts from the partner countries and the EU Member States. This work is coordinated by the European Commission and with the support from the EU Member States we are committed to preparing concrete results for the Transport Ministers to endorse in autumn 2013.

I hope that you will be able to attend these important meetings with the EU's neighbouring countries and contribute to make these meetings a success.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siim Kallas', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Siim Kallas