



TAKING POINTS OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION COUNCIL (RCC), HIDO BIŠČEVIĆ

**THIRD GOVERNING BODY MEETING OF ISIS PROGRAMME
(IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY) IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

Ohrid, 12 September 2012

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Mr. Chairman,

- It gives me great pleasure to be with you today and to welcome you on behalf of the Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat as co-chairman of the Governing Body of Implementation of Single European Sky (ISIS Programme).
- I wish to thank you for being with us today and I wish to particularly thank the European Commission (DG MOVE), the ISIS Programme Secretariat and our host, authorities of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for their joint effort in organizing this meeting.
- I hope that the discussion of high-level representatives responsible for air traffic at today's meeting will enable the endorsement of important decisions and ensure appropriate level of coordination among key partners.
- Most of the countries of the region, signatories of the European Common Aviation Area Agreement (ECAAA), are well on track to fulfil the conditions under the first phase of this Agreement. However, they need to ensure as well that the requirements of the first phase are fully transposed and enforced in order to have the ground prepared for the pursuit of the requirements of the second phase.
- Over the last several years, the SEE countries invested considerable efforts in reforming and modernizing the civil aviation sector, thereby responding to the increasing challenges in this area. Thus, the positive results and progress achieved in all key SES domains have to be mentioned and recognised, whilst emphasizing

that the commitment of respective national administrations should continue so as to achieve the goals set under the ISIS Programme.

- As for the RCC, in line with our Strategy and Work Programme 2011-2013, air traffic has been identified as one of our priorities, and we will continue to pay even more attention to this sector.
- We are all aware of poor air traffic connections among the major cities in SEE, which represents a barrier to fast and convenient travel and, thus, affects the quality of the service delivered to end consumers.
- We all have to engage our available capacities and resources in order to overcome the shortcomings and increase the accessibility to the region and within the region.
- The national air carriers in the Western Balkans are facing challenges such as competitiveness, performance and sustainability of their operations and it is therefore high time to consider a new strategy, a new concept of a shared approach towards the market. Most of the European airlines are in debt and experience financial losses. They have, however, many shared profitable routes. In that respect, a stronger cooperation between major regional aviation players is needed if air traffic connectivity throughout the region is to be improved and consequently produce immediate benefits.
- Passengers and freight should enjoy efficient, more punctual, greener and seamless travel services based on a resilient air transport system, thoroughly integrated with other transport modes and well connected with the rest of Europe. Now is the time to move from planning to delivering.
- The two ISIS Governing Body meetings held in Montenegro in 2010 and in Croatia in 2011 confirmed the commitments of national administrations and created sound basis for a more strategic approach towards the efficient and timely implementation of the Single European Sky legislative.
- ISIS Programme is a strong framework for increasing cooperation among civil aviation authorities at regional level. Therefore, the relevant authorities must reap the benefits from such an initiative taking advantage of economies of scale, as well as applying peer pressure to achieve ECAA coherence on a consensus basis. Your participation at this Conference reconfirms the need for continued efforts towards the implementation of SES II legislation, even beyond 2012, and will give an impetus to its effective implementation.
- Finally, RCC is very much committed to provide further political support to RCC members from South East Europe in finalising the second phase of ISIS Programme and beyond. Furthermore, we are ready to make our capacities available to jointly identify the areas of possible cooperation, together with ISIS Programme Secretariat and other interested partners, in order to strengthen

institutional capacities of national administrations in SEE needed to independently cope with EU demands in this field.

- Let me conclude by saying that Single European Sky is a fine example of regional cooperation and thus, we have to continue working together to ensure a safe, secure, efficient and integrated air transport system in the SEE region.
- I wish us a successful and productive meeting.

Thank you.