CONSIDERING:

- that the number of people over 65 years of age will virtually double and the number of people over 80 will treble in the next fifty years in the developed world;
- that there is a strong correlation between age and disability and that therefore a growing number and proportion of the population will have disabilities;
- that the proportion of the total population with mobility difficulties is significant and will continue to increase; it has been seen to be as high as 35 per cent in some cases;
- that mobility is fundamental to independent living and to full participation in society;
- that transport system improvements for people with reduced mobility benefit all travellers.

NOTING:

- that valuable progress has been made in making some modes of transport more accessible to people with mobility handicaps;
- that, despite this progress, much remains to be achieved;
- that efforts needs to be made simultaneously on many fronts (including vehicles, the pedestrian and built environment and in terms of information provided) to ensure fully accessible transport chains and networks.

AGREE:

- that a further political impetus needs to be given to improving access for people with mobility handicaps.
EMPHASISE the following principles:

- that all new investments in transport, must take account of and plan for the needs of people with reduced mobility;
- that all links in the transport chain need to be improved so that an accessible environment is created door-to-door;
- that close co-operation between governments, public authorities, manufacturers, operators and people with disabilities is essential.

REITERATE:

- the importance of building on past achievements, in particular the need to:
  - implement past ECMT Resolutions, notably:
    Resolution No. 68 of 1989 on Transport for People with Mobility Handicaps
    Resolution No. 90/4 on Access to Buses, Trains and Coaches
    Resolution No. 91/8 on Information and Communication
    Resolution No. 94/2 on Access to Taxis
  - implement guidelines and recommendations drawn up in ECMT and other international organisations (e.g. ECMT guidelines on access to trains, EU/COST work on buses, ECAC work on airports and aviation).

RECOMMEND:

In relation to Buses:

- that Governments encourage and accelerate the positive trend towards the introduction of fully accessible buses;
- that the introduction of such buses needs to be stimulated and supported by:
  - the competent authorities providing the conditions whereby buses can get close to stops and the resources to enforce this;
  - industry, governments and people with disabilities working together capitalising on the know-how ascertained in the COST-322 programme, including appropriate solutions to the problems of boarding aids.

In relation to Trains, Trams and Light Rail Systems:

- that Governments make renewed efforts to stimulate improved railway accessibility based on the ECMT/UIC guidelines of 1992/1996 considering the important role of the railways as part of the transport chain.
- that railways themselves recognise the commercial benefits of accessible design and also take responsibility and initiatives on this subject.
In relation to Taxis and Coaches:

- that the generally slow progress in this area needs to be accelerated;
- that dialogue with industry, operators, local authorities and disabled people be renewed so that solutions that are practicable and affordable in vehicle design and operations can be found.

In relation to Aviation

- that the guidelines on aviation and airport access drawn up by ECAC be implemented;
- that more attention be given to the improvement of transport links to airports.

In relation to the whole transport chain

- that increased efforts be made to link the different means of transport and thereby create an integrated and accessible transport system.

REQUEST:

- that a guide on good practice in improving accessibility be drawn up as an aid to countries and organisations, both inside and outside ECMT;
- that analysis and advice on the appropriate level and kind of accessibility legislation be drawn up and disseminated;
- that the transport policy implications of an ageing population be developed and reported on;
- that the ECMT continues to work closely with the European Union (including COST) and with NGO’s (e.g. UITP, IRU and UIC) to implement solutions;
- The Committee of Deputies to report back in due course on the implementation of this Comprehensive Resolution.