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**INFORMATION NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Council  
Subject: Ministerial Conference on Eastern Partnership (Krakow, 24 and 25 October 2011)  
– Information from the Presidency

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Delegations will find annexed an information note on the above-mentioned subject, which will be dealt with under "Any Other Business" at the meeting of the Council (**Transport**, Telecommunications and Energy) on 6 October 2011.

Ministerial Conference on Eastern Partnership (Krakow, 24 and 25 October 2011)

Information from the Presidency

The EU Partnership with Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan (the Eastern Partnership) was launched in 2009 to foster EU's relations with the six eastern neighbouring countries in all possible domains.

Bringing forward this Eastern Partnership is one of the main general priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council. In the field of transport, the Presidency wants to seize the occasion given by the new European Commission's communication on transport relations with neighbouring regions to convene Transport Ministers of Member States and of the six Eastern Partnership countries to a conference in Krakow on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of October, with the European Commission and a representative of the Republic of Croatia.

This Conference has an ambition to bring representatives of countries of both sides to meet, sometime for the first time, to present their vision of the opportunities, but also challenges they will be facing through this transport partnership, and to discuss on a bilateral basis if they so wish.

This Conference should:

- help to promote the free movement of passengers and goods through infrastructure, legislation and market policies,
- aim at illustrating the **mutual benefit** of such a partnership between EU and Eastern countries in the general political framework of the neighbourhood policy and the benefit of fostering ties between Eastern partners,
- stress the **progress that is expected from Eastern Partnership countries** in transport related legislation to benefit of market opening of the EU,

- help showing **the way to reduce the gap** between both sides of the Partnership:
    - possible **TEN-T** extension to connect Countries and People,
    - possible **funds** to realize common projects,
  
  - aim to bring about **practical proposals** related to the way forward and first initiatives to be taken, and should be a launch pad for **a transport panel of the Eastern Partnership**,
  
  - give to Ministers **time and facilities for bilateral meetings** to discuss possible bilateral problems or consider business opportunities.
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