Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Air quality and diesel emissions in urban centres

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Mr Geraint DAVIES and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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It is estimated that 400,000 people die prematurely each year across the European Union from diesel pollution from particulates and nitrogen oxides.

Diesel cars produce 22 times more carcinogenic particulates than petrol and four times more NOx. These emissions cause lung and blood vessel damage, heart disease, stroke and diabetes, and these medical effects have been known for over 15 years.

In 2010, the annual economic cost of premature deaths from air pollution across the countries of the WHO European Region stood at US$1.431 trillion. The overall annual economic cost of health impacts and mortality from air pollution, including estimates for morbidity costs, stood at US$1.575 trillion per year.

Approximately 50% of new cars in the European Union are now diesel, up from less than 10% in 1990. Laboratory emissions testing has not reflected on-road driving conditions and some vehicles have had test-cheating devices installed;

The Parliamentary Assembly therefore calls on governments of member States to:

– improve urban air quality by ensuring vehicle emissions-testing in reflects on-road driving conditions;

– develop localised emissions tests and detect "cheating devices" and ban the removal of pollution-reducing devices, extend low emissions zones and pedestrianisation;

– restrict older, more heavily polluting diesel vehicles from polluted urban centres; encourage electric tram systems and LPG, hydrogen-powered or electric buses and taxis;

– introduce vehicle scrap-page schemes and grants for older more polluting diesel vehicles;

– introduce taxes and use fiscal measures to encourage the use of and investment in more sustainable public and private transport.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left