

Translation of letter

From: The Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Italian Parliament

Date: Rome, 29 July 2010

To: Mr Barroso

I am writing to inform you that on 21 July 2010, the IXth Committee (Transport) of the Chamber of Deputies approved a document – which I enclose, together with the opinion of the XIVth Committee (EU Policy) – on the Action Plan on Urban Mobility (COM(2010) 490 final).

[complimentary close]

## CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

### FINAL DOCUMENT APPROVED BY THE IXth COMMITTEE PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 127 OF THE REGULATION ON THE ACTION PLAN ON URBAN MOBILITY (COM(2009) 490 FINAL) (Doc. XVIII, no 25)

'The IXth Committee,

having examined, pursuant to Article 127 of the Regulation, the Action Plan on Urban Mobility (COM(2009) 490 final) presented by the European Commission on 30 September 2009;

noting:

the elements gleaned in the course of several hearings held by the Committee as part of its scrutiny procedure;

the conclusions adopted by the Transport Council on 24 June 2010 expressing appreciation for the Commission's initiative and asking it, *inter alia*, to identify specific measures and pursue the Action Plan's objectives in the new transport white paper;

the growing interest among the public at large, not only among experts in the field, in issues of urban mobility as regards impacts on the quality of life and taking account of economic, social and environmental repercussions; the peculiarities of the fabric of Italian cities, which require the implementation of effective policies for protecting historic town centres, especially those of particular value, and for restoring outlying areas, in view of the failings that have marked town-planning, transport and infrastructure policy in recent decades, with its inability to plan on the basis of coherent logic and a strategic overview;

the need to pay more and more attention to aspects connected with the safety of urban transport, particularly as regards the more vulnerable road users, in view of the excessive numbers of victims of accidents; the extremely high volumes of road traffic and inadequate development of public (especially rail) transport which characterise Italy's larger cities, with the resulting traffic congestion and long journey times;

the fact that urban mobility is a key factor for economic growth, employment and competitiveness, as every year the European economy loses about € 100 billion (1% of GDP) because of congestion in the cities; the importance that coherent, effective urban mobility policies might have in pursuing the European Union's fundamental objectives when it comes to protecting health and the environment, to climate change and renewable energies, and the general objectives of the EU policies in question;

having found it necessary that this document be forwarded to the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission in the context of the political dialogue;

gives a completely positive assessment, underlining:

*with regard to the Government's position in developing legislative proposals and to discussions in the relevant Community institutions, the following priorities:*

- a) to regard the European Commission's Action Plan as an opportunity to take an integrated and coherent approach to the issue with clearly defined priorities and reconciling the initiatives to be taken in the field of transport policy with other EU policies, such as those on industry, the environment and land-use planning, tourism and social affairs, with particular reference to health protection;
- b) to ensure inter-institutional coordination in order to overcome the current fragmentation of arrangements and competences in the field of urban mobility and thus provide public and private operators with a proper and sufficiently clear view of the reference framework laid down by the EU. In this context, use could be made of the experience gained in appointing coordinators for the transeuropean transport network projects;
- c) to take specific measures to strengthen national and local initiatives on the basis of an overall approach going beyond municipal boundaries to take in the transport needs of whole metropolitan areas. In this respect, we stress the need for strategic and integrated transport planning, with periodic updates on the basis of changes on the ground, technological developments and levels of public satisfaction, promoting an efficient use of existing infrastructures, including reconverting them for local use. This should also take account of the problems connected with workers commuting into and out of city centres;
- d) as regards transport policy, to link urban mobility decisions to strategic intermodality priorities, with particular reference to the TEN networks, so as to enable the larger conurbations to fulfil their function as efficient points of interconnection and provide an efficient 'last mile' transport system for both goods and passengers;
- e) to exploit fully, including through the allocation of the proper resources, the potential advantages of intelligent transport systems (ITSs), which could take on a strategic role in channelling traffic onto less congested forms of transport; innovative and technologically advanced systems could also facilitate a more rational use of existing infrastructure, reduced journey times and shorter delays due to congestion, and fewer accidents and pollutant emissions; in this context, particular importance attaches to the info-mobility systems and systems encouraging environment-friendly driving behaviour with which the latest vehicles are equipped and which could also be supported by EU decisions on driving licence arrangements and on new criteria for driving tests (fuel consumption, driving behaviour geared to better road safety, etc.);
- f) to take appropriate initiatives, also based on best practice and on citizens' most immediate and most advanced experience, to discourage the use of private vehicles, especially those that cause the most pollution, and return to original forms of transport that are less costly and cause less pollution, with a particular emphasis on mobility for cyclists, ensuring sufficient investment at EU level in resources for creating infrastructure, supporting intermodality (expanding the right to transport bicycles on trains, on metropolitan lines and specially equipped buses, and facilities for leaving bicycles at public transport stations) and in finance for research and compiling comparable data, above all in order to improve safety for the most vulnerable road users;
- g) again with the aim of encouraging the use of alternative forms of transport over private vehicles, local public transport, activities linked to the delivery of essential services (refuse collection, street cleaning, maintenance work) and the transport of

one's own or others' goods should progressively, but as quickly as possible, be brought into line with environmental, economic and logistical sustainability objectives; to this end, it is appropriate to encourage the replacement of Italy's bus fleet, which is older than the European average, and that of commercial vehicles, in favour of latest-generation vehicles. The latter produce fewer emissions and have significantly lower running costs, which could be a structural advantage in periods of economic crisis like the present; the vehicles would also be more easily integrated into a latest-generation logistical network; their use in the 'last mile' could be encouraged, for example, gradually replacing conventionally fuelled vehicles;

- h) to support the Commission's proposal for an urban mobility observatory (Theme 5; Action 17), provided it performs specific functions that do not overlap with existing activities and its tasks are clearly defined. the observatory's main activity should consist of monitoring legislative activity and EU instruments in the field of urban mobility, collecting data on quality standards, practical applications, technology, contractual questions, users' rights, exchanging best practice and monitoring the development of the sector; drawing up concrete, flexible solutions that take account of local specificities and do not lose sight of the objectives to be achieved. In this context, it is essential that information be organised in a systematic and standardised way and made available over a wide network;
- i) as regards funding (Actions 2, 14 and 15 of the Plan), we would stress the urgent need for a comprehensive framework of specific financing for urban mobility, and sustainable urban mobility in particular, given that, in the absence of coordination between the various sources of funds, such information is still too fragmented, in view also of the fact that urban mobility is a dimension taken into account in the context of other EU policies (cohesion, environment, health, etc.); we would also underline the need for a generally stable resourcing framework;

*at national level*, underlines the need for the Government:

to prioritise the need to overcome the crisis-management and sporadic approach to urban mobility which has led all too often to extreme measures being taken to block vehicle traffic rather than pursuing coherent structural policies to address congestion and reduce pollutant emissions;

to promote coordination between the initiatives and competences of the various public and private parties involved in the planning and implementation of urban mobility policies, primarily through the exchange of information between local administrations and associations and foundations contributing by means of specific projects to encourage sustainable mobility and integrated policies on the ground;

to strengthen a medium and long term strategy of action on urban mobility that combines sectoral transport policies with more general policies on land use, such as those linked to managing movements of tourists;

to develop planning for mobility on the basis of unified and integrated schemes by providing suitable instruments or using those already available: urban traffic plans (UTPs) and urban mobility plans (UMPs), the more widespread use of which seems desirable, thus ensuring certainty in defining and allocating competences and implementation times;

to encourage all initiatives likely to reduce the number of private vehicles, in particular those that cause the most pollution, entering, circulating in and remaining in the most important or densely inhabited areas, progressively expanding limited traffic zones on the basis of appropriate trials and at the same time using appropriate finance to improve public transport by rationalising routes and maintaining bus lanes;

also in order to reduce private traffic, to encourage non-motorised transport by creating dedicated and reserved lanes and a rational functional subdivision of the road network, setting aside some streets for specific purposes and avoiding mixed use where possible, thus also improving road safety;

to make effective use of information and promotion of social marketing campaigns for all forms of mobility other than the car, in particular bicycles, in order to give more attention to citizens, their health, quality of life and environmental education, with particular emphasis on teaching young schoolchildren;

to create a conducive environment for the large-scale use of low and zero emission (e.g. methane-fuelled, hybrid, biofuel and electric) vehicles, with the accent on the reduction of greenhouse emissions, in the light also of the commitment to keep global warming below 2 °C which the UN countries chose to sign up to at the Copenhagen Summit in 2009; to this end, to encourage the appropriate trialling and subsequent development, in agreement with institutions, local administrations, electricity companies, other specialised companies and financial and credit institutes, of a dense network of recharging and assistance stations across the country with a standard electrical socket;

to take all initiatives, including legislative, necessary for the harmonisation and standardisation of products to improve urban mobility and thus encourage the growth and competitiveness of the Italian system;

to raise awareness of project financing instruments, the activity of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in respect of urban mobility, be it as finance-provider or adviser, taking account of possible future developments and opportunities to improve existing instruments (specialised technical assistance, support for the planning and development of innovative integrated projects, long-term financing), and of the added value to be gained from exchanging technical and financial information; at the same time, to encourage all initiatives necessary to enabling Italian researchers to operate in the areas in question, making full use of the opportunities offered by the EU.'