



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

EU helps to mobilise investments for transport on the Europe–Caucasus–Asia corridor

Brussels, 28 February 2012 – Today the European Commission hosts the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA) Investment Forum to help attract investments into transport infrastructure between the EU and Central Asia. The high level conference brings together representatives of the international donor community and the countries in TRACECA to discuss potential funding for priority projects.

Štefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, commented: *"An efficient transport system is the backbone of effective regional integration. Our Eastern neighbours, who link the Black and the Caspian Seas to China and beyond, could benefit from stronger transport infrastructure and services, in order to help them reach their full potential in their economic and trade relations with the EU."*

Vice-President Siim Kallas, European Commissioner responsible for Mobility and Transport, added: *"Our experience in developing transport corridors and making sure that high transport safety, security and social standards are applied, can be shared with our partner countries. Better connections benefit passengers and operators both in the EU and our partner countries."*

12 projects will be presented at the Forum to potential donors and investors interested in logistics centres and road, rail, maritime and aviation transport. Improving the current border crossing procedures, which can hamper the smooth flow of goods and people, will also be discussed.

The TRACECA Investment Forum aims to attract investment for transport infrastructure in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Romania, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Improving partners' infrastructure, in particular their transport networks, leads to better interconnection and safer and more reliable transport services, with a clear impact on living conditions and economic growth both in the partner countries and in the EU. Improving connections with the Trans-European Transport network is also one of the objectives of the Eastern Partnership transport cooperation.

Facts and figures on the TRACECA programme

TRACECA is a transport cooperation programme among 12 countries in the Black Sea, Eastern Partnership and Central Asia regions. With a permanent Secretariat in Azerbaijan, it covers the areas of maritime transport, aviation, road and rail, transport security, and transport infrastructure. Initially started in 1993 as a programme funded by the European Union, TRACECA also aims to strengthen economic relations, trade and transport links between the countries.

Up to now, the EU has supported this cooperation with technical assistance with a total of almost €170 million for 80 projects, which since 2004 have mostly focused on transport safety and security, legal harmonisation initiatives, trade facilitation and institutional support.