



**Resolution 610 (1976)<sup>1</sup>**

## **Channel Tunnel as a factor in the European network of trunk communications**

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Aware of the political value to Europe of the construction of a tunnel under the Channel, and convinced that the completion of such a project would, by strengthening links of all kinds between the continent and Great Britain, greatly increase Europe's unity and cohesion ;
2. Noting that the tunnel would improve transport facilities, thus offering substantial economic advantages to Europe, in particular by linking its most densely populated and productive areas, and developing intra-European trade ;
3. Considering that the tunnel is one of the major elements in the European communications network, as shown once again by the report of its Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities on European trunk communications ([Doc. 3713](#)), debated together with the report on the Channel Tunnel ([Doc. 3712](#)), and believing that the Channel Tunnel project should be studied further in the light of ECMT's studies on access infrastructures and on the European communications network as a whole ;
4. Pointing out that the economic advantages of the project to the whole of Europe, in particular north-west Europe, give the tunnel a truly European function ;
5. Noting the importance attached by the United Kingdom authorities to avoiding any over-concentration of economic activities in south-east England, but convinced that improved communications are essential to the successful development of peripheral regions of Europe, like Scotland and Ireland, and can help to prevent the concentration of economic activities round the tunnel access that would otherwise occur ;
6. Noting that in the absence of a tunnel it would be necessary to give consideration to large-scale investment programmes, and to develop means of transport whose running costs and energy consumption would far exceed those of the tunnel ;
7. Drawing attention to the general conclusions of the Cairncross Committee, that the tunnel project would be economically advantageous and would also pay its way, and considering that the Channel Tunnel project will have repercussions on trunk communications in Europe as a whole, and that study of the project should therefore be widened with this in mind and not merely in the light of the exclusively Franco-British economic aspects ;
8. Noting that the French Government has on several occasions expressed its support for the tunnel project and has stated that it is ready to resume work on it in a European context, but recognising that the British contribution to the total cost may be regarded as excessive in view of the number of countries that may be expected to benefit from the tunnel ;
9. Expressing its regret that compensation amounting to 450 million French francs has had to be paid to the tunnel companies, without any negotiated possibility of an early resumption of work,

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1. Assembly debate on 28 January 1976 (22nd Sitting) (see [Doc. 3712](#), report of the Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities). Text adopted by the Assembly on 28 January 1976 (22nd Sitting).



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10. Urges the British and French Governments to resume study of the project through the consultation machinery provided by the European Communities, with a view to arriving at a rapid solution for the project at European level ;
11. Invites ECMT to play its part in the search for this European solution ;
12. Appeals to the European Communities to help find a solution, particularly by investigating the possibility of European arrangements for meeting the cost of the access infrastructures.