

Letter from: The President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies

To: Mr José Manuel Barroso

Date: Rome, 26 October 2009

Ref.: 2009/0028846/GEN/TN

I wish to inform you that on 14 October 2009, the IXth Committee (Transport) of the Chamber of Deputies adopted a document on the Green Paper 'Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy' (COM(2009) 44 final). Please find attached a copy of the document jointly with the opinion of the XIVth Committee (European Union Policies).

(Complimentary close)

Wednesday, 14 October 2009

IXth Committee

ANNEX

Green Paper ‘Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy’

(COM(2009) 44 final)

FINAL DOCUMENT APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE

The IXth Committee,

Having examined, within the meaning of Article 127 of the Regulation, the Green Paper 'Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy' (COM(2009) 44 final) adopted by the European Commission on 4 February 2009;

Having noted the Committee's conclusions approved by the Council for Transport, Communication and Energy of 12 June 2009 and the results of the public consultation launched by DG Transport and Energy of the European Commission on 30 April 2009;

Having noted the information obtained at the hearing of the Vice-president of the European Commission and Commissioner for Transport Antonio Tajani on 16 July 2009;

Having welcomed the decision of the European Commission to provide, until the end of 2009, immediate funding through the recovery plan for projects starting between the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010 within the framework of TEN-T networks and having noted the attention given to intermodal transport and the need to rebalance goods and passenger transport in the European Union;

Taking into account the deadlines set by the Commission for the procedure for adopting, in the next few years, legislative proposals in this field, in particular, with a view to the following:

1. the upcoming revision of the guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, which, it is hoped, will be published by the end of 2010 after a Commission communication on the future TEN-T policy is published, presumably in the first quarter of 2010; and

2. further legislative proposals on Community funds;

Whereas the Community intervention is in conformity with the objective of updating the European transport policy in such a way as to enhance the opportunity for cross-border connection and integration by overcoming existing problems, bearing in mind territorial, economic and social cohesion, the need for interoperability and technological innovation, development of railway corridors, intermodal interconnection with ports and airports, and significant reduction of CO₂ emissions.

Having noted the opinion of the XIVth Committee, with which we fully agree;

Taking into account that the problems found so far and emphasised in the Green Paper mainly relate to compliance with the project completion schedule, the inadequacy of the available financial resources in respect of the needs and the lack of coordination;

Whereas the completion of the trans-European transport networks on the Italian territory is a prerequisite for stepping up Italy's competitiveness and avoiding economic marginalisation;

Having noted that, as regards the resolutions adopted on 22 April 2009 at the Assembly of the Chamber of Deputies on the Commission's 2009 Legislative and Work Programme, the European Commission agreed on the need for the European Union to identify additional resources for building the trans-European transport networks;

Hereby delivers a positive assessment

and underlines, in relation to the Government's position on both the definition of legislative proposals and the decisions of the relevant Community institutions, the following needs;

As regards the organisation of the TEN-T networks policy, while sharing the will to establish a trans-European priority network in the future, the following measures are considered appropriate:

Retaining for the next programming period the current structure, which includes the comprehensive trans-European network, and the list of priority projects, revising them contextually and assessing the possibility of additional measures essential for the implementation of the trans-European priority network. In this regard, in line both with the recent Commission Communication on interconnecting trans-European and trans-African networks as well as with

European countries that are not part of the European Union, connections with third countries should be favoured, in particular as regards the Mediterranean area and Eastern European countries that are not part of the European Union, and with the initiative of calling a Conference of the Ministers of Transport of the European Union and of the abovementioned countries on the future development of trans-European networks, to be held in Naples on 21 and 22 October 2009;

Favouring, under the framework of the review of the TEN-T networks, the infrastructure for using alternative road transport modes, so as to relieve congestion on the road network and significantly reduce polluting emissions, providing for adequate funding for the construction of high-speed/high-capacity railway connections and the upgrade of connections with ports, especially 'last-mile' connections;

In particular, within the framework of the review of TEN-T networks:

1) Ensuring completion as scheduled of corridor 1 (Berlin-Palermo), corridor 5 and corridor 24 (Genoa-Rotterdam); in particular speeding up the completion of strategic works for connecting Northern Italy and the rest of Europe under the framework of the aforementioned corridors, identifying the Verona and Novara entrepôts as central hubs in the sections defined by corridors 1 and 5, and finding the financial support needed for the completion of the Turin-Lyon and Verona-Trieste lines;

2) Making proper use of maritime transport, especially as regards the development of the motorways of the sea and territorial continuity, and promoting, under the framework of the completion of corridors 5, 24 ('corridor of the two seas') and 1, the works relating to the upgrade of the port hubs of Trieste and Genoa and of Sicilian ports;

3) Giving priority to projects that include infrastructure works and might help Italy to become the Mediterranean's logistic platform in relation to future trade with Northern African countries;

4) Considering the inclusion of corridor 8 (Bari-Varna) in view of its strategic relevance for Bulgaria's accession to the European Union and the Union's possibilities for enlargement in the Balkan area and providing the extension of that corridor to Naples in order to fully take in Southern Italy; ensuring to this end financial support for the works needed to upgrade the Bari-Naples railway connection and connections on the Adriatic corridor, in particular as regards the Termoli-Chieuti section;

5) Ensuring full completion of high-capacity railway infrastructure works relating to the southern section of corridor 1 with a view to making the best use of the port of Gioia Tauro's connections and guaranteeing Sicily's territorial continuity;

Backing at Community level the appropriate initiatives to increase the financial resources allocated to the completion of the TEN-T networks;

Concentrating TEN-T budget resources on a greater number of more significant projects that may be completed more rapidly; making, at the same time, the corresponding Community funding available over more than one programming period, ensuring adequate financial resources under the subsequent framework programmes;

Backing the appropriate initiatives enabling the expenses relating to the completion of the infrastructure works included in the TEN-T networks to be disregarded so as to comply with the obligations arising from the Stability and Growth Pact;

Ensuring the prompt implementation of the projects that have already received Community and national funding in order to provide tangible help to overcoming the infrastructural backwardness penalising some areas of the European Union, in particular its southern regions; providing for the monitoring of the subsequent development phases of the projects to be completed in each Member State so as to monitor their progress and take action to solve any problems; promoting the establishment of specific corridor associations, in particular for the North-Western logistic platform, again with a view to guaranteeing the prompt completion of works and making the best use of the possibilities for intermodal connection;

Promoting political action to increase indirect sources of funding and identify alternative funding instruments, which may vary depending on the different nature of the projects, bearing in mind the possibility of projects being self-financing, whenever this is economically feasible, by levying a charge for the use of the infrastructure (*Eurovignette*) and greater use of public-private partnerships, without excluding the possibility of finding resources for completing the infrastructure by issuing *Eurobonds*;

Stepping up an efficient use of resources, concentrating them on the physical works rather than on related studies and, on the basis of the results of constant monitoring of works progress, identifying the most appropriate measures to ensure a more flexible management of aid aimed at favouring projects that are closer to completion;

As regards planning, recognising the primary need to ensure a balanced and integrated development through the active involvement of all the relevant bodies and interinstitutional cooperation, it is necessary to:

Favour a more efficient use of existing infrastructure, including by reconvertng it for local transport whenever it is no longer useful for connecting local networks to the main network, and giving special attention to the connections of marginal areas with the large TEN-T networks;

Integrate into the priority network those hubs that at times turn into 'bottlenecks' to the detriment of a seamless connection. In this respect, special attention should be given to the complex mobility systems of metropolitan areas;

Confirming the will to reduce the environmental impact of transport in line with the targets established for the fight against climate changes, in particular as regards the reduction of CO₂ emissions. In this respect, action aimed at promoting the modernisation of fishing vessels, by both scrapping vessels older than 30 years and regulating access to European ports by means of premiums for compliance – or sanctions for non-compliance – with the strictest Community environmental compatibility standards;

Aiming to make the best use of connection points between TEN-T sections, taking account of all the transport systems in an intermodal approach and favouring in particular the motorways of the sea;

Making the best use of intelligent transport systems (ITS), which should play a strategic role in diverting all traffic to less congested transport modes, since high-tech and innovative systems may contribute to improving accessibility and sustainability and a more efficient use of existing infrastructure, which would also have a positive impact on consumption;

As to coordination, continuing the experience of European coordinators, in the light of the positive results obtained so far, extending it not only to 'corridors' and 'projects' but also to specific thematic areas and taking it forward so as to enable multi-level connection, in respect of various projects and transport modes, at local, national and European scale;

Concerning action at national and local level:

Ensuring the timely completion of road works in the most congested areas, including in terms of the interconnections with TEN-T sections, in particular the foothill areas in the Veneto and Lombardy Regions, the Tyrrhenian-Brenner motorway and the Nogara-Adriatic Sea motorway and the revision of the A7 Genoa-Serravalle Scrivia motorway;

As regards the implementation of small-scale works, organising a special control unit in charge of establishing the corresponding time-schedule and providing for the funding of such works for the whole of Italy, bearing in mind worksite and road safety criteria and carrying out a prompt verification of available Structural Adjustment Facility resources.

Green Paper ‘Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy’

COM (2009) 44 final

OPINION ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

The XIVth Committee,

Having examined the Green Paper ‘Towards a better integrated trans-European transport network at the service of the common transport policy’ (COM(2009) 44 final) and welcomed the initiative of the European Commission to revise the priorities and objectives of TEN-T policy;

Sharing the objective of taking forward the strategy of priority projects followed so far, in the sense of integrating it in respect of a priority network offering the added value of linking more systematically the hubs (which are the cause of the worst congestion problems) with ports and airports as points of network access and main intermodal interconnection points;

Without prejudice to the need to guarantee a strong continuity with the approach adopted until now in order to rationalise and reorient the current approach and contribute in a more efficient way to attaining significant common objectives and meet sector challenges from a political, economic, environmental and technological point of view, including to avoid wasting the resources already allocated to priority projects;

Having noted the conclusions on the Green Paper approved at the Council meeting on transport, communication and energy stressing the importance of taking account of territorial, economic and social cohesion and coordination with the measures and objectives set out in the framework of the common transport policy (intelligent transport, traffic management system, interoperability, technological innovation and railway corridors, green corridors and airspace blocks), bearing in mind that TEN-T networks should significantly contribute to reducing CO₂ emissions;

Whereas the method proposed by Europe, i.e. concentrating resources on a number of priority projects, has proven to be particularly useful for Italy, where there is a strong tendency to fragment action and resource allocation;

Taking into account that the development of transport infrastructure is a priority for Italy – which is historically characterised by infrastructural backwardness and imbalance, especially as regards Southern regions, and a modal imbalance towards road traffic – and that Italy should voice its needs and interests: the completion of the trans-European transport networks on the Italian territory is a prerequisite for stepping up Italy’s competitiveness and avoiding economic marginalisation, especially given its specific geopolitical position;

Having noted the need for this opinion to be submitted, jointly with the final document approved by the relevant committee, to the European Commission in the framework of the existing political dialogue,

Hereby delivers

A FAVOURABLE OPINION

with the following remarks:

a) In the light of the financial difficulties encountered in completing TEN-T networks and the long-term nature of the larger projects, the need is felt to: 1) take the appropriate measures to increase Community TEN-T budgetary resources for the next programming period (2014-20), assessing the possibility of using innovative methods to find more funding, e.g. the issuing of Eurobonds; 2) concentrate TEN-T budgetary resources on the 30 current priority projects; 3) make Community TEN-T financing available for more than one planning period;

b) Option 1 of the Green Paper on planning methods, which envisages to keep the existing two-level structure based on the comprehensive network (roads, railways, high-speed trains, inland waterways and seaports) and the 30 priority projects singled out by Decision 884 of 2004, seems more realistic and is likely to build on the current approach;

c) without prejudice to the need to ensure continuity of the action undertaken for the 2007-13 period, possible limited additions to the list of 30 priority projects should be examined, where these are considered essential for the future implementation of a priority trans-European network. In particular, Italy should assert its interest in upgrading the connection with the Mediterranean area and the interconnection with the Swiss transport network;

d) Closer coordination should be ensured in identifying the works to be prioritised at trans-European level, by removing the inconsistencies that have slowed down projects so far;

e) Initiatives should be preferred that are aimed at reducing the environmental impact of transport, in line with the targets set out for fighting climate change, choosing the least polluting modes.