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European Transport Workers' Federation
Fédération Européenne des Travailleurs des Transports
Europäische Transportarbeiter-Föderation
Federación Europea de los Trabajadores del Transporte

Ms Adina-Ioana Vălean
Commissioner for Transport
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 24 March 2020

Dear Commissioner,

Since our last letter, the COVID-19 keeps spreading across Europe, and so does the crisis that it is causing. In the meantime, transport workers keep moving cargo and passengers across Europe. They do this without always receiving the right instructions, without the masks and gloves they need for protection. Now more than ever, our unions are fighting every day to make sure that they are treated with respect. We won't stop repeating that this crisis is only giving more visibility to the structural problems that transport has and to the way its workers are treated.

Transport workers do not want to be called heroes. They want to be treated with respect and dignity. And we, the unions that represent them, want to make sure that this crisis is not used to drive down their working and living conditions.

We wrote you several letters over the last two weeks. None of them were answered. We have asked for a short meeting, again, no answer. We think that treating transport workers with respect also means responding to the appeals sent by the organisation that represents them at European level.

As we have warned before, the transport industry is in danger, and we need concrete action to protect the transport workers who are on the frontline and who will bear these consequences.

Measures to help workers to survive this crisis must be taken. It seems, at the moment, that a lot of efforts are focussed on the free flow of goods, but that nothing is being done to protect those that ensure this.

In this vein, we would like to share our views on yesterday's communication on practical guidance to ensure a continuous flow of goods across the EU via green lanes.

Road transport

In road transport, the ETF has repeatedly brought concrete measures to the table and shared them with you. We are disappointed to see that your communication does not take these measures into consideration. What's more, the communication goes against the efforts of the Member States to contain the pandemic and address its impacts. There is also no regard for the safety of drivers who are keeping Europe moving and are key in fighting off this pandemic. Instead, your proposals would have



President Frank Moreels

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them stuck in their vehicles for 30 days as you recommend in-vehicle sleeping and eating as well as give the green light to the transportation of all goods. Now more than ever, controls should be focused on compliance with driving and rest time rules. You can read our views on what needs to be done [here](#).

Aviation

In aviation, while we were expecting concrete measures, there is hardly anything relevant to the industry included in the communication. Recommendations on the safety of transport workers in Annex 2 are not sufficient, as they only cover freight transport by road. A significant amount of critical supplies is transported by air cargo, and recommendations on the protection of the concerned aviation workers are urgently needed. Similarly, insufficient protection has been put in place for front line aviation workers in passenger services both on the ground and in the air. Finally, Annex 3 contains some incorrect wording – there is no such thing as “a public transport aircraft crew”. It should read “aircrew involved in commercial air transport”.

In addition to our reflections on the communication, we’d like to bring to your attention the continuous developments in civil aviation. The situation is dire, and there is a clear need for a long-term vision. You can read our views on what this needs to entail [here](#).

Keeping all of this in mind, we think that it is of the utmost importance that we have a video conference to discuss the above. It is time to act: this is the time to help transport workers keep the EU moving!

Yours Sincerely,



Livia Spera
ETF Acting General Secretary



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