

**Open Conference of Fighting Transport Unions - London, 31 January 2011:
*Future Public Transport - Nationalisation not Privatisation***

STATEMENT AGREED BY:

Open Conference of Fighting Transport Unions

Future Public Transport - Nationalisation not Privatisation

London, January 31 2011

We congratulate participants at this conference for contributing to the discussion between organised transport workers to build resistance to European Union liberalisation measures.

EU transport policies promoting **privatisation, fragmentation, social dumping, outsourcing and attacks on collective employment conditions** are designed to increase profitability at the expense of labour. The European Commission now governs public sector workers' pay bargaining in Ireland and Greece. As the global capitalist crisis and the crisis of European banks and the 'Euro' intensifies other workers will suffer similar attacks on their fundamental democratic rights. European Court of Justice decisions attack trade union rights and freedoms and promote the rights of capital and business in the EU, while austerity measures of national governments and EU institutions target the social gains of previous generations.

We send **solidarity greetings** to all trade unionists fighting privatisation and other effects of liberalisation and defending public transport as a nationalised, essential public service.

We call on participants at today's conference and those who could not attend to continue to build and extend dialogue and cooperation between fighting transport unions, to improve analysis and exchange of information and to coordinate joint initiatives and activities.

The latest consequences of EU liberalisation for public transport workers include:

1. **A renewed attack in 2011 on nationalised railway systems through the European Commission's 'recast' 1st Rail Package to enforce privatisation and fragmentation of transport planning, investment and services;**
2. **New attacks on publicly owned railways through the Commission's 4th Rail Package, to enforce competition in domestic passenger train services, leading to widespread attacks on occupational and public safety, pay, conditions, pensions, trade union organisation and collective bargaining;**
3. **Continued catastrophic decline in maritime employment conditions and lifeline ferry services as a result of EU liberalisation of 'cabotage', EU Treaties governing 'freedom of establishment' and continuing disastrous consequences from 'flags of convenience';**
4. **Enforced privatisation of urban transport networks under the EU Regulation (2007) on public service obligations in local public transport by road and rail;**
5. **Abandonment of 'socialised transport' in favour of services run in the interests of corporate monopoly capital, where profit becomes the only**

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criteria and transport policy is designed solely to promote 'Euro companies' competing in global markets;

6. More expensive, less efficient public transport for citizens and consumers, where greed, the domination of financial interests and profit are allowed to destroy jobs, public transport services and communities.

We therefore condemn:

- Those EU liberalisation directives, including the various railway packages and rules on state aid, which are increasingly leading to the privatisation of Europe's railways and leading to less democratic accountability and the growth of corporate transport monopolies;
- Those governments, EU and other institutions, which increasingly demand privatisation, liberalisation and fragmentation of transport as a condition of investment.

We believe that, unless employers are effectively challenged by trade unions fighting for nationalized, publicly accountable transport systems, attacks on workers through privatisation and social dumping will be assisted by recent judgments in the European Court of Justice, which represent a fundamental attack on collective bargaining and the right to strike.

We therefore call for a European-wide demonstration by trade unions representing transport workers before the end of 2011. The purpose of the demonstration will be to:

- Protest against EU institutions that demand privatisation and liberalisation of rail and ferry services;
- Argue for high-quality, integrated, publicly owned public transport that puts people before profit;
- Demand an end to social dumping and call for defence of workers' and trade union rights and national collective bargaining.

To achieve this end we agree to:

- Coordinate our activities where possible and work together to maximise participation by transport workers' trade unions and transport users' associations in coordinating national opposition to EU transport liberalisation policies, including developing a multilingual website through www.rail4all.org/ European Coalition Against Railway Privatisation;
- Establish a Conference Coordinating Committee to help plan future initiatives and to create the basis for united, coordinated national industrial action by all fighting unions across the transport sector and to integrate information and analysis of the true cost of privatisation and successful experiences of renationalisation.

Agreed by participants at the Open Conference of Fighting Transport Unions organised by RMT (Britain) on '*Future Public Transport - Nationalisation not Privatisation*' held at SOAS in London, January 31 2011

