

# **Declaration on the further promotion of sustainable transport in the Alpine Region**

*Innsbruck, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2015*

## HAVING REGARD TO

1. the trans-European transport network policy of the European Union, as defined with the Regulations on Union Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network<sup>1</sup> and the Connecting Europe Facility<sup>2</sup>, and in particular to the provisions thereof which strengthen the legal basis for reinforcing action towards more sustainable transport through the Alps;
2. the common transport policy of the European Union, and in particular those fields which may contribute to reducing negative effects of transport on habitants, climate and natural resources notably promoting intermodality, safety, sustainability and innovation;
3. the Alpine Convention which calls upon its contracting parties to pursue a comprehensive policy for the preservation and protection of the Alps and which, in its Transport Protocol, promotes a sustainable transport policy to enhance the quality of life of the people living in the Alpine area and to reduce negative effects on and risks for habitants and natural resources which result from traffic within and across the Alps;
4. the Zürich Process which promotes, through regular meetings at Ministerial and technical level, the advancement of areas making vital contributions to sustainable transport in the Alpine Region – including the expansion of traffic management, the management of incidents, safety management of railway tunnels as well as the collection of data and the development of environmental indicators;
5. the Alpine Traffic Observatory in the framework of the EU / Switzerland Land Transport Agreement, collecting data and preparing reports on goods transport by road and rail across the Alps;
6. the fact that the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP), as requested by the European Council of 19-20 December 2013, is currently under preparation; which aims to foster a harmonious and sustainable development across the Alpine Region and is based on three action oriented policy areas whereas the second policy area shall promote a territorial development focused on an environmentally friendly mobility, reinforced academic cooperation, development of services, transports and communication infrastructures policy;

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) N° 1315/2013

<sup>2</sup> Regulation (EU) N° 1316/2013

7. the Council conclusions on Transport, Infrastructure and the Trans European Network adopted on 3 December 2014, which underline the importance of a closer cooperation amongst Member States, European Coordinators and the Commission especially for the completion of the cross-border projects and which recommend the exchange of best practices concerning these projects.

#### APPRECIATING

8. the progress which has been made up to now, in the framework of the trans-European transport network policy, such as the realization of the Lötschberg base tunnel in Switzerland - in operation since 2007, in preparing and implementing major Alpine crossing infrastructure projects, notably in the rail sector;
9. the successful launching of the core network corridors, four of which include Alpine crossing sections; the strong focus on major Alpine crossing railway tunnels and on an overall corridor development towards sustainable and efficient mobility which may build on the full magnitude of the new European infrastructure policy and on strengthened interrelation with the common transport policy; the resulting potential for a step change in the sustainability record of transport through the Alps;
10. the reinforced role of European Coordinators who stimulate and align the wide range of action contributing to the development of the corridors, including in Switzerland; the enhanced possibilities for EU funding from the Connecting Europe Facility, with a strong concentration on key cross-border railway projects and with due emphasis placed on other measures which contribute to sustainable transport;
11. the approval of the Transport Protocol of the Alpine Convention by the Council of the European Union<sup>3</sup> which reconfirms the importance attached by all parties to a sustainable transport policy in this sensitive Alpine area;
12. the responsibilities of the Member States, as well as third countries like Switzerland and Liechtenstein, regarding the planning and decision-making processes of major cross-border railways projects, as well as their governance under implementation and operation phases;
13. the involvement of regional and local partners across the Alpine countries which, such as in the framework of the iMonitraf! project or the Brenner Corridor Platform, contribute to assess the needs and opportunities from a regional and local perspective.

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<sup>3</sup> Council Decision of 10 June 2013 on the conclusion on behalf of the European Union of the Protocol on the implementation of the 1991 Alpine Convention in the field of transport (Transport Protocol)

## AGREEING

14. that the Alpine States, the European Commission and implementing bodies shall pursue their commitments aiming at the completion of the major Alpine crossing railway tunnel projects stated below in accordance with national plans, in particular the recent joint applications for EU co-funding :
  - the Gotthard base tunnel – as part of the Rhine – Alpine corridor: by 2016
  - the Ceneri base tunnel – as part of the Rhine – Alpine corridor: by 2019
  - “Terzo Valico dei Giovi” line – as part of the Rhine – Alpine corridor: by 2020
  - the Koralm tunnel – as part of the Baltic Adriatic corridor: by 2023
  - the Semmering base tunnel – as part of the Baltic Adriatic corridor: by 2024
  - the Brenner base tunnel (Innsbruck – Fortezza – Ponte Gardena) – as part of the Scandinavian Mediterranean corridor: by 2025
  - the cross-border base tunnel on the Lyon – Torino connection – as part of the Mediterranean corridor: by 2029
  - the cross-border Karavanke tunnel: by 2025
15. that the work plans of the European Coordinators and the recent joint applications by the Alpine States for EU co-funding shall contribute to the cross-Alpine Corridors;
16. that the completion of these tunnels will yield full benefit when the corresponding access infrastructure is available – including corridors of 4m corner height for combined transport in access to and from the new base tunnels such as in Switzerland; that such access infrastructure includes in particular the railway connections Karlsruhe – Basel, Swiss/Italian State border – Milano and Swiss/Italian State border – Novara – Genoa, München – Wörgl, Ponte Gardena – Verona, Lyon – Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, Susa – Torino, Trieste – Divaca, hinterland connections with Northern Adriatic ports, as well as connections with Western Balkan region; that the actors concerned will pursue these projects in a time horizon compatible with anticipated needs;
17. that, in order to support the aforementioned commitments, Alpine States and the European Commission shall make best the possible use and availability of the implementation instruments of the trans-European transport network policy – i.e. corridor coordination, TEN-T funding and financial instruments; that, especially for key cross-border sections, best practices are exchanged, remaining obstacles identified and appropriate solutions explored;
18. that Alpine crossing sections of the relevant core network corridors should lead the way in making core network corridors "frontrunners" of a sustainable mobility system; that, to this end, due emphasis shall be placed on the broad range of potential projects in fields such as traffic management, technological innovation, interoperability, inter-modality, sustainable freight and innovative/integrated passengers services, efficient infrastructure management and safety; that, any transport policy measure suitable to stimulate the shift of transport (in particular freight) to rail, should be particularly considered; the preliminary completion of the necessary alternative transport infrastructure and the provision of related services shall

allow to fully benefit from these investments to create economic growth and jobs and not hamper established economic relations;

19. that sustainable long-term financing, including at EU-level, constitutes a vital pillar of sustainable corridor development and should, therefore, be given appropriate importance; that, in support of the European Energy Union and the Digital Agenda for Europe, synergies should be generated where appropriate between the development of transport as well as energy and/or digital infrastructure, and the EU funding mark-up foreseen for this purpose should be made use of;
20. that the potential of corridor pilot projects should be explored in the fields of sustainable mobility and sustainable financing, and that this may create a momentum for other core network corridors to follow the sustainability initiative of the Alpine States and regions ; that, to this end, cooperation could be sought where appropriate within the future EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP);
21. that communication on overall corridor development shall be enhanced and include, besides the States involved, the Commission and implementing bodies, also civil society.
22. to meet again in one year to discuss the progress made, and possible difficulties faced, with the implementation of these measures.

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**Violeta Bulc**  
*European Commissioner for Transport*

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**Maurizio Lupi**  
*Minister of Infrastructure and Transport  
Italy*

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**Alois Stöger**  
*Minister of Transport, Innovation and Technology  
Austria*

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**Marlies Amann-Marxer**  
*Minister of Infrastructure, Environment and Sport  
Liechtenstein*

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**Alain Vidalies**  
*Minister of State for Transport, Marine Affairs and Fisheries  
France*

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**Peter Gašperšič**  
*Minister of Infrastructure  
Slovenia*

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**Alexander Dobrindt**  
*Federal Minister of Transport and Digital Infrastructure  
Germany*

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**Doris Leuthard**  
*Federal Minister of Environment, Transport, Energy and  
Communications  
Switzerland*