



Resolution 288 (1964)¹

Reply to the 10th annual report of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly thanks the European Conference of Ministers of Transport for the transmission of its 10th annual report and is grateful to the President of the Conference for personally presenting the report ; the interest displayed by the Conference in the suggestions formulated by the Assembly in regard to European transport problems encourages it to hope that this excellent collaboration will continue to grow even closer in the future.

A general transport policy

2. The Assembly warmly supports the work undertaken by ECMT with a view to elaborating a general transport policy acceptable to all European countries based on sound economic principles ; in this context it congratulates ECMT on the International Symposium on the Theory and Practice of Transport Economics held in Strasbourg from 5th to 9th October 1964 which discussed some of the basic problems that arise in attempting to work out a general transport policy

3. The Assembly has taken note with interest of the preliminary results of the studies undertaken by ECMT with a view to establishing a forecast of the long-term development of transport demand in member countries ; it encourages member countries to endeavour, in the course of their consultations in ECMT in the context of these studies, to define homogeneous statistical norms in the transport sector with a view to facilitating international comparison and to improve statistical data with regard, in particular, to goods transport by road and by inland waterway, distinguishing between national traffic, international traffic and transit traffic.

4. The Assembly believes, in this connection, that it is important that the studies of future transport demand should also cover passenger transport.

5. The Assembly is especially concerned that the endeavours of ECMT to work out a real European policy in regard to the co-operation of investments in transport should be pursued with all energy ; it notes with interest that ECMT has asked to be informed by the European Civil Aviation Conference concerning investments in airports and in security arrangements for air transport, and that useful co-operation has been initiated between the two Organisations. In this connection the Assembly draws the attention of ECMT to the waste of time inflicted on air passengers in commuting to and from airports and suggests that ECMT should examine this question, in consultation with ECAC, with a view to improving general transport facilities between airports and the business centres of the cities they serve by appropriate measures, for instance by an extension of the subway network.

6. The Assembly recognises that ECMT has made determined efforts to secure international financing for various transport projects ; it deplores that the restrictions which still obtain on the various national financial markets handicap the international financing of such projects and urges member Governments to eliminate such restrictions wherever possible.

1. Assembly debate on 6th November 1964 (14th Sitting) (see [Docs. 1790](#) Docs. 1790, 10th annual report of ECMT, and 1809, report of the Economic Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 6th November 1964 (14th Sitting).



7. The Assembly, considering that the development of the big international seaports is intimately connected with that of the surface transport system, which links them with the hinterland, invites ECMT to study this question ; in particular, it believes that the investment policies of the big seaports should be worked out by mutual consultation, appropriately dovetailed into the co-ordinated investment plans for the various modes of land and inland waterway transport.

Railways

8. The Assembly notes with regret that, even in those cases where the requests made by national railways with a view to normalising their accounts would be integrally met, most railway administrations would nevertheless remain in deficit ; in consequence studies have to be pursued with a view to finally eliminating the chronic deficits of the railways. Simultaneously, it is necessary to continue the standardisation of railway equipment and it is also desirable that automatic coupling should be introduced on a larger scale in Europe as is now the case in the US and in the USSR. Further, the financial resources of Eurofima should be increased since they are still very modest compared with total orders of railway equipment. The Assembly also draws the attention of ECMT to the need of expanding the present use of combined transport agreements between railways and road hauliers, this being the best approach to the question of co-ordinating road and rail transport on long distances.

Roads

9. The Assembly believes that the increase in the number of road vehicles, as well as of the total distances travelled by road vehicles, creates an urgent need to develop the road infrastructure in step with road traffic. In the light of recent technical studies, notably those carried on in the United States, it urges member Governments to agree on standard norms for maximum weights and dimensions of road transport vehicles. It is of the greatest importance that new discriminations should not arise in Europe with regard to the application of such standards as between the Six and other member countries. It is also necessary to push on with studies designed to unify fiscal charges, in particular those imposed on certain categories of international road transports, and the Assembly congratulates ECMT for having established liaison to this effect with IRU, since there is also a danger here of different solutions being adopted by the Six and the non-Six. It is equally important, in its view, to agree, on as wide a basis as possible, on a definition of what constitutes professional transport and transport on own account. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the progress realised by the Restricted Groups set up by ECMT with regard to the development of the main arteries of the European road network and expresses the hope that this work will be continued.

Inland waterways

10. The Assembly thanks ECMT for the interest it has shown in developing the European inland waterway network and urges the Governments to pursue their efforts to modernise their inland waterways and adapt them to European standards. In this connection it believes that the Agreement concluded with regard to the standardisation of a first type of barge will facilitate further studies regarding the improvement of the inland waterways, both from the technical and the financial point of view. Further, Governments should, as soon as possible, take a stand on the proposals for the organisation of traffic on the Rhine contained in the Statute for the creation of the Union on the International Navigation of the Rhine submitted to them by the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine.

Pipelines

11. The Assembly urges all Governments which have not already done so to enact the necessary legislation to regulate transport by pipelines and to model such legislation on uniform principles, since this new mode of transport appears to be growing rapidly in importance in Europe.

The Channel Tunnel

12. The Assembly expresses the hope that, now that the Governments of the United Kingdom and France have taken a decision of principle with regard to the construction of a railway tunnel, the financial problems that are still outstanding should not further delay the realisation of this project which marks an important step towards yet closer relations between the United Kingdom and the Continent, and requests ECMT to supply it with further information on this matter in its next report.

Road safety and noise abatement

13. The Assembly congratulates ECMT on its efforts in the field of road accident prevention and has taken note with interest of its future work programme in this field.

14. The Assembly notes further that the joint meeting of ECMT and Council of Europe road experts on road safety education held in Paris from 1st to 4th October 1963 arrived at agreement on certain broad principles which should govern road safety education intended for youth, and considers that this work should be followed up at practical level and its results reviewed within the framework of the general programme of ECMT. A second joint meeting of ECMT and Council of Europe experts should, therefore, be held with a view to working out practical measures to implement the agreed principles ; in particular an effort should be made to develop scientifically tested teaching methods and to elaborate suitable schoolbooks.

15. The Assembly warmly supports the progress achieved in harmonising the national rules of the road as a step towards a European Highway Code. It is gratified to learn that the number of member countries participating in the activities of the Working Party responsible for these questions has risen from eight in 1960 to fourteen in 1963, and urges these member Governments to do all in their power to achieve positive results, despite the many very real difficulties, in harmonising their systems of road signals.

16. The Assembly considers that it is urgently necessary to press on with the efforts to combat noise produced by motor vehicles and congratulates ECMT on taking up this matter ; it further invites ECMT to examine whether it should not also study the problem of air pollution by toxic exhaust gases of motor vehicles.