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New and Improved Framework for Cross-border Infrastructure in Europe

The EU Ministers for Transport were gathered today for a Council Meeting in Brussels to discuss, among other issues, how cross-border transport and infrastructure can generate growth in the EU.

At the Council Meeting, there was broad agreement among the ministers on the proposal on the new guidelines for EU's transport network (TEN-T). Via allocation of EU funds, the objective of the Trans-European Transport Network TEN-T is to support better transport connections and infrastructure across EU borders.

Furthermore, the ministers adopted a joint position on the proposal on ground-handling in the European airports. The objective of the proposal is to increase the efficiency and quality of the groundhandling services to the benefit of both airlines and passengers.

During the lunch meeting, the ministers also discussed the security procedures in the European airports as well as flight time regulations for pilots.

In this connection, Minister for Transport Henrik Dam Kristensen says:

- I am pleased with the concrete results achieved by the Council at our meeting today. In my opinion, we can quite honestly say that today, the Council took some major steps towards better cohesion in the European transport sector. This applies to both cross-border infrastructure as well as important legislative framework for aviation.

- Today, the Council expressed broad agreement on new guidelines for the Trans-European Transport Network, TEN-T. We Europeans travel more and more across European borders, and all around Europe, goods have to be transported from A to B on a daily basis. Thus, we are highly dependent on a well-functioning European transport system. With the new guidelines for the TEN-T, we create the framework for the strengthening of cross-border infrastructure via EU funds, which provides genuine added value for all of Europe.

- A majority in the Council was also in favor of a revision of the rules on groundhandling in the European airports. The quality and efficiency of



groundhandling services must be increased. Particularly in view of the coming years' increase in the number of passengers, it is important that we at this point come to terms with the need for greater competition in this field in order to deliver improved and more efficient services.

- The ministers also discussed security procedures in the European airports and flight time regulations for pilots. The Council initiated an important debate on how we may streamline the procedures while, at the same time, maintaining a high level of security.