



Press Release

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Transport policy must be given higher priority, demands transport sector in joint letter to Commission President Barroso

Transport policy must be given a higher priority that reflects the importance of the sector's contribution to the development of the European Union, Commission President José Manuel Barroso has been told by transport representatives. In a joint letter, nine transport organisations representing European the rail, road, air, inland waterway and maritime sectors, expressed their desire for a stronger and more comprehensive commitment to transport policy from the new Commission. "Our sector should be seen and developed with full consideration given to all the complex environmental, economic, social, and employment factors that are inseparable from EU transport policy and the achievement of a prosperous, integrated and successful European Union," they wrote.

In the recently published 'Political Guidelines for the New Commission', presented by Commission President Barroso in July 2009, the 'decarbonisation of the transport sector' was the sole reference to transport in the entire document.

"Decisively tackling the environmental challenges is a more important priority than ever before and has to be a key element of the future European transport and climate policy," the sector organisations agree. "But it should not be pursued to the exclusion of all other transport policy goals," they add.

Transport is 'the backbone' of the European economy, accounting directly for 7% of GDP and more than 5% of total employment in the EU. This number more than doubles if the related industries serving transport, such as manufacturing, servicing, maintenance, and IT, are included.

Besides the decarbonisation of the transport sector, the European Commission's Communication on the Future for Transport from June 2009 raises some other important challenges, for which the transport sector must prepare: the implications of an ageing and increasingly urbanised population on both the workforce and transport users; the impact of transport costs on inward investment or delocalisation of business; migration and internal mobility; the adoption of new technology and infrastructure; co-modality; transport safety and transport security. These are all challenges which deserve full consideration alongside the environmental impact of transport, which must be properly addressed, the organisations demand.

The letter was sent to Commission President Barroso and to Commission Vice-President Tajani (in copy) on 20 November 2009. It was signed by Michael Nielsen, International Road Transport Union (IRU), Ulrich Schulte-Strathaus, Association of European Airlines (AEA), Johannes Ludewig, Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), Theresia Hacksteiner, European Barge Union (EBU), Alfons Guinier, European Community Shipowner's Association (ECSA), Isabelle Ryckbost, European Federation of Inland Ports (EFIP), Henk van der Velde, European Skippers Organization (ESO), Patrick Verhoeven, European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO), and Karin de Schepper, Inland Navigation Europe (INE).

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For further information, please contact:

Frank Schneider
CER Press and Communications Manager
phone +32 2 213 08 90
mobile +32 473 32 20 94
e-mail frank.schneider@cer.be

Juliette Ebele
IRU Head of Communications
Phone: +41 22 918 27 07
e-mail: Juliette.ebele@iru.org

Isabelle Ryckbost
Director EFIP
Phone: +32.2.219.82.07

Alfons Guinier
ECSA Secretary General
Tel: +32 2 510 61 26
Mobile: +32 475 28 40 89
e-mail: Guinier@ecsa.eu

The **Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER)** brings together more than 70 European railway undertakings and infrastructure companies. CER represents the interests of its members towards the European institutions as well as other policy makers and transport actors. CER's main focus is promoting the strengthening of rail as essential to the creation of a sustainable transport system which is efficient, effective and environmentally sound. For more information, see www.cer.be

The **International Road Transport Union (IRU)**, through its 180 Member Associations in 74 countries, upholds the interests of the entire road transport industry worldwide. It represents bus, coach, taxi and truck operators, from large transport fleets to driver-owners, in all public and private international bodies, advocating the sustainable development and facilitation of road transport. More information at www.iru.org

The **European Federation of inland ports (EFIP)** represents more than 200 inland ports in 18 countries the European Union, Moldova, Switzerland and Ukraine. EFIP highlights and promotes the role of European inland ports as nodal points for intermodal transport, combining road, rail, inland waterway and based on geographical accessibility, also short-sea shipping. EFIP is the voice of the European inland port network and actively accompanies all developments in the field of EU transport and environmental policy. For more information, see: www.inlandports.be

ECSA is the professional association representing the interests of the **European shipping industry**. ECSA was established in Brussels in 1965 and has daily contacts with the EU Institutions. Its membership comprises the Shipowners Associations of EU Member States and Norway (EEA).

European shipowners are active in a large variety of maritime services such as dry bulk, tankers, container regular lines, ferries, ro-ro services, short sea shipping, offshore, cable laying, cruises, etc. European shipping has a global leading position controlling 40 % of the global merchant fleet.

Theresia Hacksteiner
 EBU Secretary General
 Tel: +31 10 4116070
 Mobile: +31 653 336366
 e-mail: Hacksteiner@ebu-uenf.org

David Henderson
 Manager Information
 Association of European Airlines
 Phone : +32(0) 2 639 89 72
 Email: david.henderson@aea.be

Caroline Smith
 INE Communications
 Phone +32 2 553 62 71
 e-mail: caroline.smith@inlandnavigation.org

Patrick Verhoeven
 Secretary General ESPO
 Phone: + 32.2.736.34.63
 Mobile: + 32 477 30.12.26
 Email: patrick.verhoeven@espo.be

Henk J. van der Velde
 vice president ESO
 phone nr. 0031 10 206 06 02
 email : secretariat@eso-oenb.org

The **European Barge Union (EBU)** represents the interests of barge owners and barge operators from eight European countries. Its members are the national representative organisations of inland navigation in Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania and Switzerland.

EBU represents the interest of inland navigation on a pan European level and deals with all questions, arising out of the future development of the inland navigation industry and inland waterway transport.

To realise this aim EBU is mainly active in the field of the development of the European transport policy the improvement of the economic position of inland navigation the structured cooperation with national and international institutions the exchange of information and experience between the parties involved

The **Association of European Airlines (AEA)** represents 33 major European network carriers and has been the natural point of contact between the industry and its regulators for 55 years. It has been at the heart of evolutionary processes which have seen the European airline sector transform into a dynamic, market-driven entity, embracing new technologies and new business models, intent on maintaining its pre-eminent position in a global marketplace. Website: www.aea.be

Inland Navigation Europe (INE) is the European platform of national & regional waterway managers and promotion bureaus, established in 2000 with the support of the European Commission. INE sees major opportunities to contribute to long-term strategies for sustainable transportation by moving more goods by water in EU regions with accessible and navigable rivers and canals. To capture this business, INE members share their experience and know-how with enterprises ready to rethink their freight logistics. INE is a neutral platform without commercial interests. For more information www.inlandnavigation.org

The **European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO)** represents the port authorities, port associations and port administrations of the seaports of the European Union. The organisation was established in 1993 to promote policies and viewpoints of the European port sector with, primarily, the institutions of the European Union. More information can be found at : www.espo.be

European Skippers Organisation (ESO) looks after the interests of the European private inland shipping entrepreneurs on the European level. The ESO-Council is composed of representatives of Belgian, Dutch, French, German and Polish inland shipping organisations.

The European Skippers Organisation was founded in 1975 in Brussels to make the voice of the independent skippers heard clearly by what was then called the EEC. Since then, 'Brussels' has come to see waterways transport as a serious alternative.