UNICE

14/05/2002

Dear Member of Parliament,

Further to our letter dated 22 March 2002, concerning driving restrictions, UNICE has noted that various amendments to the draft directive have been tabled that would allow a substantial improvement of the Commission proposal.

UNICE considers that driving restrictions as such are in conflict with the EU principle of the free movement of goods. Moreover, to UNICE's knowledge there are no safety statistics that justify driving bans on week-ends and official holidays. The arguments on which such bans are based are not generally valid and need to be judged against the obvious and considerable costs they impose on companies and consumers alike. UNICE therefore considers these bans should be as limited as possible, and would welcome your support for various of the proposed amendments to article 3, in order of preference:

Amendment 33 in combination with amendment 41 (Vermeer): this amendment would require the Member States to submit an objective and valid justification before introducing any new driving restriction, as well as prior agreement from the European Commission.

Amendment 32 (Van Dam): this amendment limits all driving restrictions to Sundays and official holidays.

Amendment 35 (Helmer): this amendment accepts extending the limits of the lorry bans in the "summer" period (15 June till 15 September), but maintains the limits of the original Commission proposal for the "winter" period (only on Sundays from 16 September to 14 June).

UNICE would also welcome your support for the proposed amendments to Annex I of the draft directive (amendment 14 from the rapporteur, and amendments 55 up till and including amendment 60), which all aim to exempt time-critical transports from the scope of the directive.

Enclosed you will find a detailed list of the amendments that are supported by European business.

I thank you for the attention you may give to our views.

Yours sincerely,

(*Original signed by*)

Philippe de Buck
Secretary General

Annex: UNICE opinion on EP amendments to Commission proposal on driving restrictions

1	+	45	-
2	+	46	-
3	+	47	+
4	-	48	-
5	+	49	+
6	-	50	-
7	+	51	-
8	+	52	-
9	+	53	-
10	+	54	+
11	-	55	+
12	+	56	+
13	+	57	+
14	+	58	+
15	-	59	+
16	-	60	+
17	-	61	+
18	-	62	+
19	+		
20	-		
21	-		
22	-		
23	-		
24	+		
25	-		
26	+		
27	-		
28	+		
29	+		
30	-		
31	+		
32	+		
33	+		
34	-		
35	+		
36	-		
37	-		
38	-		
39	-		
40	+		
41	+		
42	+		
43	-		
44	-		

+ = supported by UNICE
- = not supported by UNICE