

12/11/01



B5-710/01

Strasbourg, 12 November 2001

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the debate on topical and urgent subjects of major importance pursuant to Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure

by Diana Wallis, Marieke Sanders-ten Holte and Luciano Caveri on behalf of the ELDR Group

on the Gotthard tunnel accidentThe European Parliament,

- having regard to the tragic accident in the Gotthard tunnel in Switzerland on 24 October,
- having regard also to the tragic accident in the Mont Blanc tunnel on 24 March 1999, and its resulting closure,
- having regard to the Commission's proposal for a Regulation amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 881/92 on access to the market in the carriage of goods by road within the Community, to and from the territory of a Member State, or passing across the territory of one or more Member States as regards a uniform driver attestation (COM (2000) 751),
- having regard to the Commission's White Paper on a Common Transport Policy of 12 September 2001 (COM(2001) 370),
- having regard to the Commission's proposal for a Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2236/95 laying down general rules for the granting of Community financial aid in the field of trans-European networks,
- having regard to the legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation amending Protocol No 9 to the Act of Accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden as regards the system of ecopoints for heavy goods vehicles transiting through Austria (COM(2000) 862 - C5-0769/2000 - 2000/0361(COD)), adopted by the European Parliament on 5 September 2001,
- having regard to the European Parliament resolution on transport infrastructure charging (the Costa report), adopted on 18 January 2001 (2000/2030(INI)),

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- A. Whereas the Gotthard tunnel accident has underlined the need further to improve tunnel safety standards throughout Europe,
- B. Whereas the exact circumstances of the accident have also highlighted important issues relating to the employment and training of professional drivers,
- C. Whereas the accident has exacerbated the problems of traffic circulation in the Alpine region,
 - 1. Welcomes the Commission's initiative in proposing a new directive on the harmonisation of minimum safety standards for road and rail tunnels, and undertakes to cooperate fully with Council and Commission to ensure its rapid adoption and implementation; Calls on the Commission, in developing this proposal, to give serious consideration to the recent report by the Organisation on Economic Cooperation and Development, which proposes the banding of tunnels according to their level of security for the transport of dangerous substances;
 - 2. Considers that the circumstances surrounding the accident have underlined the importance of the Commission's proposal to establish a uniform driver attestation; Calls on Member States to make every effort to ensure that, once adopted, the proposed regulation is properly enforced, in order to ensure a level playing field throughout the single market in heavy goods transport in terms of the employment of HGV drivers;
 - 3. Considers that the accident in the Gotthard tunnel and the ensuing traffic congestion has again underlined the need for the development of an integrated transport policy for the entire Alpine region; Recalls its request of 5 September for the Commission to initiate a plan of action in this respect;
 - 4. Stresses that the proposal on transport infrastructure charging, which the Commission has undertaken to present in the course of 2002, in line with the recommendations of the Costa report, will constitute a major contribution towards efforts to develop a long-term solution to the major problems of traffic congestion in the Alpine region and elsewhere in the European Union;
 - 5. Fully supports the Commission's proposal to increase the proportion of Community funding from the TENs budget from 10 to 20%, for those projects aimed at eliminating cross-border rail bottlenecks, and reducing the imbalance between transport modes which exists in areas such as the Alpine region; In this context, calls on the Commission and the Member States concerned to continue to accord the highest possible priority to development and completion of the Lyon-Turin and Brenner Pass rail links;
 - 6. At the same time, acknowledges that the highest possible security conditions have been implemented in the Mont Blanc tunnel, thereby allowing the complete and immediate re-opening of this route for regulated freight traffic.

PP. Mrs Wallis
Mrs Sanders-Ken Holte
Mr Caveroi



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