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**Information Note on the current situation regarding the
development of the Euro-Mediterranean transport network**

Transmitted by the European Commission
Directorate General for Energy and Transport

1. Work to better connect the European Union (EU) principal transport infrastructure routes (Trans-European Networks) to those of the Mediterranean region was launched in the mid-1990(s) but did not really get under way until the adoption of an action plan in Valencia in 2003. Following this the Commission adopted a Communication which set out a plan to create a 'EUROMED' network and the associated planning.
2. The principal recent events in relation to transport infrastructure have been:
 - The creation of the EUROMED transport project. This project commenced in the spring of 2003 with a budget of €20m from the MEDA fund. The countries covered are Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

The objectives of the project are:

First, to support the reform of the transport sector in the countries concerned based upon a diagnosis of the situation of transport in the region;

Second, to identify and support a regional transport infrastructure network.

The work on developing the network is under way as an input to the High Level Group which is examining the linkage of the TEN-T network to neighbouring countries.

A diagnostic study of the situation of the transport sector has been compiled and presented at the end of 2004.

- The SAFEMED project covering safety and security in the region. This project has been approved by the Commission and should start in spring 2005. The aim is to follow-up the maritime safety measures taken in the EU under the 'Erika' and 'Prestige' packets through an assistance programme. Among the subjects to be covered will be: strengthening the capacity of 'flag States', monitoring the performance of classification societies, creating a traffic management system in the area, ratification of major conventions on the protection of the marine environment, training of sea-farers and maritime administrations, security of vessels and port installations. The broad aim of the project will be to reduce the gap between the international legislation applied by the partner countries and the legislation in force in the EU.
- EUROMED GNSS. This projects aims at the facilitation of the application of EGNOS and later Galileo in the region. The project is under way and the work programme involves training, demonstration projects for services and applications in the partner countries. Some of the activities will be managed by a new regional EUROMED office which has been set up in Cairo.
- Regional air transport programme (forthcoming). This project is in the identification stage by the Commission services in liaison with a working group of the director generals of civil aviation in the region; it will form part of the MEDA Neighbourhood Programme 2004-2006. Among the issues being considered in the framework of this project under preparation are: the harmonization of technical norms, the approximation of safety and security norms and questions linked to ATM cooperation

3. In the course of 2005 the Commission plans to present a long term transport strategy for the region taking into account the diagnosis made under the EUROMED transport project. A first Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial conference is planned for the end of 2005. EUROMED transport cooperation activities are undertaken under the MEDA programme which the Commission has proposed to replace by a new financial instrument the 'European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument' in the forthcoming EU financial perspectives for 2007-2013.
