

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

8876/88 (Presse 156)

1269th Council meeting

- Transport -

Luxembourg, 26 October 1988

President: Mr Yorgos PETSOS

Minister for Transport and
Communications of the
Hellenic Republic

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Jean-Luc DEHAENE
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister
for Transport and Institutional
Reforms

Denmark:

Mr Hans-Peter CLAUSEN
Minister for Transport and
Communications
Mr Joergen HALCK
State Secretary,
Ministry of Public Works

Germany:

Mr Jürgen WARNKE
Federal Minister for Transport
Mr Wilhelm KNITTEL
State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Transport

Greece:

Mr Yorgas PETSOS
Minister for Transport and
Communications
Mr Kosmas SPHIRIOU
Deputy Minister for Transport
and Communications

Spain:

Mr José BARRIONUEVO PEÑA
Minister for Transport, Tourism
and Communications

France:

Mr Michel DELEBARRE
Minister for Transport and the Sea

Ireland:

Mr John WILSON
Minister for Tourism and
Transport

Italy:

Mr Angelo CRESCO State Secretary, Transport

Luxembourg:

Mr Marcel SCHLECHTER Minister for Transport, Minister for Public Works and Minister for Energy

Netherlands:

Mrs N. SMIT-KROES Minister for Transport and Public Works

Portugal:

Mr Joao de OLIVEIRA MARTINS Minister for Public Works, Transport and Communications

Mr Carlos COSTA State Secretary, Inland Transport

United Kingdom:

Mr Paul CHANNON Minister for Transport

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For the Commission:

Mr Stanley CLINTON DAVIS Minister

Before embarking on the agenda for the meeting, the Council and the Commission sent a message of sympathy to the Governments of the Member States concerned and the families of the victims of the accident to the "Jupiter" off Piraeus.

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The Council also offered its condolences to the Government of the Philippines and to the people of that country who had suffered during typhoon Ruby, and in particular the families affected by the disaster involving the "Dona Marilyn" and the accidents to other vessels damaged.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH NON-COMMUNITY TRANSIT COUNTRIES

On 7 December 1987 the Council authorized the Commission to open a first round of negotiations with Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia. The Commission gave the Council an oral briefing on the outcome of these negotiations at the Council meeting on 20 June 1988, whereupon the Council adopted conclusions relating to the negotiations (see Press Release on the Transport Council meeting on 20 and 21 June 1988 (7005/88)).

On 5 October 1988 the Council received a written report from the Commission on the outcome of the first round of negotiations with the three countries concerned. The report was coupled with a recommendation for a Decision concerning the second round of negotiations.

At today's meeting, the Council established guidelines on a number of key aspects of the second round of negotiations. These guidelines are intended to assist the Permanent Representatives Committee in drawing up a new negotiating brief to enable the Council to adopt the directives for the second round of negotiations by 31 December 1988.

The Council confirmed its wish that the Commission should conclude the negotiations by 31 December 1989.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURES

The Council examined certain points of the draft Regulation for an action programme in the field of transport infrastructures with a view to the completion of an integrated market in 1992.

The Council paid particular attention to the question of entering specific appropriations for transport infrastructures under a multiannual budget heading.

After its discussions the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue with the examination of the proposal. The President said he hoped it would be possible to reach a final decision on the issue at the next meeting on 8 December 1988.

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS IN INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to conduct a more detailed study of the Commission's proposal in preparation for a substantial discussion of this item at the Council's meeting on 8 December 1988.

In this connection the Council noted the details given by the Commission on its talks within the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine regarding the involvement of Switzerland in the scrapping scheme envisaged by the Community.

WEIGHTS AND DIMENSIONS OF ROAD VEHICLES

The Council continued the discussion begun at the meeting in June concerning the Commission's proposal for making a number of amendments and additions to the Directive on the weights, dimensions and certain other characteristics of commercial road vehicles.

The Council noted that there were still difficulties regarding a number of aspects of these proposals and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue the discussions with a view to enabling the Council to take a decision at its next meeting.

ADMISSION TO THE OCCUPATION OF HAULAGE OPERATOR

The Council examined certain basic aspects of the proposal for a Directive amending the Directive on admission to the occupation of road haulage and road passenger transport operator, namely the requirements as to good repute, financial standing and professional competence.

After the discussion, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to expedite its proceedings so that the Directive could be adopted by the end of 1988.

AIDS FOR COMBINED TRANSPORT

The Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to pursue its discussions in such a way as to enable the Council to take a decision on the matter at its next meeting.

AIR SAFETY

The Council noted a statement by the Commission on the proposals which it intended to submit regarding air safety. Among other things, these proposals were designed to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between the Community, the Member States and Eurocontrol.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONSAppointment

On a proposal from the Federal German Government, the Council appointed Mr F. BESCHORNER a member of the Advisory Committee of the Euratom Supply Agency in place of Mr C. JOHANNSEN, - who had resigned - for the remainder of the Committee's term of office, which ran until 28 March 1989.

Brussels, 25 October 1988

NOTE BIO(88) 339 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC: AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE PORTE-PAROLE

RENDEZ-VOUS DE MIDI - M.F. Berendt

Court of Auditors Report on Agricultural Stocks

Commenting on this report, which criticises the effectiveness of national accounting and control procedures for stocks held in intervention, we stressed that this problem reflected the more fundamental need to reduce agricultural stock levels. The Community had already achieved substantial cuts and the Commission had made further proposals to reduce them further. Intervention should not regularly be used simply as an alternative market.

As for the detailed criticisms in the Court Report, the Commission is setting up a working group with representatives of member states to work out ways of improving national and Community systems of accounting and control.

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* Preparation Transport Council October 26 1988 (M.F. Berendt)

This Council will be working on a number of dossiers in preparation for the two-day meeting to be held on December 8 and 9, but is not expecting to take major decisions.

Ministers will have the first opportunity in formal session to discuss the Commission's proposals for a negotiating mandate with Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia. They will deal with a number of questions of principle, including the relationship between easier road transit and environmental and road safety considerations, a parallel effort for improving railway cooperation and combined transport, the terms for reciprocal access, financial aspects and the overall scope of the negotiations. The Commission would hope to see adoption of the negotiating mandate in December.

Further discussion will be held on the Commission's proposals for a medium-term programme for transport infrastructure. These foresee an allocation of 630m ecu over a five year period to help finance 12 priority actions including construction of a combined transport network, improvement of links to Spain and Portugal, construction of the TGV and improvement of Alpine and Scandinavian links, all projects identified as being of European importance.

The funding would be provided partly through existing Community Instruments and partly through a special budget line. There would also be encouragement to attract private capital. Until now the Council has consistently failed to agree Community funding for transport infrastructure and it has been the European Parliament, using its margin, which has voted an annual budget which this year amounts to 65m ECU including 5m ECU for transit projects.

Denmark, France, Germany and the United Kingdom have until now resisted any long-term commitment to Community expenditure. The Netherlands, previously in the same camp, is showing signs of changing its position. It sees a link between this issue and the proposed measures for slimming down the inland waterways fleet in the heart of the Community, which will also be discussed at this week's meeting.

In the road haulage sector, work has been proceeding on the proposed qualifications for new entrants into the road haulage and passenger transport business, although there are differences in the Council over how far detailed requirements should be laid down in Community law. The Commission has also been pressing for the Council to complete Community legislation on the weights and dimensions of lorries; this will also be on the agenda.

Matériel distribué

IP 647 M Matutes à la "New Business Conference", Tokyo
IP 648 Les entreprises européennes et l'Ecu
P 122 FEDER, 8ème tranche 1988
MEMO 136 Préparation Transport Council
MEMO 137 1992: La Communauté restera un partenaire fiable des
PVD

Discours de M. Andriessen à l'université libre d'Amsterdam

2 décisions article 115 conc. la France:

- TV couleurs de Taiwan et Corée du Sud
- Tissus synthétiques de Chine

Regards,


C.D. Ehlermann

FRIERE DE FAIRE LA DISTRIBUTION A PARTIR DE BRUXELLES

NOTE BIO(88) 339 (suite et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC. : AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE FORTE-PAROLE

TRANSPORT COUNCIL OCTOBER 26 1988 (M. F. BERENDT)

Ministers of Transport gave a general welcome to the Commission's proposals for a negotiating mandate with Austria, Switzerland and Yugoslavia, while calling for a certain change in emphasis, underlining the need for reciprocity in the negotiations, talking of the more neutral "financial implications" rather than "financial aspects" and expressing caution over the inclusion of issues other than surface transport in the mandate (Dis : such as air transport). The Council is expected to adopt a mandate formally in December.

On the formation of a 630m ecu transport infrastructure fund as proposed in the Commission's five-year action plan, the positions of member states were little changed, with Denmark, Luxemburg, the United Kingdom clearly opposed to the establishment of a new fund and arguing that the existing structural funds should suffice.

France and the Netherlands took a more nuanced approach, opening the possibility of some special help for those projects where the Regional Fund, for example, was geographically or by its terms of reference not able to help. All other member states favoured the setting up of a new fund for financing transport infrastructure.

The President told the Council that the European Parliament intended to allocate 120m ecu for transport infrastructure projects in 1989, but had stated that it would not take such ad hoc decisions in future; thereafter funding would have to be on a specific legal basis agreed in the Council. The December meeting, said the President, would therefore have to be definitive.

These and all other issues on the agenda were referred to COREPER to prepare for the Council of December 8 and 9. This will deal with maritime transport on the morning of December 8 and other transport issues for the remainder of the session, including weights and dimensions of motor vehicles, rationalisation of inland waterways fleets, access to the profession and combined transport.

Regards

Michael BERENDT