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MIF TRANSPORT

Commission Communications on a Future Maritime Transport Policy and on TEN-T

COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON THE EU'S MARITIME TRANSPORT POLICY UNTIL 2018

The MIF Group Transport welcomes the Commission Communication on the strategic goals and recommendations for the EU's maritime transport policy until 2018 COM (2009) 8 final of 21.01.09.

The maritime industries appreciate that the indispensable role of maritime transport services for European and global trade has been recognised in the Communication.

The comprehensive strategy paper touches upon a wide range of basic elements such as: the competitive position of European shipping in global markets, human resources, seamanship and maritime know how, quality shipping as a key competitive advantage, working together on the international scene, exploiting the full potential of short sea shipping and sea transport services for business and citizens in Europe and Europe as a world leader in maritime research and innovation.

In view of the wide range of elements it is evident that the MIF members will make their individual comments and suggestions to this strategy paper. Nevertheless the MIF Group Transport wish to commend Vice President Tajani and the Commission services for this sound and balanced strategy paper the principles of which will now have to be applied in practice.

COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON TEN-T: Policy Review

Investments in ports and hinterland connections remain key.

The Maritime Industries Forum (MIF) Group Transport representing the European Maritime Cluster and/or horizontal business associations appreciates the Commission Consultation on the Review of the TEN-T through the Communication COM (2009) 44 final of 04.02.09.

Though individual MIF members will give their own comments, the Group Transport would like to reiterate some comments and suggestions that have been put forward by the MIF previously.

As expressed in its comments to the Commission consultation document on "Logistics for promoting freight intermodality" of 2006 the maritime industries would like to stress that sufficient and efficient infrastructure has paramount importance in

the efficiency and performance of the transport sector networks, the MIF Group advocates:

- Optimal use and proper upgrading and maintenance of existing infrastructure. Prioritisation of market led TEN-T projects improving cross-border connections and removing bottlenecks.
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The present financial and economic crisis underpins the request for improving the European Transport network even more. In the context of the European Policy of modality the maritime industries wish to reiterate the request for investments in port infrastructure and in more and better hinterland connections. The TEN-T are the right instrument to support this request.

The MIF has always followed a market driven philosophy and continues to do so. Within this philosophy dirigisme and central planning should be avoided. However, it is recognised that there should be a vision behind the TEN-T policy. A pragmatic and practical approach taking into account all relevant factors such as demographic evolutions and density of traffic as well as trade requirements should be followed.

The maritime industries find it difficult to express a preference for one of the three options brought forward in the Commission Communication. Nevertheless it has been noted that a vast majority seems to lean towards the combined approach as brought forward under the third option.

However, the key point to be made in addition to the above policy considerations is that without appropriate financing the TEN-T policy will not deliver the results expected from it. This should be taken into account in the further discussions by the EU Institutions.

The Maritime Industries Forum (MIF) was established in 1992 and represents the different European maritime industry associations of the maritime cluster (labour and enterprises). The main objective of the MIF is to address topics of common interest to the industry sectors with a view to enhancing their competitiveness. More details on www.mif-eu.org.