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**NOTE**

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: AOB for the meeting of the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council on 8 June 2026  
Call to continue discussions on the proposal for a revision of the combined transport directive  
*- Information from Malta*

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The Combined Transport Directive (CTD) was designed to encourage multimodal freight transport and reduce the negative externalities of long-distance road haulage. The existing Directive provides for rigid distance-based criteria - particularly the cap on road legs, without accounting for the length of non-road legs segments within the same intermodal journey. These criteria do not adequately reflect Europe's geographic and infrastructure diversity, especially for island and peripheral Member States that do not have the option to use direct rail connections and are physically detached from the continental mainland. Additionally, the current Directive does not uphold the principles of the European Green Deal.

The Commission's Recast Proposal has promised a positive change in various sectors including:

- Environmental: A meaningful shift from road to rail, inland waterways, and short-sea shipping would contribute directly to the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, air pollution, noise, and congestion, supporting Member States in meeting their climate targets.

- **Economic:** Studies have shown that extending the scope of the CTD has the potential to generate positive spillover effects on GDP, trade, and the cost of imports. By reducing regulatory barriers, hauliers can retain more profit, invest in equipment, and pass cost savings on to end customers, strengthening the competitiveness of the EU logistics sector.
- **Cohesion:** A revised Directive that accounts for the specific realities of islands, peripheral, and geographically disadvantaged regions would enhance territorial cohesion and ensure a level playing field across the Single Market.

While recognising that the negotiations so far have not led to successful compromises, Malta expresses its concern with the Commission's intention to withdraw this Proposal. Withdrawing the Proposal for the Combined Transport Directive would result in a profound setback for the European Union's ambitions.

Malta believes that there is room for further negotiations to develop a creative compromise that offers a competitive level playing field for all Member States. Several available avenues remain unexplored, including hybrid models and enhanced flexibility clauses.

Malta urges the Commission to allow more time for further negotiations to take place, as well as incoming Presidencies to consider reviving the debate with a view to exploring all avenues that could lead to an agreement on this important initiative for the transport sector and for the EU's competitiveness and internal market.

The future of Europe's freight transport, the achievement of our climate commitments, and the integrity of territorial cohesion demand nothing less than steadfast resolve in pursuit of this essential reform.

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