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Transport and Space

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Sehr geehrter Herr Vorsitzender,

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren Abgeordnete des Europäischen Parlamentes,
Meine sehr verehrten Damen und Herren !

Herr Vorsitzender, als wir uns das erste Mal trafen, haben Sie mir erklärt, wie wichtig für Sie ein *nachhaltiges* Transportsystem in Europa ist.

Und Sie haben mir auch von Ihrem Engagement zum "Europaradweg Eiserner Vorhang" berichtet.

Počas nášho rozhovoru, som si uvedomil, koľko histórie s pánom Cramerom spoločne zdieľame. Obaja sme žili v tieni **železnej opony**. Pán predseda v Berlíne a ja v Bratislave. Európa bola rozdelená spôsobom, ktorý si už dnes mladí ľudia ani nevedia predstaviť. Uplynulých 25 rokov bolo preto z hľadiska zjednocovania Európy doslova historickou transformáciou.

Doprava je pravdepodobne sektor, v ktorom sa dôsledky Studenej vojny a s tým súvisiace rozdelenie Európy prejavovalo najzreteľnejšie. Práve preto bude odstránenie týchto stále pretrvávajúcich rozdielov prostredníctvom efektívnej implementácie trans-európskych sietí mojou prioritou číslo jeden.

Vážený pán predseda, vážení poslanci, spolu s Vami som kandidoval a bol zvolený do Európskeho parlamentu. Podobne ako aj Vy, aj ja som absolvoval desiatky stretnutí so spoluobčanmi, vďaka ktorým viem, ktoré otázky z hľadiska jednotlivých európskych politik považujú za kľúčové. Táto spätná väzba od občanov mi potvrdila, že sektor dopravy a fungujúca dopravná infraštruktúra sú pre občanov veľmi dôležité. Trojnásobné navýšenie rozpočtu pre dobudovanie transeurópskych dopravných koridorov oproti minulému obdobiu, ktoré presadil Európsky parlament, je najlepším dôkazom jeho blízkosti k občanom a záujmu o riešenie ich problémov.

Transport and mobility is at the **heart of European integration**. I believe that Europe in the 21st century deserves a world class transport system, if we want to remain the world leader in environmentally friendly, safe and modern transport mobility and logistics. In other words: a sustainable backbone to our society.

Economic growth and the **creation of decent, solid jobs** is the priority number one for the Juncker Commission. I believe that our joint efforts in the area of transport and space can contribute significantly to this goal.

I am eager to work intensely with you to contribute to the pledge of President-elect Juncker to create this new **€300bn investment package** by taking an innovative approach in leveraging EU funds allocated for the modernisation of EU infrastructure.

And for that, we need **good projects**; we need to further our good cooperation with the **European Investment Bank**; we need to find a good working relationship with the **private sector** to start this formidable process of lifting Europe out of crisis and bringing Europe the world-class infrastructure it needs for the 21st century.

And of course we need to do this with a clear vision in mind. To prepare Europe not for what is needed today but to prepare it for what is coming; for what will be needed in 10, 20 or 30 years' time.

It means we need to deploy **intelligent transport systems**, we need to work on fully intermodal, integrated networks based on new satellite and digital technologies.

We need new services and products that will allow European citizens and businesses to have a choice of sustainable transport options which they can access by simply pushing a button on a Smartphone application.

70% of EU citizens live in **cities** and transport increasingly impacts the quality of their lives, whether they walk, cycle, drive a car or take a bus.

We need a transport system based on the most innovative solutions. This will give Europe back its competitive edge, create a lot of "*cool jobs*" for young people and give stability to 11 million dedicated transport workers who already work in this area.

Finally, we need a transport system with the highest standards for **safety** and **security**.

How can we accomplish this vision? Where to start?

I referred to the **TEN-T network**, and I want to assure you that if I get your approval, I will be vigorous in the implementation of these projects.

I will work on all the corridors, try to overcome all the bottlenecks, and will not hesitate to apply the rule "*use it or lose it*" to keep motivation among the Member States very, very high.

To fill these networks with life, I am ready to work hard with you starting with the legislative proposals that are currently on the table. The **4th Railway Package** and the **Single European Sky** are those where I believe we can achieve significant progress.

I would like to assure you that I am fully aware of the **social sensitivities** and **concerns** around these files. My proposal how to address them would be to deepen the social dialogue, where together with social partners we would work on how to modernise the transport industry - not to the detriment of well-established social standards.

Most of the positive developments in the European transport industry would not have happened if the European Union had not pushed for high levels of **passenger rights**.

I am very proud to be from the only place in the world where passengers have their rights guaranteed in every mode of transport.

And I am sure that this was the key to push companies to end practices such as overbooking or last minute schedule-changing.

Honourable Members,

The Single European Transport Area must include all modes of transport. We must achieve the required inter-operability of our **railway sector**, and overcome cross-border fragmentation by deploying modern signalling systems like ERTMS which are just waiting to be rolled out.

We must use the European Railway Agency to get rid of the 26,000 different national rules blocking this sector from development and use the joint undertakings like Shift2Rail to design tomorrow's interoperable rail system.

Together we can ensure that rail delivers the reliable, high-quality and cost effective services our citizens and business will choose to use. At the same time, we will help EU rail manufacturers maintain their world leading position.

I am a strong believer in the **Single European Sky**. I do not think we can afford to lose €5bn a year because we cannot create a coherent European airspace and that we are therefore forcing our airplanes to take longer and costlier routes, producing more CO2 emissions.

We have to work on airport performance and capacity and look at what is going on in our neighbourhood, in the Middle East for example, where we face formidable competition. If we cannot take the right decisions, we will very soon lack the adequate capacity in Europe.

So we need to prepare our air industry for this challenge.

Great work is done by SESAR and its applications which I believe, along with our satellite potential, will be the key to keeping this industry at the cutting edge in terms of competitiveness and safety.

As you know, Europe is the world's biggest trading bloc, but sometimes we forget that around 75% of our exports and imports go by **ships**, carried by the biggest fleet in the world.

40% of world ships are European owned. Three European ports are among the biggest sea gateways on this planet.

That is why we have to be very much focused on this sector as well. We must make sure that this sector as much as others is fully integrated in the inter-modal single European transport area. This means modernising port infrastructure and linking it up

with the trans-European corridors. It means making a European **maritime transport** system without barriers a reality.

We also have to find a way to fight efficiently against greenhouse emissions and air pollution, where – because here we are talking about a global industry – we must actively progress in the IMO, and in the case of aviation, in ICAO, of which Member States are members. Cooperation in these fora will thus be essential.

When we are looking for new potential, we have to pay more attention to **inland waterways**. Very often these could offer the best solution from the pollution, capacity and availability point of view. But this industry is very fragmented; the fleet is often obsolete and waterways such as the Danube are used only at 15% of its capacity.

Now, guided by the NAIADES programme, we can breathe new life into this industry and help SMEs to work better and more competitively in this area.

If you allow me, honourable Members, I would like to conclude this "*tour de mode*" with **road transport**.

72% of passengers are transported by car, 45% of freight is transported by trucks in Europe – it is a massive sector and a challenge of equal size.

We will have to tackle problems related to better organisation of road transport so we do not continue to lose 1% of GDP every year because of congestion.

And we have to make sure we can organise our freight road transport better, because it is clear that we cannot continue the practice of one in four trucks driving empty on the highways.

We need the intelligent and fair application of the **user- and polluter-pays principles**, so we can maintain our infrastructure in good state and push industry towards organising their work more effectively.

And I think we have to look in a deep and comprehensive manner at the different applications of the agreed rules, such as the rules on *cabotage*.

Pressure on the industry to reduce congestion, noise and CO2 emissions, whilst at the same time to enhance safety, will clearly increase. I am committed to accelerate the deployment of new technologies during this legislature to help address these issues. I firmly believe that progress in this area will help us to further reduce the number of road fatalities as well, because 26000 fatalities a year is very, very high; an unacceptable number for me and I believe for all of us. There will be no compromise on safety, for all modes of transport. Europe will continue to be the safest transport area in the world.

I am convinced that very soon we will see more smart vehicles on our roads that can "*talk*" to each other and use alternative energy provided by a Europe-wide infrastructure.

This is the way forward for the road sector– but if we want to achieve these goals, we need to offer an adequate regulatory framework and a European infrastructure, including our space network, that can help facilitate the roll out of these new technologies.

Je suis très heureux de voir réunis **l'espace** et le transport: l'espace se rapproche des utilisateurs. C'est d'autant plus important que les années à venir sont cruciales pour l'Europe spatiale.

D'ici 2020, notre objectif est d'avoir l'infrastructure spatiale nécessaire pour fournir des services opérationnels **Galileo et Copernicus** aux utilisateurs. Pour ce faire, l'Union mettra en orbite plus de 30 satellites dans les 5 années à venir!

L'Europe possède une base industrielle forte, à la pointe de la technologie. Les programmes spatiaux de l'Union ont le potentiel de renforcer sa compétitivité, de stimuler la recherche et l'innovation, et de créer de la croissance et de l'emploi hautement qualifié.

Mais n'oublions pas que l'espace est avant tout au service des citoyens européens. Qu'ils utilisent leur téléphone, fassent une transaction financière, prennent l'avion, regardent les prévisions météorologiques ou cherchent le restaurant le plus proche depuis leur voiture, ils s'appuient sur des infrastructures spatiales. 7% du PIB européen dépend des applications des systèmes mondiaux de navigation par satellite.

Bien sûr, comme toute entreprise ambitieuse et techniquement hautement complexe, cela ne va pas sans contretemps. L'incident lors du lancement des satellites Galileo en août ne doit pas nous décourager. Au contraire.

Je suis convaincu que nos capacités à tirer les leçons de cette situation nous permettront de rebondir et de renforcer nos programmes spatiaux.

Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Members of the European Parliament,
Ladies and Gentlemen !

Transport is an area that touches everybody. **Transport** is the **backbone of the modern society**; we cannot survive or prosper without it.

We have formidable assets. European transport is the safest system in the world. Its transport industry and logistics are a showcase for Europe's competitiveness and innovative spirit.

If I am confirmed by you, as Commissioner for Transport and Space, I will work together with you to build on this **global leadership**, using all tools at our disposal to

give Europe the infrastructure needed for the 21th century, to boost economy and create jobs, to drive innovation and to protect the environment.

Thank you very much !