

Dear readers,

As from today, **16 March 2020**, the Permanent Secretariat begins to monitor the travel restrictions set up by the different partners in South East Europe (including EU Member States) as one of the measures aimed at containing the spreading of COVID-19 in the region.

Every day – until further notice – the TCT will provide an update of the situation which will be made available on the TCT Website at **14.30**.

As you know, the spreading of the disease led to the setting up of very strong measures by the different governments in the region. These measures, as a collateral impact, also affect transport and trade in the region. The role of the Permanent Secretariat is certainly not to comment or judge these measures, but rather to provide a full picture of the situation to the public (administrations – citizens – business).

The Permanent Secretariat will be in touch with all interested parties (administrations / EU Delegations / international organizations) to collect and assess the data provided. Together with these interested parties, in particular with the health and transport administrations, the Permanent Secretariat may be brought to propose some guidance on the way the essential trade (human and animal food or medicines for instance) could continue to travel within the region and with MS. This could become a critical issue, in order to avoid that none of the interested parties would be facing shortage of goods of first necessity. I also count of you to inform me or report on actions you may wish to see coordinated at the level of the region and / or with MS.

As you all know, the situation is serious. The coordination of the actions is the only possible response to defeat the COVID-19. The Permanent Secretariat of the Transport Community is a very small organization, certainly not in the front line as many of you may presently be. However, all the team members are ready and committed to give their contribution to this unprecedented challenge.

Thank you for your attention.

Alain Baron, Director (interim)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alain Baron', written in a cursive style.