



**REPUBLIC OF GREECE**  
**MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

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COMMUNICATIONS, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION,  
AT THE ADVISORY WORKSHOP ON UNECE LEGAL INSTRUMENTS IN  
THE FIELD OF TRANSPORT AND ON RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE  
AND BORDER CROSSING DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE SOUTHEAST EUROPE  
(Thessaloniki, Greece, 19-20 December 2005)**

Distinguished Delegates, Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

I should like to welcome you in Greece and in the historic city of Thessaloniki. I wish you a nice stay and a very fruitful meeting.

The Greek Ministry of Transport and Communications is very happy to host this advisory workshop on UNECE legal instruments in the field of transport and on related infrastructure and border crossing developments in the southeastern European region. This event is part of the UNECE efforts to assist its South - Eastern European member countries to further integrate their transport systems with those of other UNECE member countries, which our Ministry fully supports.

The workshop will offer all of us the opportunity to acquire useful information about the ECE legislation on Transport and to discuss on the recent developments on transport infrastructure and border crossing in the region. The UNECE legislation aims to facilitate international transport

while improving its safety and environmental performance. These agreements and conventions provide the international legal and technical framework for the development of international road, rail, inland waterway and multi - modal transport in the UNECE region. The aim is to create coherent international infrastructure networks, harmonized and simplified border-crossing procedures and uniform rules and regulations for the whole ECE area.

Greece has acceded to most of the ECE agreements and conventions, and has benefited from the integration of these legal instruments to its transport policy.

While these legislation is important to all European countries, both western and eastern, they are especially important for the Governments of non EU countries, which need to develop their transport legislation along the lines of those existing in the other European countries.

Furthermore, transport infrastructure as well as current performance of border crossing procedures in the SEE is far from being adequate and efficient. This creates serious problems in the international transport operations in our region, causing serious damage to the development of our trade and tourism, which are of vital importance for achieving higher economic development and ensuring prosperity to our people.

This is an additional reason why we believe that this meeting will offer great assistance to all of us, in the Southeast part of Europe, and in particular to our colleagues from the five countries directly involved in

this workshop in their efforts to harmonize their transport legislation with that of the other ECE countries.

I am confident that the workshop will meet its objectives, and once again, I wish you all a nice stay here in Thessaloniki and a very fruitful meeting.