



Resolution 912 (1989)¹

Measures aimed at promoting development of the south-west European trunk communications system

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Observing that south-west Europe is composed of a vast economic area in the process of industrialisation, with a considerable volume of transport in its different forms, especially by land, both road and rail;
2. Recalling that the Council of Europe has already pleaded in favour of a network of trunk communications and regional planning in Europe in, among others, [Recommendation 826 \(1978\)](#) and [Resolution 668 \(1978\)](#), the European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (the "AGR Agreement") which came into force in 1986, and the Resolution adopted in January 1988 by the European Parliament on the consequences for European transport policy of the accession of Spain and Portugal to the European Communities;
3. Taking account of the fact that traffic towards southern Europe has fundamentally been directed towards the south-east, with less movement towards the Iberian peninsula, hindering its development and that of the South of France;
4. Considering that it is desirable that the entire European continent should be developed in a balanced manner, and that it is accordingly essential to promote the development of Spain and Portugal, a prime means of doing so being to facilitate transport towards and across the Iberian peninsula through the construction of a south-west European trunk road system - one requirement for which will be to overcome the obstacle presented by the Pyrenees, by building new passages in non-coastal areas in order to connect the French and Spanish motorways with each other;
5. Bearing in mind the steadily expanding flow of tourism towards this area of south-west Europe, which is a factor not only of development, but also of understanding and prosperity for all the countries concerned;
6. Convinced, furthermore, that the union between Europe and Africa needs more and more to be effected via the Iberian peninsula, the current plan being that such union shall be by sea, with projects for a fixed link across the Strait of Gibraltar already under consideration and possibly to be realised at a future date;
7. Considering the advantages which an improvement of the communications between central and south-western Europe and of communication routes within the latter area, as well as a fixed link across the Strait of Gibraltar, would offer for the economic development on both shores;
8. Recognising the case for the speedy development of such a south-west European trunk road system, and emphasising the need for European governments particularly those directly concerned - to step up their co-operation so that the link can be realised on the basis of the routes and specifications laid down in the report of its Committee on Economic Affairs and Development ([Doc. 5992](#)),

1. Assembly debate on 1 February 1989 (22nd Sitting) (see [Doc. 5992](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, Rapporteur: Mr De Arespacochaga). Text adopted by the Assembly on 1 February 1989 (22nd Sitting).



9. Invites the governments of member states:

9.1. to recognise the urgent and pressing need to construct the trunk communications defined in the European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries (AGR), adopted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, in order better to meet the present requirements of balanced economic and social development throughout Europe;

9.2. to study carefully the investment cost and the impact on the development of southern European countries, in the light of general economic considerations, of a substantial improvement in the link between northern and central Europe, on the one hand, and Portugal and the Strait of Gibraltar, on the other, across the Iberian peninsula;

9.3. to promote throughout Europe the movement of persons and goods towards the African continent by means of that link;

9.4. to make full use of the opportunities for assistance in carrying out the project afforded by the relevant European organisations, such as the European Communities, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;

9.5. to seek both public and private means of financing so as to speed up the realisation of a southwest European trunk road system, where the European Community should play an important part by promoting recourse to different financial procedures applicable to the field of transport infrastructure;

9.6. to analyse the characteristics of a link between Europe and Africa across the Strait of Gibraltar, with the aid of appropriate technical advice, taking into account the economic interests involved, and studying in depth the possibility of a fixed link in due course;

9.7. to increase co-operation between themselves and between their railway companies to improve rail transport between the networks of the Iberian peninsula and those of other European states;

10. Invites the governments concerned - in particular those of Spain, France, Portugal and Morocco - to convene an international conference to study the practical realisation of a south-west European traffic passageway.