



IPTM - Instituto Portuário e dos Transportes Marítimos, I.P.

« Les ports et le transport maritime : Les Régions pour une politique européenne ambitieuse et équilibrée » - CRPM - GIJÓN, 19 Novembre 2007

Projecto de Intervenção

**PORTUGUESE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL - A STRONGER UNION FOR A BETTER WORLD
July - December 2007**

Mr. President of the Principality of Asturias

Lady Mayoress of Gijon

Mr. Chairman of the Port of Gijon

Mr. Claudio Martini, President of CPMR

Mr. Jacques Barrot, Vice – President of the European Commission

Mr. Luis Pascal, Member Representative of the European Parliament,

Ladies and Gentlemen,



Mrs. Ana Vitorino, the Secretary of State for Transport of the Portuguese Government, is unable to attend this meeting, as initially planned and scheduled.

Another event, related to the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council, required her presence.

Allow me to begin on behalf of the Portuguese Secretary of State, to thank you for the invitation, and address a few words to you, in this seminar.

My task has been simplified, after the comprehensive speeches made by the former speakers given that they have already introduced the fundamental issues, concerning European maritime transport and ports policy.

The operational basis for the Portuguese Presidency is the 18-month programme, in force since January 2007,



drawn up with Germany and Slovenia, and endorsed by the General Affairs and External Relations Council.

This Programme outlines the work to be implemented through the various Council formations, in close cooperation with the European Parliament and the Commission.

However, each Presidency reflects the respective country's specificities.

FOR PORTUGAL,

With an extensive coastline, and Europe's largest Exclusive Economic Zone, and a geographical situation in Europe that imposes an objective of greater centrality – for which Atlantic links are vital – the programme for the Presidency of the European Council necessarily reflects a strong commitment and particular approach to maritime transport and port affairs.



As a result,

One of the main goals of the Portuguese Presidency is to contribute to improve the performance of the global transport sector.

To do so, priority has been given to initiatives such as:

- Promoting sustainable mobility;
- Reinforcement of intermodality;
- Strengthening of the internal market;
- Innovation and technological development;
- As well as promotion of safety and security.

In this context, and as already stated, maritime transport is viewed as a priority, given its importance to these goals, and a greater number of initiatives have been foreseen in this second semester.

For maritime transport, **the negotiation of the 3rd package on safety and security** is a priority.



Let me also thank the work of the European Parliament which has already concluded its first reading on all the proposals presented by the Commission.

In the Council, a political agreement has been reached concerning the Proposals for Directives on,

- Vessel Traffic Management,
- Port State Control, and
- Accident Investigation,

The Portuguese Presidency focuses its efforts on discussing:

- Regulation on the Liability of Carriers of Passengers by Sea (Athens Convention)
- As well as the Directive on Classification Societies.



Concerning these **two legislative proposals**, work is being done in order to **achieve political agreement** in the Transport Council, **scheduled for November 30th**.

We will also start the negotiation of the Directive on Civil Liability of Ship-owners and the Flag State Directive.

A central goal of maritime transport policy is to improve conditions of maritime security and safety, search and rescue, at the same time assuring protection of marine environment.

So,

It is vital to improve “maritime surveillance”.

Moreover, the Commission in its communication in October identified maritime surveillance as one of the three tools of greatest importance for integrated policy-making.



In the **last Council of Transports**, held on October 2nd, the Ministers approved a Resolution, which has established **the creation of a Regional European Centre for Long-Range Identification and Tracking of Ships (EU LRIT)**, whose goals include the **mentioned objectives.**

This Centre will be operated by the European Maritime Safety Agency, thus reinforcing the competencies of this body.

At the international level, given the importance for EU maritime transport policy and regulation of reinforcing the relationship between Member States, the Commission and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), in particular for preparation of the General Assembly, the Portuguese Presidency has been promoting the necessary work to ensure a consensus on this matter.



For the development of maritime transport in the framework of an integrated maritime policy, it is necessary to promote sustainable mobility, fostering co-modality and competitiveness between transport modes, and strengthening the internal market.

The Portuguese Presidency, guided by these priorities, promoted **two Ministerial level conferences**, on October 22nd and 23th, in Lisbon, dedicated to:

1) European Maritime Policy
and

2) Motorways of the Sea and Logistics

Let me now briefly summarise the main conclusions resulting from these conferences on transport policy.

All countries applauded the Commission for the adoption of an integrated approach in a set of documents which summarise recent developments and



political options, concerning maritime transport, ports, logistic chains, and which included:

- 1) the **Logistic Action Plan**;
- 2) the **Communication on Ports Policy**;
- 3) the updated **report on the Motorways of the Sea**;
- 4) and launch of the **consultation process regarding a European Maritime space without bureaucratic or administrative borders.**

We also became more aware of the importance of having an integrated vision for maritime transport, bearing in mind its fundamental relationship with other modes of transport, with ports and logistic chains, across Europe.

It is clearer, that both, transport and logistic, play a paramount role in each country's economic and social competitiveness.



The Commission's Logistics Action Plan, was also welcomed, which includes a set of measures and actions to be implemented in the near future.

Emphasis should be placed on the introduction of **Freight Transport Green Corridors in Europe**, pointing to the need to develop maritime transport, in particular:

- 1) Short Sea Shipping,
and
- 2) Motorways of the Sea,

whose success is intrinsically linked to:

- a) procedural harmonization and simplification;
- b) reduction of administrative borders;
and
- c) development of intelligent transport systems.



This means that **ports** must cease to constitute break points in logistic chains, and instead **become key facilitators in the global chain**, including their relationship with the hinterland.

A consensus was reached about regarding **ports as key modal transfer points, vital to the development of Short Sea Shipping, Logistics and Motorways of the Sea.**

In conclusion, a great deal is still foreseen to be done, in order to transform transport and logistics into an increasing driving force of competitiveness and sustainable economic and social development in Europe. Several of these goals are already being achieved.

Finally I would like to thank you once again for the invitation, and wish you a very successful seminar.