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European truck industry urges governments to reverse decline in infrastructure investment and follow an Integrated Approach to safety and environment

Road infrastructure in Europe increasingly fails to meet the requirements of a competitive economy due to a lack of investment. ‘The European Commission takes a significantly more realistic approach towards road transport in its recent review of Europe’s transport policy. Now, the new political framework must be followed by investment decisions’, said Paolo Monferino, chairman of the commercial vehicles board of the Association of European Automobile Manufacturers (ACEA), and CEO of IVECO Group.

Monferino addressed an audience of European legislators, transport associations representatives and truck manufacturers at the third ACEA Commercial Vehicle Event today in Brussels. Other speakers were European Transport Commissioner Jacques Barrot, MEP Etelka Barsi-Pataky, rapporteur of the mid-term review of the White paper on transport policy, and representatives of the European Union Road Federation, the European Investment Bank, the current Finish and up-coming German EU presidency.

‘‘Mobility is an important source of economic growth, employment and cultural activity. Europe needs better port, airport and road networks to safeguard prosperity’’, said Monferino. ‘‘Demand for and revenue of road transport have grown but investment in road transport infrastructure has declined to dangerously low levels. This has contributed to bottlenecks and increased congestion which is damaging to mobility, road safety and the environment.’’

Commissioner Barrot emphasised the ‘‘large value’’ of CARS 21, the EU High-level Group that addressed last year the importance of the automotive industry’s competitiveness whilst continuing to improve safety and environmental conditions. CARS 21 recommended an Integrated Approach to safety and reducing CO2 emissions from cars. Barrot stressed his believe in such an approach as the preferred means of achieving progress, together with the industry and other stakeholders, in the field of safety and environment.

ACEA commercial vehicle board chairman Monferino presented to Commissioner Barrot the first edition of two new brochures. They highlight the importance of the commercial vehicle industry for the EU and give examples of the many contributions from truck manufacturers to increased road safety, fuel efficiency and cleaner air. The brochures can be found on www.acea.be.

ACEA represents the European automobile industry, including the major truck manufacturers DaimlerChrysler, DAF, Iveco, MAN, Scania, Volkswagen and Volvo.

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