PAN-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT CONFERENCE  
Prague, 29-31 October 1991

Organised by the European Parliament and
the Commission of the European Communities

in collaboration with
the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities,
the European Conference of Ministers of Transport,
the European Civil Aviation Conference,
the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

PRAGUE DECLARATION

ON AN ALL EUROPEAN TRANSPORT POLICY

31 October 1991

The representatives of the Governments and Parliaments of European States, of the European Communities and of intergovernmental organisations having responsibilities in the field of transport and non-governmental organisations, meeting at the European Transport Conference in Prague on 29-31 October 1991

HAVING REGARD to the Paris “Charter for a New Europe” signed on 21 November 1990 at the Summit meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe;

ANXIOUS to give formal and concrete expression to this new desire for a European-wide co-operation based on mutual respect in order to create the conditions for reducing tension and imbalance within the international community;

HAVING REGARD to the existing international agreements and resolutions in the field of transport and to the work which is at present being carried out by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport, the Central Commission for Rhine Navigation, the Danube Commission, the European Civil Aviation Conference, Eurocontrol, the International Civil Aviation Organisation, the International Maritime Organisation, the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development and other international organisations having responsibilities in the field of transport;

HAVING REGARD to the important role played the European Communities in the process of European integration i.e. through the achievement of the internal market in the field of transport;

CONSIDERING developments in other European States and aware of the necessity to make compatible developments in different parts of Europe so as to avoid divergences and contradictions;
HAVING REGARD to the discussion at the European Council meetings on 25 and 26 June 1990 in Dublin and 14 and 15 December 1990 in Rome on the Memorandum from the Netherlands Government entitled “A Transport Policy for Europe”;

HAVING REGARD to the European inland waterway and transport declaration which was adopted the 11 September 1991 in Budapest;

HAVING REGARD to resolutions of the European Parliament and the respective reports of its Committee on Transport and Tourism on the common transport policy in view of the achievement of the internal market; on the development of transport infrastructure within the European Community, on the relations between the European Community and the EFTA countries as well as with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the area of transport policy, on transport and environment and on combined transport;

PERSUADED that an efficient, safe and environmentally friendly transport system will contribute to a better quality of life in Europe;

AWARE of the need for the reconstruction of infrastructures and restructuring of the transport economy in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as well as of the need of measures aiming at a better integration of European countries developing from an economic point of view, and that it is desirable for the European Communities and all the countries concerned to participate in co-ordinated or joint actions;

CONCERNED about dramatic developments which could lead to serious crisis and possible collapse of Europe’s transport systems, as are the unacceptable number of victims of traffic accidents, the growing negative effects of traffic on the environment and the health of people, increasing congestion, decreasing infrastructure investment in various parts of Europe and some traffic scenarios which forecast a traffic growth of 40 % in general and of 1000 % on East-West axes for the next 10 years;

RESOLVED to promote transport co-operation in the long term in Europe within the framework of a market economy, for the development of which the European Communities, through completion of the internal transport market and its role in international relations will be of considerable importance;

EAGER to establish a climate of confidence so as to be able to capitalise on the existing co-operation and to establish closer, mutually beneficial commercial and transport relations;

DECLARE

that

A. An all-European Transport Policy should pursue the following objectives

1. An efficient all-European transport system should be developed pursuant to the principles of market economy and fair competition by means of an integrated European transport concept which is well adapted to the objectives of social, environmental and energy policies as well as to safety requirements and which is liberated from unnecessary restrictions, like certain load conditions, or certain technical and administrative barriers;
2. An adequate European transport infrastructure network plan which takes into account existing European-wide agreements and goes beyond purely national conceptions as well as a timetable for the achievement of the necessary projects should be agreed on the basis of standards that take into account the necessities of economic efficiency, energy savings, safety, protection of the environment and urbanistic interests in view of extending and modernising major transport routes linking the European countries and peripheral regions;

3. Growth in the number of movements of vehicles and pollution and congestion of highly frequented traffic links should be reduced, by introducing and applying strategies for developing intermodal and combined transport using techniques integrating road and rail transport, inland navigation, maritime and air transport and also progressively taking into account external costs;

4. The protection of the environment, the rational use of energy, the safety of transport and the improvement of working conditions should be achieved to the best possible extent by appropriate standards and complementary measures and by the priority development of infrastructures for low-emission transport systems;

5. A free European air transport market and a performant air traffic control system should be achieved and the freedom of international shipping be maintained, with sufficient guarantees for safety, equitable labour conditions and avoidance of pollution;

6. The use of telecommunications and telematics in transport should be promoted.

B. All European co-operation in the field of transport should be put into practice by means of

1. Co-ordinated urgent measures to be taken by all those concerned in order to improve the traffic situation on the main international axes, in particular by providing facilities for combined transport and high speed rail systems, notably taking into account the needs in Central and Eastern Europe as well as in the peripheral and the mountain regions; the necessary financial means should be rapidly provided also using, within available resources, the techniques of financial engineering available to the Communities, intergovernmental and private financing bodies, amongst which the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development;

2. Continuing discussions of these issues, open to all European countries, organised pragmatically by the European institutions and organisations involved acting closely together within the fields of their competence and without creating new institutions;

3. Assembling and evaluating, at the appropriate (technical) level, of existing policies and measures for organising and influencing transport markets in view of their aptitude

   a) to lead to an optimum efficiency of the transport system, e.g. by stimulating the co-operation of different modes of transport and harmonising technical and administrative rules,

   b) to minimise undesirable effects of traffic,
c) to make transport data, forecasts and research findings comparable and to improve their exchange;

exploring also the possibilities for the working out or further development of all European agreements on the conditions for international transport and eased border crossing, and possibly elaborating adequate proposals;

4. Assembling and where necessary refining existing knowledge and schemes in the sphere of all European transport infrastructure and further development of existing agreements in this sphere with a view to

a) identifying existing bottlenecks and missing links,

b) indicating the most important major transport routes linking the European countries and regions to be considered for improvement and modernisation,

c) making suggestions for funding implementation of the transport infrastructure plan, establishing the cost of funding the said transport routes;

C. To ensure effective Follow-up, the competent bodies should take the necessary steps in order to

1. Forward this declaration to Governments and Parliaments of EEC and EFTA member States, of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and of all other European States, to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe to be convened in March 1992 in Helsinki, to the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission and the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport, the Central Commission for the Rhine navigation, the Danube Commission, the European Civil Aviation Conference, Eurocontrol, the International Civil Aviation Organisation, International Maritime Organisation, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank and all other organisations invited to attend this conference;

2. Assess in due time the achievements of European transport policy and convene at an appropriate stage, a second all-European Transport Conference with a view to promoting further initiatives for all-European co-operation in transport.