

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

5800/81 (Presse 45)

698th Council meeting

- Transport -

Brussels, 26 March 1981

President: Mr D.S. TUIJNMAN,
Minister of Transport and Water Control
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

26.III.81

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

Belgium:

Mr Valmy FEAUX Minister of Communications

Denmark:

Mr Jens Risgaard KNUDSEN Minister of Public Works and Communications

Germany:

Mr Volker HAUFF Federal Minister of Transport
Mr Heinz RUHNAU State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Transport

Greece:

Mr Georges PANAGIOTOPOULOS Minister of Communications
Mr Jean FIKIORIS Minister of Shipping

France:

Mr Jean COSTET Director-General,
Ministry of Transport

Ireland:

Mr Padraig FLYNN Minister of State,
Ministry of Transport

Italy:

Mr Salvatore FORMICA Minister of Transport

Luxembourg:

Mr Josy BARTHEL Minister of Transport,
Communications and Informatics

Netherlands:

Mr D.S. TUIJNMAN
Mrs N. SMIT-KROES

Minister of Transport and Water
Control
State Secretary.
Ministry of Transport and Water
Control

United Kingdom:

Mr Norman FOWLER
Lord SKELMERSDALE

Minister of Transport
Under-Secretary of State,
Ministry of Transport

Commission:

Mr Georges CONTOGEOORGIS

Member

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RELATIONS WITH THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

At the beginning of the meeting, the President gave an account of his meeting on 19 February in Brussels with the Committee on Transport of the European Parliament, at which he had in particular indicated that the Presidency intended to achieve progress in implementing various measures involved in Community transport policy.

Furthermore, the President stressed the importance attached by the Members of Parliament to the following areas:

- improvement of transport infrastructures;
- sea transport, in particular the dangers to competition posed by State-trading countries and the protection of coasts against sea pollution;
- the liberalizing of rules on air transport within the Community.

PRIORITY TASKS

Continuing the discussions started at its previous meeting (¹), the Council approved the list of the following main topics to be given priority during the period up to the end of 1983:

- = improving the situation of railways;
- = continuing measures to harmonize conditions of competition;
- = implementing measures in the field of transport infrastructure;
- = developing combined forms of transport;
- = facilitating frontier crossing;
- = improving the operation of the transport market, in particular international transport;
- = improving the efficiency and safety of transport;
- = bettering social conditions in the transport field;
- = continuing the work in hand on sea and air transport in accordance with the conclusions reached by the Council at its previous meetings;
- = solving the problems likely to arise in connection with intra-Community transit via third countries.

This list, the order of which does not indicate the order of priority of the topics to be dealt with, will provide a basis for the Council's future discussions on transport.

(¹) See Press Release 11981/80 (Presse 182) of 4.XII.80

26.III.81

RAILWAY POLICY

Following an in-depth discussion of Community railway policy, the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine in detail certain problems not yet solved and to finalize a draft Council Resolution in the light of the comments made by various delegations during the discussions, in order to enable the Council to take a decision on this matter at its next meeting.

SUPPORT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

Continuing the discussions started at its previous meetings, in particular on 23 November 1978 and 4 December 1980, the Council noted that it was not yet able to take a decision at this stage. It stressed the need to examine the Commission proposal in greater detail and instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to speed up discussions on this question so as to be able to report back to it in time for its next meeting.

COMMUNITY QUOTA

Continuing its discussion of 4 December 1980 ⁽¹⁾, the Council re-examined the problems raised by a possible increase in the Community quota for the carriage of goods by road between Member States.

Certain delegations stressed the economic and political importance of increasing the Community quota. Other delegations pointed to the need to make substantial progress in Community railway policy and in the harmonization of conditions of competition.

At the end of the discussion, the President noted that the Council was not able to take a decision at its present meeting, and the Council instructed the Permanent Representatives Committee to speed up discussions on the basis in particular of the Commission proposal.

WAITING TIMES AT FRONTIER CROSSING-POINTS

After discussing waiting times at frontier crossing points in intra-Community transport, including transit via third countries, the Council requested the Commission to submit a report before the end of 1981 together where appropriate, with proposals for measures likely to reduce waiting times at frontier crossing-points, taking account of the necessary controls and the nature of the goods carried.

Mr Contogeorgis, Member of the Commission responsible for transport questions, said that the Commission intended to submit a draft Directive on this in the near future.

⁽¹⁾ See Press Release 11981/80 (Presse 182) of that date.

COMBINED ROAD/RAIL TRANSPORT

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision on the opening of negotiations between the Community and third countries on arrangements for certain types of international combined road/rail carriage of goods, and adopted the negotiating directives for the Commission.

The aim of these negotiations is to reach agreements between the European Economic Community and third countries

- avoiding combined carriage within the Community being subject to different arrangements depending on whether the route concerned lies wholly within the Community or between Member States and third countries,
- encouraging greater use of this method for the international carriage of goods between Member States and third countries,
- contributing, by reducing traffic, to improving road safety while at the same time forming part of an environmental protection measure.

CARGO LINER TRAFFIC BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST

Following the decision of 4 December 1980, the Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision laying down the detailed arrangements for the collection of information concerning the activities of carriers participating in cargo liner traffic between the Member States and the Far East.

In accordance with this Decision, the Member States will gather information concerning inter alia liner services, the tonnage carried and the freight rates for liner traffic between the ports of the Community and Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines and Thailand. This information collection operation will take place from 1 July 1981 to 31 December 1982.

OTHER TRANSPORT QUESTIONS

The Council also took note of a statement by the Commission on summer time, transport relations with Austria, the draft Directive on the adjustment of national systems of taxing commercial vehicles, the duty-free entry of fuel contained in the tanks of commercial vehicles and on price fixing for international transport by rail.

26.III.81

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

The Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Decision on the conclusion of the Protocols extending for the fourth and fifth times the Wheat Trade Convention and the Food Aid Convention which constitute the International Wheat Agreement of 1971.

The Council recorded its agreement to the following six proposals for financial and technical aid to Zimbabwe:

- Reclamation of abandoned land and intensive-colonization programme;
- Support for national advisory services;
- Agricultural training programme;
- Rural health;
- Study of rural projects (preparation of projects with a view to Lomé II);
- Programme of technical assistance to the Ministry of Rural Development, Land and Colonization.

The Council also recorded its agreement to the extension, until September 1983, of the current provisional arrangement adopted by the Council on 20 September 1977 on relations between Euratom and the IAEA concerning sensitive installations and light water reactors.

Finally, the Council adopted, in the official languages of the Communities, the Directive amending Directive 78/631/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous preparations (pesticides - postponement of the date of entry into force).

Appointments

On a proposal from the French Government, the Council appointed Mr André DUNET, Collaborateur du Bureau Confédéral de la CGT, Member of the Economic and Social Committee in place of Mr Georges CROESE, who has resigned, for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 18 September 1982.

On a proposal from the Italian Government, the Council also appointed Mr Franco CHITTOLINA, Ufficio Internazionale CISL, Member of the Committee of the European Social Fund in place of Mr Antonio MINIUTTI, who has resigned, for the remainder of the latter's term of office, which runs until 9 November 1982.

Bruxelles, le 25 mars 1981

NOTE BIO (81) 120 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

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PREPARATION CONSEIL TRANSPORTS DU 26 MARS 1981
(J.CARROLL)

Le Conseil Transports se tiendra le 26 mars a Bruxelles sous la
presidence de M. Tuijnman. La Commission sera representee par
M.Contogeorgis.

Les travaux porteront sur les points suivants:

1. Les priorites dans le domaine des transports jusqu'a la fin
de 1983: Le Conseil a l'intention d'adopter une resolution
basee sur la proposition de la Commission (COM (80) 582) du
21 octobre 1980 et la note P-91) mais qui serait moins
contraignante que la Commission aurait souhaite. La Commission
a jusqu'a present emis une reserve generale sur le texte
propose par le Conseil.
2. La Politique ferroviaire de la Communaute: La projet de
resolution devant le Conseil est base sur le memorandum a ce
sujet que la Commission avait soumis le 12 decembre 1980
(COM (80) 752 et la Note P-107). Le texte de la resolution
suit dans ses grandes lignes les objectifs preconises par
la Commission (mesures d'harmonisation et d'assainissement).
Les delegations allemande, belge et italienne veulent inserer
des references concernant le lien a etablir entre les mesures
de politique commune de transport (dont quotas transport
routier) et l'exploitation optimale des capacites du chemin
de fer.
3. Le soutien des projets d'interet communautaire en matiere
d'infrastructure de transport: Il s'agit de
la proposition que la Commission a presente en juillet 1976
et pour laquelle le Conseil n'est pas parvenu a un accord.
La Presidence soumet maintenant un projet de conclusions
visant a debloquer le dossier. Aux termes de ces conclusions,
le soutien financier de la Communaute aux infrastructures de
transport serait accorde, dans un premier stade, dans deux
secteurs d'intervention, a savoir les infrastructures
visant a faciliter les passages aux frontieres et les
installations pour les transports combines y compris les
secteurs maritimes et aeriens. Les delegations danoise et
francaise ont emis une reserve sur cette approche.
4. Les temps d'attente aux passages frontaliers dans le transport
entre Etats membres: Le Conseil aura un echange de vues
au sujet des entraves aux frontieres - controles
douaniers, veterinaire, fiscal etc.

5. Contingent communautaire pour les transports de marchandises par route effectues entre Etats membres: Le Conseil du 4 decembre 1980 a attribue a la Grece un contingent de 76 autorisations mais n'a pas reussi a atteindre un accord sur la proposition de la Commission pour une augmentation generale de 25%. La Presidence avait envisage de reporter cette question au mois de juin mais suite aux demandes du Royaume-Uni, de l'Irlande et de la Grece, la question a ete inscrite a l'ordre du jour de ce Conseil.

Amities,

M. SANTARELLI / COMEUR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Santarelli', written over the typed name 'M. SANTARELLI / COMEUR'. The signature is stylized and somewhat abstract, with a prominent vertical stroke on the right side.

Bruxelles, le 26 mars 1981

NOTE BIO (81) 120 (suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE

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CONSEIL TRANSPORTS DU 26 MARS 1981 (J.CARROLL)

Le Conseil s'est termine vers 13.45 cet apres-midi avec des resultats partiels et plutot decevants.

Du cote positif, le Conseil a adopte en point "A" la decision d'entamer les negociations avec un certain nombre de pays tiers afin d'etendre a ceux-ci le regime de liberalisation des transports combines rail/route de marchandises qui existent entre les Etats membres. Le Conseil a egalement adopte en point "A" une decision etablissant les modalites de la collecte d'informations concernant les activites des transporteurs participant aux transports maritimes de ligne entre les Etats membres et l'Extreme-Orient (Voir Note IP (80) 306).

Le Conseil a aussi approuve une resolution au sujet des priorites dans le domaine des transports jusqu'a la fin de 1983. Comme on pouvait s'y attendre, le Conseil a prefere une version moins contraignante que celle proposee par la Commission. Pour celle-ci, M. Contogeorgis a fait acter au proces-verbal une declaration regrettant que le Conseil ne s'est pas engage a prendre des decisions d'ici 1983 sur les actions prioritaires dans la liste soumise par la Commission.

Le projet de resolution sur la politique ferroviaire de la Communaute a ete envoye au COREPER lorsque le Conseil n'est pas parvenu a rapprocher les points de vue divergents des delegations allemande, belge et italienne (exploitation optimale des capacites des chemins de fer et elimination des distorsions de concurrence) et des autres delegations qui se sont opposees a l'idee de favoriser en quelque sorte les chemins de fer par rapport aux autres modes de transport.

Cet echec avait pour resultat que les delegations allemande et italienne se sont opposees a leur tour a toute augmentation du contingent communautaire pour les transports de marchandises par route effectues entre Etats membres.

En ce qui concerne l'effort par la Presidence de debloquer le dossier "infrastructures" tout en limitant dans un premier temps le soutien financier a certains secteurs (passage aux frontieres; transports combines), les reserves francaise, danoise et irlandaise ont ete maintenues.

Enfin, au sujet du temps d'attente aux passages frontaliers, le Conseil a invite la Commission a lui soumettre avant la fin de 1981 un rapport assorti, le cas echeant, de propositions sur les mesures aptes a reduire les temps d'attente.

Amities,

M.SANTARELLI COMEUR

