

CER welcomes the Council's renewed Sustainable Development Strategy

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The Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies welcomes the European Council's clear commitment to a sustainable transport system in Europe. In its decision on a renewed Sustainable Development Strategy today in Brussels, the Council confirmed that Member States as well as the EU are to take appropriate measures to effect a modal shift from road to rail and to focus on alternatives to road transport for freight and passengers. The Council underlines the principle of "getting the prices right": according to today's strategy decision, prices must reflect the real economic, social and environmental costs of products and services.

Johannes Ludewig, Executive Director of CER, said: "We agree with the Council on the potential impact of internalising these external costs in the prices, both on economic growth and on the environment." Therefore CER considers the deadline of 2008 for the Commission to submit a model for the assessment of these external costs as being too late. "The facts and all possible models are well-known. There is no excuse to wait another two years with the implementation of a political tool, which was agreed upon already in the 2001 Transport White Paper."

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