



Resolution 663 (1977)¹

Reply to the 22nd and 23rd annual reports of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Taking note of the 22nd and 23rd annual reports of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) (Docs. 3940 and 3999), and of the reports of its Committees on Economic Affairs and Development (Doc. 4033), and on Regional Planning and Local Authorities (Doc. 4029)
2. Aware that many social problems and problems of energy supplies, environment, regional planning and quality of life are related to the development of adequate and efficient means of transport ;
3. Considering that harmonisation of national transport policies at European level and, in particular, organised co-operation between the member countries in infrastructure investment are essential for balanced and dynamic economic growth and regional development ;
4. Emphasising the special role of ECMT in enabling the Ministers of Transport to tackle these problems in a framework which includes all the countries of Western Europe,
5. Welcomes the fact that Finland became the nineteenth member country of ECMT in December 1976 ;
6. Congratulates ECMT for having pursued in the last few years, despite the less favourable economic situation, the international studies which have thrown up solutions and helped ministerial decision-making on such difficult transport problems as the organisation of financial assistance for the railways, the promotion of international trade through the most rational possible use of various modes of transport, the establishment of a permanent multilateral quota system for road freight transport, the gradual establishment of major trunk communications in Europe, the improvement of road safety and the development of co-operation between railways ;
7. Stresses the need to give priority to public transport, particularly in large and medium-sized towns including their suburbs ;
8. Emphasises the need for governments to intensify efforts in the transport sector that lead to substantial energy savings and thus restrain cost increases due to energy ;
9. Notes with satisfaction the first steps taken towards close co-operation between ECMT and the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), so essential to the achievement of common objectives, and expresses the hope that this co-operation will be strengthened in the future ;
10. Expresses its urgent wish that the two conferences should find a way to a dialogue at ministerial level, and in this respect points out that items on the agenda of the 4th CEMAT Conference, to be held in 1978 in Vienna, would cover topics which are particularly appropriate to such a dialogue, and also expresses the wish to be associated with some present or future joint technical activities of the two Ministerial Conferences, in particular by the participation of its Rapporteurs engaged in the same activities ;

1. Assembly debate on 6 October 1977 (9th Sitting) (see Doc. 4033, report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development). Text adopted by the Assembly on 6 October 1977 (9th Sitting).



11. Expresses the wish that the teaching of road safety in schools should be the subject of a third joint Council of Europe/ECMT Conference in 1979 at the latest, in order to continue the action undertaken on the basis of the guiding principles adopted in 1963 in Paris and in 1971 in Vienna, in the light of new dangers arising from the increase in motor traffic ;
12. Regrets that the action recommended by ECMT for the introduction of the automatic coupling of railway wagons for use in international transport has not yet been taken, and insists that decisions to do this be taken in all member countries without delay ;
13. Earnestly invites ECMT to continue its studies so as at last to find a solution to the problems involved in combined rail-road transport, urban travel and transport, ultra high-speed transport between urban centres and the simplification of administrative procedures affecting transport at frontier crossings ;
14. Recalls its long-standing concern at the number of road accidents, and welcomes the marked signs of improvement resulting from the arrangements made in concert by the Ministers of Transport with a view to counteracting certain important causes of road accidents and in the determination of their gravity ;
15. Supports the resolution adopted by ECMT with a view to making it compulsory for front-seat passengers travelling in motor vehicles to wear seat-belts outside built-up areas, and for children under the age of 12 to travel in back seats ;
16. Gives priority in this regard to the study by ECMT of action to be taken with a view to reducing night-time accidents, the proportion of which in relation to all road accidents has generally increased in recent years and the consequences of which are especially serious ;
17. Invites the ECMT member countries which have not yet done so to ratify or to accede to :
the Vienna Convention on Road Signs and Signals, of 1968 ;
the Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries, of 1975 ;
18. Expresses the wish that ECMT will inform it in good time of action taken on the proposals formulated in the present resolution and developed in the Assembly reports mentioned in paragraph 1 above ;
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution, together with the explanatory memoranda submitted by its two committees (Docs. 4033 and 4029), to the Presidents and Speakers of member states' parliaments, with a request to forward them to the competent parliamentary committees for examination, inviting them at the same time to give all possible support to the work of ECMT ;
20. Instructs its Committee on Parliamentary and Public Relations to make special approaches to national parliaments to speed up the procedure for ratification of the two conventions mentioned in paragraph 16 above.