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Donor Coordination Meeting Seeks to Ensure Efficiency and Sustainability of Investments in the Transport Sector in the South Caucasus

Tbilisi, 10 November, 2011. The World Bank together with the Georgian Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure is hosting the Donors' Coordination Meeting on Transport Perspectives in the South Caucasus on November 10-11, 2011. The participants of the Meeting are the government officials from the three South Caucasus countries, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well staff and officials of all the donors currently involved in the transport sector (ADB, EBRD, EIB, IFC, JICA, KfW, MCG).

Following the three previous Coordination Meetings the overall objective of the meeting is to encourage better donor coordination in the transport sector in the South Caucasus, to share views among donors on the current state of the transport sector and related policy matters, and to discuss issues and strategy going forward.

“This Coordination Meeting is a unique opportunity to discuss transport issues that affect the entire South Caucasus. The World Bank is commended for facilitating these meetings, and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia would be pleased to host the conferences annually. Such conferences would help to develop stronger ties between South Caucasus countries in the frames of infrastructure projects,” **said Ramaz Nikolaishvili, Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure.**

“The objective of the meeting is to maximize the development impact of donor supported programs through their better alignment with respective country programs and strengthened donor coordination. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the participants to present their programs, clarify investment needs and promote new project ideas for donor support,” **said Asad Alam, World Bank Regional Director for the South Caucasus.**

Presentations will be made by the respective government representatives on the Transport Programs in their countries. These will be followed by more in depth discussions with the donor group on their current involvement and their views on the Government programs for potential future support. The Armenian delegation is headed by Mr. Manuk Vardanyan, Minister of Transport and Communication, the Azerbaijani delegation is expected to be headed by Mr. Zia Mammadov, Minister of Transport.

The Coordination Meeting will also discuss issues of general importance for the Transport Sector at present and outlined possible future trends. These discussions will focus on *Road Safety: Developments in the South Caucasus; Urban Transport: Developments in the South Caucasus and the methods to improve Railways management.*

During discussions, participants are expected to agree that transport investments are important for the three South Caucasus countries to support growth and job creation, and also to agree on stronger efforts to ensure efficiency and sustainability of investments.

The meeting is an important step following previous years' initiatives in better addressing the very large investment needs in the South Caucasus transport sector.

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