Brussels, June 28, 2011

ETF Contribution to EIB Consultation (June 2011)

Any roadmap designed to give European transport the frame for further development and becoming a leading global player must therefore take account of the human and social factors associated with these developments. The European transport sector has the potential to become the ‘beacon’ on the map that leads the way towards a new model for integration, for efficiency, and for environmental sustainability. It is the sector where by its nature public, private and social interests go together hand in hand. Vice-President Siim Kallas has repeatedly stated that his guiding principle is to promote transport services that truly benefit Europeans. The ETF firmly believes Europe has to promote the sharing of the benefits of a better transport system with all transport workers.

ETF supports the policy of a “public service” dimension to civil aviation and regrets that this dimension in the intra-community air transport is continuously reduced rather than enhanced. As Europe is adopting a more diverse multicultural population it brings with it a growing desire to preserve family links back to their country of origin.

The ETF agrees with the Commission (“the so-called White Paper”) that “….it is crucial that European transport continues to develop and invest to maintain its competitive position.” At the same time, the ETF seeks an infrastructure policy and investment that gives priority to more sustainable civil aviation.

An integrated and coordinated airports and air traffic management infrastructure development planned now at European, national and regional levels is essential to build a sustainable civil aviation industry. Such a policy must support economic growth, social cohesion and participation.

Regarding the achievement of an efficient co-modality for freight shipments and attractive for shippers, ETF believe that alternative transport solutions must be found. However, encouraging waterborne and rail modes for long-hauls will have an impact on the current business at aviation level. If this is the case, solutions will have to be agreed between and with the social partners and implemented to avoid social negative consequences.

The ETF agrees that the emergence of multinational and multimodal operators has to be facilitated. Already existing operators should be encouraged as a first step in this process to make efforts and turn from mono-modal into multimodal operators.
We also believe that the EU should stimulate the use of new safe technology on all commercial airplanes, airports and ATM infrastructure.

The success of the Single European Sky will only be possible if employees are fully part of it and are involved and participate in all human related matters. Safety as a prime area of human concern goes beyond what can be achieved through safety regulation. It encompasses:

- the unique capabilities and performance of humans,
- the development and continuous maintenance of safety culture at organisational, operational and individual levels,
- maintaining and improving competencies through training and teamwork practices,
- managing stress and fatigue and maintaining and fostering health at the workplace,
- managing team resources through appropriate working conditions and schedules to name but a few.

The ETF agrees that capacity should be optimised and expanded where needed. Growth needs to be sustainable and not left to a situation where aircraft are burning fuel needlessly in queues awaiting departures or landing positions. Whilst on the ground an aircraft can burn ten times faster, whilst going nowhere, than it does at altitude travelling at between 475-500 knots.

Given the space required for development a fully structured growth programme should be in place to accommodate not just the growth requirements of today but decades into the future. Given the planning barriers that exist and time necessary to ensure additional and replacement capacity in aviation together with intermodal connectivity significant investment is required, not just from the industry but from central governmental coffers.

The EFT believes that as technological developments are realised it will be possible to accommodate not just a doubling but a potential trebling of demand for passenger and freight by 2050 without increasing over all emission levels last seen in 2005. The development of sustainable biofuels is a significant part of this effort.

The ETF therefore welcomes aims that call for low-carbon sustainable fuels in aviation to reach 40 per cent by 2050. Current technological advancement in this area would suggest, however, that a more realistic percentage is between 10 and 20 per cent. Consequently, substantial investment will be needed in order to realise this goal.