

The Prague Initiative

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the last three months we have been struggling in Prague to persuade the government to refuse the requirement of the Minister of Health concerning the introduction of the hygienic air traffic noise limits of 55 dB during the day and 45 dB at night. This would affect also French airplanes and French visitors of Prague that would have to land in Munich or Vienna.

The French Ministries of Transport, Health and Environment as well as a lot of state, municipal and private organizations were of a great help for us during the negotiations about the hygienic noise limits in the Czech Republic. In this context I also have to mention the representatives of other European Countries such as Greece, Spain or Holland and Mr. Delcampe from the CAFE TEAM of the European Commission, who provided us with the update on the account of the situation of noise limits in those countries that have already started to fulfill their obligations.

In 2004 CIDB showed the National Noise Observatory of the Czech Republic the way how to join and integrate powers of particular involved bodies into the field of noise combating in order to facilitate the improvements regarding citizens' health.

In February 2006 the Paris City Hall granted Prague an anti-noise measures programme only one day after it was agreed upon.

France also created the NMPB Route 96, which is used for a calculation of more than 80% of the total noise impact on the European population.

Czech National Railways has asked the National Noise Observatory for help with the creation of the national calculation methodology for the railway traffic noise – of course, with the use of the Dutch calculation methodology application, as recommended in the Directive 2002/49/EC - as well as to assist in the search for the sources of co-financing railway anti-noise measures from the programme of European Commission.

Czech cities and Regional Authorities cooperate with us especially in the fields of funds facilitation for anti-noise measures, during the preparation of new developing territories or when planning changes in the transport communication system supporting the improvement of population's health.

In the Czech Republic, we have prepared an Evaluation programme for Community Noise Impact on the population which we offer to be listed among the common programmes of EU members.

All this should be dealt with jointly and for the whole Europe. That is why I think it is necessary to create European Association of National Anti-Noise Initiatives and to start under the French leadership the setting and harmonizing of priorities concerning the fulfillment of the Directive 2002/49/EC.

The EU political bodies ask us to prepare the environment noise combatting plans until 18th July 2008. We would like to hear how they are prepared to help countries aiming towards to the fulfillment of the Directive 2002/49/EC in the realization of set goals especially with the help of the financial support.

Together, we should create an advisory body that would be recommending the European Commission how to realize the programme to ensure its highest efficiency. We are all aware of the gap between the legislation and real life – and this space should be filled by us.

We should also aim to help the new member states such as Poland or Estonia and candidate countries such as Romania.

To achieve the goal, I propose to organize a conference at the end of September in Prague that should be the foundation stone for the coordinated fight against the health threatening noise. This conference should produce a memorandum appealing to the EU Commissioner of Environment for a closer cooperation in this valuable initiative for almost half a billion of European population. Thank you for your attention and I look forward to seeing you in Prague.

Paris, 4th April 2006



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