

# European Parliament

Strasbourg, 18 May 2010

10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Room Low R3.1.

## **The speech pronounced at the delivery of the Charter of Hendaye to MEPs by a delegate of the Italian delegation of the NO TAV movement**

---

Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Parliament, Mr. European Commission representative, dear friends,

The French delegate clearly set out before me the path that has led dozens of associations and movements of three European countries to sign the Charter of Hendaye, while we know that other associations that act in other member states have already requested to sign this struggle's declaration.

I am pleased to announce that in the Italian No TAV delegation are present - a demonstration of the fruitful relationship that is established between voters and elected officials in this twenty-year struggle to high-speed train - many majority and opposition administrators of the Susa Valley and the Piedmont Region.

One of their representatives will speak after me.

In North Western Italy we've been struggling for over 20 years against the high speed / capacity railway line and today we reiterate the European Parliament that the new Lyon-Turin railway line is an unnecessary and destructive infrastructure.

Ours is not a isolated and a hasty opinion but is widely shared by the studies produced by renowned economists.

But, as you see in the images that run on the screen, the No TAV movement was again in early 2010 subject to harsh repression during a geologic coring campaign.

The Susa and Sangone Valleys and the city of Turin has been militarized to enable the conduct of disproportionate costs drills: we estimate that the safety of the 91 military planned sites is appraisable between 56 and 105 million €, i.e. between 20 and 35 times the cost of the drills themselves.

We believe that such a military defence of construction yards would be appropriate only in case of war.

We demand that the police is deployed to protect citizens and not to prevent free and democratic non-violent acts.

Our democratic opposition is demonstrated by our own presence in the European Parliament to which we have already addressed between 2004 and 2008 six NO TAV petitions, but whose examination by the Committee on Petitions has not yet been completed.

We recall that in September 2007 we have delivered 32,000 No TAV signatures in the European Parliament a copy of which is on this table.

We consider unacceptable the response delay of the Committee on Petitions and we hope that our coming here in Strasbourg will help to enhance the listening to citizens by the European institutions.

We demand free and easy access to documentation on the activities of all committees, with particular attention to funding Member States by the EIB and the EU.

The dossiers we are presenting today at the European Parliament and the media, together with relentless and massive public demonstrations of dissent that have been continuing for years, are evidence of strong social opposition which is suppressed and obscured in order to weaken its action.

We wish to report the bankruptcy procedure of consultation with people to build the railway line between Lyon and Turin by Italian governments through the Observatory, which is a true anaesthetic of the democracy.

This organization has chosen complacent players to credit the European Commission and the public a non-existent unanimous consent to construction of the railway line between Lyon and Turin.

For years we were seeking access to documents passed between the Observatory and local authorities, the denial of this right, despite a 2008 ruling of the Administrative Court, is testimony of the arrogant behaviour of that organism.

Yesterday, we warned the Observatory pro tempore chairman by an act of court.

This shows that the Observatory is a table where it is reproduced inequalities through an artificial equality and where participation is mystified, is an institution that has been transformed from a body assessing the appropriateness and feasibility of the new railway to the place of his design.

We are Italian citizens who are opposed to high-speed lines of the Priority Project No 6 from the Susa Valley to Friuli, the Priority Project No 1 from Berlin to Palermo and the Project of the third crossing point between Liguria and Piedmont, are asking the European Commission and the European Parliament as driving force of the transport policies in the European Union start a reflexion on the nonsense and unnecessary character of these great infrastructures and a major revision of the strategy of the EU as regards European transports

But at the same time we ask the Governments of France, Italy and Spain stop immediately the construction work and projects of HSR to undertake a real uniform public debate on a European scale on the model of transport, territorial planning and organisation of our society that underlie this unrestrained development of HSR lines.

In this regard we would like to affirm our desire to have recourse to the Aarhus Convention of 1998 which gives individuals and groups the right to receive environmental information held by public authorities, the right to participate in decision-making in the field, and finally the right to review of procedures and access to justice.

In conclusion, with reference to the severe financial and economic crisis that is besieging Europe adopted yesterday by the ECB President Mr. Jean-Claude Trichet "*the most difficult situation since World War II if not first*" - we say that these monumental high-speed infrastructures are THE FACTORY OF DEBT: not the solution to the crisis but the aggravation of the problems that have produced it on us and the future generations.

We thank you for your attention, we are now, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Parliament and Mr. European Commission representative, to listen to you.