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MOTTATT

19 SEPT 2011

Ms. Magnhild Meltveit Kleppa
Ministry of Transport and Communications
The Minister
P.O. Box 8010 Dep,
NO-0030 Oslo
NORWAY

Dear Ms Kleppa,

Thank you for your letter on the Transport White Paper and the accompanying Norwegian position paper, which I have read with great interest.

I share your view that the legislative proposals which the European Commission will put forward in the coming years will not only be important for the EU, but also concern Norway and other EEA countries.

Indeed, with the White Paper we did not intend to focus only on those aspect of transport policy which traditionally lie within the EU competence, but we tried to provide a vision which we hope can be shared by a wide range of policy makers and stakeholders. We are firmly committed to the principle of subsidiarity, but it would not have been sensible to discuss the future of transport only with reference to those aspects for which the EU has direct responsibility. In view of the considerable challenges confronting the transport sector, it is important for all actors involved to act coherently towards common goals.

The clear presentation of the Norwegian views on the different aspects of the White Paper will be very useful when implementing the strategy through concrete policy measures.

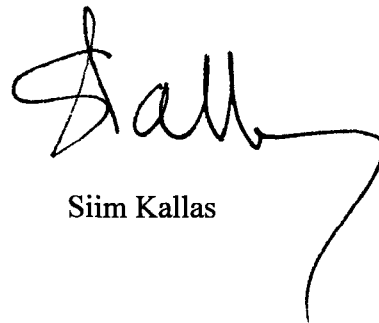
Reducing the friction of distance and creating accessibility has been and is a central endeavour for transport policy at European level and in the individual countries. Developing a multimodal core network of European infrastructure, integrating the eastern and western part of the European Union with appropriate connections to neighbouring countries will shape the Single European Transport Area. I have noted that Norway is supporting this new TEN-T policy and I look forward to your active participation with a view to improving connections between the EU and the Norwegian network.

Efficient use of this network and efficient transport operations is very dependent on getting the prices right. Users, transport operators and investors have to face the costs of their action so that their decisions on mode choice, the technologies to deploy and the infrastructure to invest in are also the most desirable from the point of view of society. This is part of the effort to align market choices with societal concerns for sustainability. I appreciate that Norway is supportive of our ideas on a more active use of user charging and application of ITS technology to achieve our goals in this area.

I have noted that Norway does not support the concept of earmarking of revenue from the transport sector to a transport fund. I believe that some kind of earmarking of revenue is necessary to win the support of the transport users and to reconcile the opposite interests of peripheral and transit countries. I am certain we will be able to set-up a constructive dialogue on this and other possible controversial areas when we will put forward our concrete suggestions in the coming years.

I regard your letter and the position paper as a preamble to this coming stage of the policy process. I look forward to the contributions from and active cooperation with Norway in this very important phase.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Siim Kallas', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Siim Kallas