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#### NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations

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Subject:	EU-Western Balkans Transport Community Coordination of the Union position on the renewal of the mandates of the Director and Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community - Information Note from the Commission
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In view of the next meeting of the Working Group on Transport - Intermodal Questions and Networks on 21 April 2023, the Commission services have provided the attached information note.

**INFORMATION NOTE****Coordination of the Union position on the renewal of the mandates of the Director and Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community**

This information note is presented by the Commission services in view of coordinating the EU position for the vote in the Regional Steering Committee of the Transport Community Treaty (TCT) on the proposed renewal of the mandates of the Director and the Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community.

Pursuant to Article 30 of the Transport Community Treaty, the Director of the Permanent Secretariat shall be appointed by the Regional Steering Committee following consultation of the Ministerial Council. The mandate shall not exceed three years, and may be renewed. Also pursuant to Article 30 of the Transport Community Treaty, the Regional Steering Committee may also appoint one or more Deputy Directors.

Mr Matej Zakonjšek, the current Director of the Permanent Secretariat, was appointed with effect from 1 August 2020, as laid down in Decision 2020/2 of the Regional Steering Committee <sup>(1)</sup>. Ms Ljuba Siljanoska, the current Deputy Director, was appointed with effect from 1 September 2020, as laid down in Decision 2020/3 of the Regional Steering Committee <sup>(2)</sup>.

The term of office of Mr Matej Zakonjšek, the current Director, expires on 1 August 2023. The term of office of Ms Ljuba Siljanoska, the current Deputy Director, expires on 1 September 2023. When first appointed, the respective appointment decisions clarified that both appointments may be renewed for maximum two times, in line with point 4.8(c) of Annex II to Decision 2019/3 of the Regional Steering Committee, laying down the Staff Regulations of the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community.

It is important to allow the uninterrupted functioning of the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat and of its bodies, in particular given the fact that the Transport Community is engaged in

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<sup>(1)</sup> [https://www.transport-community.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TCT\\_RSC\\_director\\_2020\\_2.pdf](https://www.transport-community.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TCT_RSC_director_2020_2.pdf)

<sup>(2)</sup> [https://www.transport-community.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TCT\\_RSC\\_DDirector\\_2020\\_3.pdf](https://www.transport-community.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/TCT_RSC_DDirector_2020_3.pdf)

a process of reforms, including the implementation of Annex I of the Transport Community Treaty, which require the active role of the Secretariat.

Mr Matej Zakonjšek and Ms Ljuba Siljanoska have a record of effective, efficient and independent management of the Secretariat which enables them to fulfil successfully their respective functions as Director and Deputy Director of the Transport Community Permanent Secretariat.

Since taking up their duties in 2020, the current Director and Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat have built strong links with transport stakeholders in the Western Balkans and contributed to the establishment of the Transport Community and its Permanent Secretariat as a respected international organisation in the field of transport in the Region.

Under their leadership, the Permanent Secretariat has developed guiding documents to help the South East European Parties deliver on their commitments under the TCT to transpose and implement the EU transport acquis listed in Annex I to the Treaty. These documents include the Action Plans on road transport, road safety, transport facilitation, rail transport, waterborne transport and multimodality, and social issues, as well as the Smart and Sustainable Mobility Strategy for the Western Balkans.

Under the guidance and management of the Director and Deputy Director, the Permanent Secretariat has also produced the first iteration of one of the key deliverables under the Treaty – the five-year rolling work plan for the indicative extension of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) in the region. The Secretariat has also established the annual reporting on the state of the TEN-T network in the Western Balkan Partners. To support these deliverables, the Secretariat has rolled out the TCT Transport Observatory.

Mr Zakonjšek and Ms Siljanoska have also proven their ability for independent management by pushing forward the transport agenda and contributing to the realisation of major initiatives and transport priorities for the region, such as the extension of the Green Lanes to the Western Balkans.

The current Director and Deputy Director have ensured the effective and efficient management of the budget of the Transport Community, as evidenced in the yearly improvements of the state of budgetary execution – starting from 31% in 2020, more than doubling to 77% in 2021, until reaching 83% in 2022.

Following the positive assessment on their first term of office of the performance of Mr Zakonjšek and Ms Siljanoska and of their potential to continue managing the Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community in the coming years taking into account this body's future tasks and challenges, the Commission has decided to propose to the Regional Steering Committee of the TCT to renew the terms of office of both the Director and Deputy Director for another three years, in accordance with Point 4 of Annex I to Decision 2019/3 of the Regional Steering Committee <sup>(3)</sup>. On 31 March 2023, the Commission services informed the Council Working Party on Intermodal Questions and Networks of the Commission decision to propose the renewal. Both Mr Zakonjšek and Ms Siljanoska have provided their prior agreement for the renewal of their mandates as Director and Deputy Director of the Permanent Secretariat.

Following the distribution of the proposal by the European Commission containing the proposed candidate, the Ministerial Council of the TCT should then be consulted, leading to a vote on the proposed renewal of the mandates of the Director and Deputy Director in the subsequent RSC meeting.

The Commission shared its formal proposal with the South East European Parties on 4 April 2023. A first discussion is planned for mid-April, to be followed by a consultation via written procedure of the TCT Ministerial Council thereafter (expected to be carried out in May 2023). The vote putting into effect the renewal of mandates of the Director and Deputy Director of the TCT is expected to take place during the Regional Steering Committee meeting planned for June 2023.

**Proposed Union position:**

- To vote in favour of the renewal of the mandates of Mr. Matej Zakonjšek, as Director of the Secretariat, and Ms. Ljuba Siljanoska, as Deputy Director, for a period of three years each.

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<sup>(3)</sup> <https://www.transport-community.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/transport-community-rsc-decision-2019-3.pdf>