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# **Transport Connectivity Forum**

## **October 1-2, 2019**

### **Hilton, Podgorica, Montenegro**

## **Joint Conclusions**

1. Transport Connectivity Forum which the Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs of Montenegro hosted in cooperation with the International Road Federation, Chamber of Commerce of Montenegro, Mechanical Engineering Faculty of the University of Montenegro and Monteput, in Podgorica on October 1-2, 2019, has once more confirmed the commitment of the Western Balkans countries to the European Union accession process, appreciating the assistance of the European Union which has thus far been secured through available financing mechanisms, and confirming efforts related to strengthening neighborly relations, regional stability and joint cooperation.
2. The Forum enabled constructive dialogue among the participants, reviewing results achieved in the process of accession to the European Union and aims defined through the Connectivity Agenda for the transport sector, and exchanging opinions regarding future aims of action towards integrative processes, thus opening a space for exploration of responses to questions of key significance for the Western Balkans region.
3. Joint position of the Western Balkan countries that the Berlin Process is an important initiative for the region, which would facilitate overcoming of barriers and ensure free flow of people, goods, services and capital was confirmed, through the implementation of transport sector related projects of joint strategic interest; and the need for further deepening of cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experiences was recognized, through the development of multimodal transport solutions and stronger inclusion of the private sector.

4. Regional cooperation and cooperation of the region with the EU, actualized through the Connectivity Agenda and additionally affirmed through the signing of the Transport Community Treaty is advanced with the establishment of Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community of the South-East Europe.
5. Need for further simplification of customs related and administrative procedures, together with the alignment of regulation and standards, in order to facilitate provision of transport services would lower the prices and ensure competition on the market.
6. All Western Balkans countries involved in the Berlin Process have already realized benefits through the absorption of pre-accession funds which have been made available for the transport sector.
7. Despite the potential of capital infrastructure projects to support economic growth and the growth of the living standards of citizens, their implementation on the Western Balkans remains a challenge and demands a more intensive regional cooperation, even in the phases of preparatory and procurement activities, including benchmarking analysis, in order to identify best practices and enable regional implementation considering similarities in the legal systems and strategic aims of the Western Balkans countries.
8. Road safety is a priority for the Western Balkans countries and work is being intensively and continuously done on improving this field through the drafting and adoption of new vehicle regulation and technical standards, as well as through the implementation of infrastructure projects, with the aim of preserving lives, material value and public resources, and minimizing negative effects on the environment and society.
9. Western Balkan countries are dedicated to undertaking measures aiming to reduce the number of traffic accident with fatalities in accordance with the Road Safety Declaration endorsed by the Transport Ministers in Ljubljana in April 2018.
10. Western Balkan countries commit to comprehensive structural reforms to meet European standards through a program of deepened regional dialogue and collaboration with international partners.