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Transport, Telecommunications and Energy

Transport Items

Luxembourg, 29 October 2012

President **Mr Efthemios Flourentzou**
Minister for Communications and Works of Cyprus

P R E S S

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Main results of the Council

The Council agreed a general approach on a recast of the 1993 regulation on the allocation of landing and take-off ***slots at EU airports*** *with capacity problems. In order to optimise the allocation system against the backdrop of growing airport congestion, the new draft regulation will, in particular, allow airlines to sell and buy slots. It also introduces the possibility of charging for the late return of unused slots to the slot pool and enhances the independence of, and cooperation between, slot coordinators. The compromise reached at the Council meeting allows member states to apply temporary restrictions to slot trading in duly justified cases, but gives the Commission the right to oppose such a decision.*

The Council also agreed a general approach on two draft directives laying down the responsibilities of flag states, on the one hand, and port states, on the other, as regards the ***enforcement of the Maritime Labour Convention*** *adopted in 2006 by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The goal of the Maritime Labour Convention is to guarantee decent working and living conditions on board ships and to limit social dumping, thereby securing fair competition for shipowners who respect seafarers' rights.*

The Council reached a political agreement on a new regulation on the ***tachograph*** *used in road transport, essentially confirming the general approach agreed by the Council in June this year. The new draft legislation, which will replace the 1985 tachograph regulation, is designed to make fraud more difficult and to reduce the administrative burden, notably by introducing a satellite-linked "smart tachograph" as well as a number of new regulatory measures.*

*Moreover, the Council authorised the signing and provisional application of an agreement with the European Organisation for Safety of Air Navigation (****Eurocontrol****) establishing a new and stable framework for enhanced cooperation.*

Finally, the Council held a debate on a proposed update of the common rules on periodic ***roadworthiness tests*** *for motor vehicles, intended to improve road safety and protection of the environment. The results of the debate will give guidance for the ongoing work on this proposal.*

Without discussion, the Council adopted a directive establishing a ***single European railway area****, which modernises the regulatory framework for Europe's railway sector, contained in the three directives of the "first railway package" of 2001.*

CONTENTS[1]

PARTICIPANTS **5**

ITEMS DEBATED

AVIATION 7

Tackling airport congestion by updating the rules on slot allocation 7

Enhanced cooperation with Eurocontrol 9

SHIPPING 10

Enforcing the Maritime Labour Convention 10

LAND TRANSPORT 12

Tachograph regulation 12

New rules on regular vehicle checks for roadworthiness 14

OTHER BUSINESS 16

Ministerial conference on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy 16

Emissions trading in the aviation sector 16

Aviation summit on the Single European Sky 16

Cabin air incidents in aircraft 17

Informal meeting of transport and telecommunications ministers 17

World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) 17

European Road Safety Day 18

Transport relations between the EU and Russia 18

[1]
- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (http://www.consilium.europa.eu).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

TRANSPORT

– Single European railway area * 19

TRADE POLICY

– Anti-dumping - aluminium radiators - China 19

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

– Rights of persons with disabilities - EU-level framework 20

ENVIRONMENT

– Sulphur content of marine fuels 20

– End-of-life vehicles 20

EMPLOYMENT

– Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Denmark and Germany 21

APPOINTMENTS

– Committee of the Regions 21

ACTS ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

– Restrictive measures - Republic of Guinea 21

PARTICIPANTS

The governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:	
Mr Olivier BELLE	Deputy Permanent Representative
Bulgaria:	
Mr Kamen KICHEV	Deputy Minister for Transport, Information Technology and Communications
Czech Republic:	
Mr Jiří ŽÁK	Deputy Minister for Transport
Denmark:	
Mr Henrik Dam KRISTENSEN	Minister for Transport
Germany:	
Mr Peter RAMSAUER	Federal Minister for Transport, Building and Urban Development
Estonia:	
Mr Juhan PARTS	Minister for Economic Affairs and Communications
Ireland:	
Mr Leo VARADKAR	Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport
Greece:	
Mr Konstantinos MOUSOUROULIS	Minister for Maritime Affairs
Mr Nikolaos STATHOPOULOS	Secretary-General
Spain:	
Ms Ana María PASTOR JULIÁN	Minister for Public Works
Ms Carmen LIBRERO	Secretary-General for Transport
France:	
Mr Frédéric CUVILLIER	Minister with responsibility for Transport, Oceans and Fisheries, attached to the Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy
Italy:	
Mr Mario CIACCIA	Deputy Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
Cyprus:	
Mr Efthemios FLOURENTZOU	Minister for Communications and Works
Latvia:	
Mr Aivis RONIS	Minister for Transport
Lithuania:	
Mr Rimvydas VAŠTAKAS	Deputy Minister for Transport and Communications
Luxembourg:	
Mr ClaudeWISELER	Minister for Sustainable Development and Infrastructure
Ms Michèle EISENBARTH	Deputy Permanent Representative
Hungary:	
Mr Olivér VÁRHELYI	Deputy Permanent Representative
Malta:	
Mr Austin GATT	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Communications
Netherlands:	
Ms Melanie SCHULTZ van HAEGEN-MAAS GEESTERANUS	Minister for Infrastructure and the Environment
Mr Joop ATSMA	State Secretary for Infrastructure and the Environment
Austria:	
Ms Doris BURES	Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology

Poland:
Mr Maciej JANKOWSKI — Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Transport, Construction and Maritime Economy

Portugal:
Mr Pedro COSTA PEREIRA — Deputy Permanent Representative

Romania:
Mr Valentin PREDA — State Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure

Slovenia:
Mr Uroš VAJGL — Deputy Permanent Representative

Slovakia:
Mr František PALKO — State Secretary at the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development

Finland:
Ms Marja RISLAKKI — Deputy Permanent Representative

Sweden:
Ms Catharina ELMSÄTER-SVÄRD — Minister for Infrastructure

United Kingdom:
Mr Stephen HAMMOND — Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport

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Commission:
Mr Siim KALLAS — Vice-President

The Governments of the Acceding States were represented as follows:

Croatia:
Mr Siniša HAJDAŠ DONČIĆ — Minister for Maritime Affairs, Transport and Infrastructure

ITEMS DEBATED

AVIATION

Tackling airport congestion by updating the rules on slot allocation

The Council agreed a general approach on a recast of the 1993 regulation on the allocation of landing and take-off slots at EU airports (*15442/12*). The slot allocation system, which is implemented at airports with a significant shortfall in capacity, is a tool for managing scarce capacity in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner. The revision is intended to tackle growing airport congestion.

The revision aims to ensure that slots at congested airports are allocated to those carriers able to make the best economic use of them, thus providing for optimum allocation and use of capacity. To this end, a series of measures will be introduced:

- airlines will be allowed to sell and buy slots ("secondary trading");

- member states will have the possibility of introducing charges for carriers that return unused slots to the slot pool when it is too late for re-allocation;

- the independence of, and cooperation between, slot coordinators will be strengthened, and the transparency of the allocation process will be enhanced;

- the Single European Sky (SES) network manager will be associated with the allocation process, so that the impact of capacity allocation at a given airport upon the whole European air traffic network can be taken into account.

The main outstanding issue that needed to be settled by ministers concerned the possibility for airlines to sell and buy slots. Some delegations requested the introduction of safeguards because of concerns about the possible negative impact of secondary trading on - economically less profitable - regional flights or about the potential speculative use of traded slots. Other delegations, however, as well as the Commission, stressed the need for a uniform application of the system, pointing to the risk of market fragmentation. As a compromise acceptable to the majority of delegations, the text of the draft regulation tabled by the presidency (*15282/12*) has been amended to allow member states to apply temporary restrictions where a significant and demonstrable problem with secondary trading occurs. Such restrictions must be transparent, non-discriminatory and proportionate, justified and communicated to the Commission, which has the right to oppose them. Member states will be obliged to comply with the Commission's decision, which must also be justified.

In addition, still within the framework of the secondary trading scheme, conditions have been slightly relaxed as regards the use of re-timed slots received after an exchange of newly acquired slots, which is allowed only in order to improve the slot timings for the services concerned. It was agreed that such re-timed slots need not necessarily be operated during a full scheduling period.

The compromise achieved also includes a number of changes to other parts of the draft regulation:

- Where the withdrawal of slots in the event of misuse would be disproportionate, the coordinator will have the alternative option of recommending the imposition of penalties.

- The provisions on slot cancellation due to a public holiday were removed since they are considered superfluous.

- Slight changes were also made to the provisions on the procedures for emergency coordination, on access to the coordinator's database, on information to be provided by air carriers and on the information to be provided by the coordinator to the airport managing body.

As regards the changes proposed by the Commission to the current conditions for granting priority in slot allocation to carriers that already had the same slots in previous scheduling seasons ("historical slots"), the discussions in the Council's preparatory bodies had already shown that a large majority of member states are against those changes. At the Council meeting, the Commission reaffirmed its proposal to raise the minimum rate at which carriers must effectively have used the slots allocated from the current 80% to 85% and the minimum number of slots to be requested for the same time on the same day of the week ("slot series") from the current 5 to 15 for the summer season and 10 for the winter season. Most member states, on the contrary, prefer to keep the current system, pointing to the need for flexibility for airlines, notably in order to avoid empty flights being operated only in order to secure entitlement to the slots. However, it will be possible to increase the minimum number of slots required within the framework of local guidelines.

The proposal, presented by the Commission in December 2011 (*18009/11*), is part of an "airport package" which also includes proposals on ground handling services and noise-related operating restrictions at airports. The package addresses two key challenges: capacity at airports and the quality of airport services.

The European Parliament, whose approval is also required for the adoption of the regulation, has not yet determined its position on the proposal.

Enhanced cooperation with Eurocontrol

The Council authorised the signing and provisional application of an agreement with the European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (Eurocontrol) establishing a new and stable framework for enhanced cooperation (*13792/12*).

The agreement, which lists the areas of cooperation and defines the forms and mechanisms of cooperation, confirms Eurocontrol as the technical and operational arm of the EU in the development and implementation of its Single European Sky (SES) programme, while positioning the EU as the regulator of this programme. It also provides a framework for civil-military coordination of air traffic management and for pan-European coordination beyond the EU borders. Moreover, it will enable the EU to contribute to the ongoing reform of Eurocontrol's governance structure.

In addition, the agreement aims to ensure synergies with, and avoid duplication of, the work of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in safety-related air traffic management matters and environmental issues.

Eurocontrol is a civil-military intergovernmental organisation with 39 contracting parties from all over Europe, including all EU member states except Estonia. It plays a pivotal role in air traffic management (ATM) in Europe and provides expertise and technical assistance to the EU in this field. Last year, Eurocontrol was nominated as ATM network manager for the Single European Sky programme, which is designed to establish a safe and efficient air traffic management system at European level on the basis of a legal framework adopted in 2004 and 2009.

SHIPPING

Enforcing the Maritime Labour Convention

The Council agreed on a general approach on two draft directives laying down the responsibilities of flag states, on the one hand, and port states, on the other, as regards the **enforcement of the Maritime Labour Convention** adopted in 2006 by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

The **flag state** draft directive (*14790/12*) aims to ensure that member states discharge their obligation as flag states to monitor the compliance of ships flying their flag with the rules laid down in directive 2009/13, which has incorporated a large part of the Maritime Labour Convention into EU law. The new directive is needed since the 2009 directive, which implements an agreement between the Union's social partners regarding that Convention, does not cover enforcement.

As a result of the work in the Council's preparatory bodies, the Commission's proposal (*8241/12*) was amended, notably to provide for a longer transposition deadline and to allow member states to apply a more flexible monitoring system to smaller ships under 200 gross tonnage not engaged in international voyages.

Slovenia has misgivings about the legal basis chosen for the directive, which is not a social policy provision of the treaty, as was the case for the 2009 directive, but a transport provision, deemed more appropriate by the Commission. This delegation therefore abstained and issued a statement to explain its position (*14790/12 ADD 2*).

The draft directive, which incorporates parts of the Maritime Labour Convention's enforcement provisions, requires flag states to establish inspection mechanisms to ensure compliance monitoring. It also stipulates that the personnel responsible for that monitoring must have the necessary professional competence and independence. In addition, it provides for a complaints procedure.

The **port state** draft directive (*13904/12*) amends directive 2009/16 on port state control. The amendments concern in particular

– the inclusion of new documents to be checked, namely the "maritime labour certificate" and the "declaration of maritime labour compliance";

– the extension of inspections to cover other requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention;

– the handling of complaints, and

– the inclusion of a serious or repeated breach of the Maritime Labour Convention as a reason detaining a ship.

Moreover, new rules on delegated and implementing powers conferred on the Commission are introduced to take account of the new procedures established by the Lisbon Treaty, which entered into force after the adoption of the 2009 directive.

During the discussions in the Council's preparatory bodies, some changes were made to the Commission's proposal (*8239/12*). In particular, it was decided to remove the possibility of subjecting ships under the flag of a state that has not ratified a set of conventions to further inspections at any time, in addition to the regular inspections. Furthermore, the situation of member states that have not yet ratified the Maritime Labour Convention has been clarified, with the preamble to the directive specifying that they should make every effort to comply with procedures and practices under the Convention. In addition, the Council extended the list of conventions for which port state control has to be performed, by adding two conventions, namely the conventions on the control of harmful anti-fouling systems on ships and on civil liability for bunker oil pollution damage; this should contribute to further enhancing environmental protection in EU ports. Generally, the wording of the draft directive has been aligned more closely with the text of the Convention.

The ILO's **Maritime Labour Convention** aims to guarantee decent working and living conditions on board ships and to limit social dumping, thus securing fair competition for shipowners who respect seafarers' rights. The Convention covers matters such as the minimum requirements for seafarers to work on board a ship; conditions of employment; accommodation, recreational facilities, food and catering; health protection, medical care, welfare and social security protection, as well as compliance and enforcement.

LAND TRANSPORT

Tachograph regulation

The Council reached a political agreement on a new regulation on the tachograph used in road transport (*13725/12*). The political agreement confirms the general approach agreed by the Council in June this year, while slightly adapting the wording of some parts to take account of amendments adopted by the European Parliament in the meantime.

One delegation, however, pointed out that it could not support the text of the draft regulation because it would have liked to see a wider exemption from the obligation to use the tachograph for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The political agreement will be formalised in the form of a first-reading position after legal and linguistic checks have been carried out. In parallel, the Council will continue its informal negotiations with the European Parliament in order to seek agreement on a final text to be adopted jointly by the two institutions at second reading.

The aim of the new draft legislation, which will replace the 1985 tachograph regulation, is to make fraud more difficult and to reduce the administrative burden by making full use of new technologies and introducing a number of new regulatory measures.

The text agreed by the Council contains the following key elements:

As regards the use of **technology**:

– The current manual recording of the location of the vehicle will be replaced by automated recording through satellite positioning. To reduce costs, only free positioning services will be used.

– Remote communication from the tachograph providing basic information on compliance will allow for early detection of possible manipulation or misuse, thereby enabling officers to target roadside checks better and avoid unnecessary checks. However, there will be no obligation for member states to ensure that their inspection authorities are equipped with the instruments required for remote early detection of this kind.

– In addition, the tachograph may be equipped with an interface facilitating its integration into Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS), subject to certain conditions.

The draft regulation also contains safeguards for protection of personal data: recording of vehicle position will be limited to the starting and ending place of the daily working period; access to data will be restricted to control authorities; and the explicit consent of the driver will be required for access to personal data through an external ITS device.

The "smart tachograph", i.e. the application of the new satellite-linked technology, will become mandatory 40 months after the technical specifications for the new tachograph have been established, probably in 2017 or 2018.

The **regulatory** changes include stricter requirements for workshops responsible for installing and calibrating tachographs. In order to reduce the administrative burden, the exemption from the obligation to use tachographs, which member states may grant to certain users - mainly small and medium-sized enterprises - will be extended: for those users, the new draft regulation introduces an exemption for transport operations within a radius of 100 km, whilst hitherto the exemption has been limited to 50 km in certain cases.

The regulatory measures will begin to apply two years after the publication of the regulation in the Union's Official Journal, with the exception of the rules on the approval and control of workshops and the use of driver cards, which will be applicable one year earlier.

The text agreed by the Council does not retain the Commission's proposal to incorporate a microchip with driver card functionalities into the driving licence for professional drivers, since the majority of delegations have doubts as to whether the benefits of such a merger would justify the costs it entails.

The Commission has a number of misgivings about the text as amended by the Council (see statement in *13725/12 ADD 1*). Apart from the deletion of the merger of the cards, it considers the date of introduction of the "smart tachograph" to be too late and it is also concerned about the possibility of issuing cards to drivers who reside in territories of the member states where the EU treaties do not apply (that is, the Faeroe Islands and Greenland).

The Commission presented its proposal in July 2011 (*13195/11*). The European Parliament reached its first-reading position on the proposal in July 2012.

New rules on regular vehicle checks for roadworthiness

The Council held a debate on a proposal for a regulation updating the common rules on mandatory periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles (*12786/12*). The debate, which was based on a presidency paper (*15093/12*), focused on the degree of harmonisation of vehicle testing to be achieved through the new rules as well as on the list of vehicles to be checked regularly and the frequency of the checks. The purpose of the debate was to give guidance to the Council's preparatory bodies for the ongoing work on the Commission's proposal.

The Council generally showed a positive attitude towards the Commission's initiative to further harmonise the common rules on vehicle checks. A large number of ministers considered that such a legislative initiative can usefully contribute to achieving the goals of increased road safety and improved environmental protection.

Many member states, however, had misgivings about the legal form of the proposed legislation and would prefer a directive rather than a regulation; they considered that a directive, which leaves more scope for taking into account the specificities of the member states, would be more appropriate to achieve an improved degree of harmonisation and adequate implementation. One delegation did not see the need for an initiative such as proposed by the Commission at the current stage, pointing to the high costs involved and questioning the benefits in terms of road safety.

A majority of member states voiced concerns about the lists of vehicles to be tested, with a large number of delegations questioning the extension of the checks to two- or three-wheeled vehicles, tractors or light trailers. Moreover, many delegations were not convinced by the proposal to increase the frequency of tests.

The update proposed by the Commission is intended to improve road safety, and in particular to contribute to the EU target of halving the number of road fatalities by 2020. It also aims to improve environmental protection by reducing vehicle emissions linked to poor maintenance.

Compared with the current rules under the 2009 directive which defined minimum standards for periodic roadworthiness tests, the Commission proposes to extend the scope of checks to include motorcycles and scooters as well as light trailers (under 3.5 tons), and to increase the frequency of testing for older vehicles. In addition, new requirements should be introduced, in particular for test equipment, skills and training of testing personnel and supervision of testing centres.

The proposal provides that, as under the current regime, cars should be checked for the first time no later than four years after the date of first registration, with a second inspection taking place at the latest two years after. The minimum frequency of the subsequent checks, however, should no longer be every two years but every year. This revision is considered necessary as data show that the number of serious accidents due to technical failure increases substantially after five years. Furthermore, vehicles with high mileage, namely 160 000 km on the first regular roadworthiness test, should be subject to annual checks for security reasons. The same intervals should apply also to motorcycles and scooters. The inclusion of this category of vehicles in the inspection scheme is considered necessary, since motorcycle riders are the group of road users with the highest safety risks.

The proposed regulation, presented by the Commission in July 2012, is part of a "roadworthiness package" that also includes proposals for regulations on roadside inspections of commercial vehicles (*12809/12*) and on the registration documents for vehicles (*12803/12*).

OTHER BUSINESS

Ministerial conference on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy

The presidency briefed ministers on the informal ministerial conference on the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy, which took place in Limassol (Cyprus) on 7 and 8 October. The discussions at the conference focused on identifying the marine and maritime activities considered crucial drivers for growth and jobs as well as on the supporting measures to be taken at EU and national level and the future development of the Integrated Maritime Policy. The conference adopted the "Limassol Declaration", which promotes a marine and maritime agenda to support the Europe 2020 strategy (*14792/12*). The adoption of the declaration coincides with the publication of the Commission's communication on the Blue Growth initiative, which formed the main supporting document for the conference (*13908/12*).

Emissions trading in the aviation sector

The Commission reported to ministers on the Union's preparations for the meeting of the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) to be held from 29 October to 16 November in Montreal, where the issue of measures to tackle greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation will be discussed (*15449/12*). The EU considers that a global framework for market-based measures, build on the principle of non-discrimination, is the best way forward. If such a framework can be agreed in the foreseeable future, the EU would be able to use the flexibilities provided for by its emissions trading legislation to take account of global approaches without compromising the goals of its own emissions trading scheme (ETS).

The Commission also updated ministers on recent developments as regards the opposition by non-EU countries to application of the EU's emissions trading scheme (ETS) to their airlines.

Aviation summit on the Single European Sky

The presidency reported to the Council on the aviation summit jointly organised by the Cyprus presidency and the European Commission in Limassol on 11 and 12 October, which discussed the progress made in the implementation of the Single European Sky (SES) and the next steps to be taken (*15010/12*). The debate focused on four issues: the air traffic management performance scheme; the functional airspace blocks; the SESAR (SES air traffic management research) programme, which is the technological pillar of the SES; and an update of the SES regulatory framework to be presented by the Commission. It was stressed at the conference that renewed efforts need to be made in order to complete all components of the SES.

Cabin air incidents in aircraft

The German delegation expressed its concerns about the increasing number of incidents with contaminated cabin air, in particular oil smell, in aircraft (*15117/12*). It considers that this issue should be addressed at EU level and therefore urged the Commission and the European Air Safety Agency (EASA) to take action.

The Commission set out that recent studies had not found evidence to show that such incidents were a real safety problem, but that it would continue to monitor this issue.

Informal meeting of transport and telecommunications ministers

The presidency briefed the Council on the results of the informal meeting of transport and telecommunications ministers which took place in Nicosia on 17 July (*12750/12*). At that meeting, ministers discussed how two central EU policies, the Digital Agenda for Europe and the EU transport policy, can best be integrated. The aim is to fully use the deployment of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) in order to contribute to the safer and more efficient movement of people and goods through the transport networks. The main aspects highlighted were the opening up of public data resources and the development of ITS to address multimodality issues, such as journey planners and integrated ticketing.

The conclusions drawn by the presidency on the results of the informal meeting were also presented to the Vienna ITS World Congress held in October.

World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)

The Austrian delegation briefed the Council on the results of the ministerial round table held in the framework of the 19th ITS World Congress, which was organised in Vienna from 22 to 26 October and discussed the latest trends and policies in Intelligent Transport Systems. The international round table, which took place on the opening day of the congress, focused on the discussion of best practice examples and the needs and challenges for the development and implementation of ITS. It concluded with a joint statement on a common approach for safer, more efficient and environmentally-friendly transport systems and increased political commitment to integrating ITS into national transport policies (*15397/12*).

European Road Safety Day

The presidency and the Commission briefed ministers on the fourth European Road Safety Day organised in Nicosia on 25 July, which aimed at increasing youth awareness on road safety (*14844/12* and *15159/12*). The conference included workshops on the role of education and training, increased enforcement by establishing mutual respect between the police and young people, and risky behaviours such as alcohol or drugs use and speeding.

Transport relations between the EU and Russia

The Commission briefed the Council on the increasing number of problems in the relations with Russia in the aviation, road transport and railway sectors (*14838/12)*. The issues concern in particular the charges for the overflight of Siberia and discrimination in road charges and rail freight rates. The Commission asked member states to act together to address this situation.

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED

TRANSPORT

Single European railway area *

The Council adopted[1] a directive establishing a single European railway area (directive: *44/12*, statements: *14820/12 ADD 1 REV 3*), following the approval by the European Parliament of the compromise reached in the negotiations between the two institutions.

The draft directive is a recast of the three directives of the 2001 "first railway package", which launched a gradual opening-up of the railway sector to competition at European level. The purpose of the recast is to simplify, clarify and modernise the regulatory framework for Europe's railway sector so as to increase competition, strengthen market supervision and improve conditions for investment in the sector.

For more information, see the press release on the agreement reached between the Council and the European Parliament in June (*11543/12*).

TRADE POLICY

Anti-dumping - aluminium radiators - China

The Council adopted a regulation imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty and collecting definitively the provisional duty imposed on imports of aluminium radiators originating in China *(14704/12)*.

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[1] Austria, Germany and Luxemburg voted against, Estonia, Poland and Slovakia abstained.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Rights of persons with disabilities - EU-level framework

The Council set up an EU-level framework to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. This EU-level framework is a complement to the national frameworks and mechanisms and concerns the implementation of the convention in two areas: in EU legislation and policy and in the administrations of the EU institutions, for example in relation to their employees as well as in their interaction with citizens and the public.

ENVIRONMENT

Sulphur content of marine fuels

The Council adopted a directive amending directive 1999/32/EC as regards the sulphur content of marine fuels (PE-CONS 31/12).

Emissions from shipping due to the combustion of marine fuels with a high sulphur content contribute to air pollution in the form of sulphur dioxide and particulate matter, which harm human health and contribute to acidification. The directive aims therefore to reduce these emissions considerably and to provide a high level of protection for human health and the environment by rendering the most recent International Maritime Organisation (IMO) rules on marine fuel standards mandatory in the EU, thereby amending Directive 1999/32/EC.

For more details see press release *15177/12*.

End-of-life vehicles

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption of a Commission directive amending Annex II to Directive 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles (*13992/12*).

The Commission act is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it, unless the European Parliament objects.

EMPLOYMENT

Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Denmark and Germany

The Council adopted two decisions mobilising a total of EUR 12.8 million under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF), providing support for workers made redundant in Denmark and Germany.

EUR 7.5 million is earmarked for dismissed workers of the Danish major wind turbine producer, Vestas Group, which lost an important market share due to increased competition from the lower-cost non-EU producers. Further EUR 5.4 million are made available for workers made redundant in the German printing machinery producer manroland. Like the Vestas Group, manroland has lost a significant market share and suffered a sharp decline in sales due to increased competition from the lower-cost non-EU producers.

APPOINTMENTS

Committee of the Regions

The Council appointed Mr Spyridon SPYRIDON (Greece) *(15140/12)* and Ms Patricia FERGUSON, Mr Paul WATSON and Mr Trevor CUMMINGS (United Kingdom) *(15137/12)* as members of the Committee of the Regions for the remainder of the current term of office, which runs until 25 January 2015.

ACTS ADOPTED BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE

Restrictive measures - Republic of Guinea

By written procedure ending on 26 October, the Council extended the restrictive measures against the Republic of Guinea until 27 October 2013. At the same time, it amended the arms embargo, allowing member states to authorise under certain conditions the export of explosives solely intended for use in mining and infrastructure investments.