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FACILITATION OF BORDER CROSSING IN INTERNATIONAL RAIL TRANSPORT

**Bilateral Agreement between the Council of Ministers of Serbia and Montenegro and the
Government of the Republic of Bulgaria on border controls and procedures for railway
traffic**

Transmitted by the Government of Serbia and Montenegro

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has conducted a series of measures in the course of resolving complex problems on railway border crossings. For that reason, the Commission for Border Crossings and the Commission for preparation and organization of national strategy for managing security and control of crossing the State borders services were established. The Government of the Republic of Serbia is now preparing a particular Law on Border Crossings and the Founding of Direction for Border Crossings.

Simultaneously with these activities, the Ministries in charge of transport in Serbia and Bulgaria, with the full support of the border authorities of both States, made a New Bilateral Agreement. A new BCA has been signed and is in the process of ratification by the Parliaments of both States.

According to the New Bilateral Agreement, there will be one stop for trains at the Dimitrovgrad railway station (Serbia and Montenegro) for freight trains and control of the passenger trains during the train movement between Dimitrovgrad (Serbia and Montenegro) and Dragoman (Bulgaria). Besides creating a joint station, the Agreement considered a modern approach to resolving problems of the joint work of border authorities on railway border crossings. The term "Zone", was defined as territory where border procedures were carried out, defining the legal status of the officials and railway personnel, without infringed sovereignty and integrity of each State. The Border authorities (Border Police, Customs, and Border Inspections) have created their own bilateral Protocols where they will regulate efficient border controls and procedures, having in mind the provisions and spirit of BCA.

Activities regarding the implementation of the Agreement comprise full reconstruction and modernization of the Dimitrovgrad railway station (up-to-date investments are about €15 million for electrification and rehabilitation of the station and railway line to the border).

In the first half of 2006, the conducting border control procedures is planned to start according to the New Technology defined in the New BCA.
