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Choose ESC, Choose Life!

One year event of the ChooseESC! Campaign

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Mr. Chairman, Dear Members of the European Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to this one-year after event of the ChooseESC! campaign. Many of you were present at the launch event in Rome in May last year, but I am very pleased to see also many new faces today.

The ChooseESC! campaign is about saving lives. Nothing can express this better than the motto of the campaign: ESC –three letters that can save your life!

ESC, the Electronic Stability Control is one of the most effective safety systems available. It is affordable, it works, and it can save up to 4000 lives per year in Europe. ESC has been called the most effective safety system after the safety belt, and not without reason. The target of the European Commission is to have ESC in every car in Europe. To achieve this, we need a range of measures, including the ChooseESC! campaign and type approval regulation.

David Ward, the President of eSafetyAware! platform which is running the ChooseESC! campaign, and Michiel van Ratingen, EuroNCAP Secretary General will introduce to you shortly the latest achievements of the ChooseESC! campaign. They will also give you a full picture of the deployment of ESC in Europe. Let me just say that I have followed very closely the progress of the campaign to which the Commission is contributing. I have been

very pleased with the progress, especially the involvement of the automotive clubs which are an important channel towards the motorist.

I am also pleased about the developments on the international front. There is now international exchange of best practise, and I hope that ChooseESC! can show a good example to other parts of the world and thus also contribute to saving lives outside Europe.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

User Awareness is one of the three pillars of the Commission's Intelligent Car Initiative which aims at safer, cleaner and smarter mobility in Europe.

Many of you were present here in the Autoworld at the launch event of the Intelligent Car, just over two years ago.

In these two years, we have made considerable progress in the three pillars of the Intelligent Car. First of all we have advanced with **eCall**, the pan-European in-vehicle emergency call:

- 14 Member States and 3 associated states have now signed the eCall Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). A large number of other stakeholders have signed as well.
- We have finalised negotiations with the automotive industry on the voluntary introduction of the eCall device in all new vehicles from 2010 onwards.

- We have initiated discussions with the stakeholders on the establishment of an eCall deployment platform.
- On 19 June we achieved another key milestone: the European Parliament adopted almost unanimously with 417 votes in favour the report of Ms. Zita Gurmai on the Intelligent Car Initiative. The Parliament gave very strong support to eCall, demanding that this life-saving technology is made available as soon as possible, and requested the Member States to act.
- We are launching an Impact Assessment study and a large-scale Field Operational Test which will collect new evidence on the benefits of eCall in a number of European countries.

In addition to eCall I want to highlight the progress made in two other areas of the Intelligent Car Initiative.

A Working Group on **cleaner vehicles** was established two years ago. It is co-chaired by ACEA and ERTICO and is soon ready to deliver its final report. It will highlight five priority domains where substantial gains in energy efficiency in transport can be achieved with the use of ICTs.

In the area of **smarter vehicles**, we are concentrating on two important issues: The safe use of nomadic devices in cars, and co-operative systems where we are supporting research and development on a common pan-European architecture, and then moving towards large-scale Field Operational Tests.

But I don't want to hide from you the fact that we have not solved all problems.

The world is very different now than it was two years ago. The importance of the need to tackle climate change and reduce CO2 emission is now accepted by everybody, although there may not be a consensus on what measures this requires. And energy costs are soaring: the price of oil has doubled in two years.

These changes present a huge challenge to policy makers at EU and national levels. They cannot be ignored by the transportation and automotive sectors as they have a profound and long-standing impact on everything we do.

Economic downturn and increasing fuel prices can help us to achieve the environmental goals: Energy consumption both in the U.S. and Europe is decreasing. In the OECD countries the decline from 2006 to 2007 was 390.000 barrels a day, the sharpest decline in 20 years. Consumer attitudes are changing fast especially in the U.S.

But what will happen in Europe: What will be the impact of economic downturn and increasing fuel prices on our car fleet and road safety? There is already evidence that people are either keeping their vehicles longer, or buying the cheapest new models available. Both of these developments are very alarming from the safety perspective. Affordability becomes more and more important: We must make sure that the consumers can buy safe and clean cars.

Furthermore, we are not doing very well regarding the target of halving the number of road fatalities by 2010. The preliminary data from 2007 shows that the reduction in 2006 was only 1%. Many

Member States have even experienced considerable escalation of fatalities.

This motivates me to continue my fight to get the new technologies on the road. With ESC and eCall we can save many thousands of lives per year. And remember one of our other success stories: we finally managed to get the allocation of spectrum for Short-Range Radar at 24 GHz. Daimler is one of the early adopters of this new technology. According to its analysis on real accident data it appears that 20% of rear-end crashes can be avoided using this technology, and on motorways even more: 36%. There are more systems in the pipeline, developed with the support of EU's research programme: Lane Departure Warning Systems and Brake Assist Systems, for example. These systems work, and we need to continue our collaboration to get them to the users.

I would now like to highlight the three issues which form the cornerstones of the Intelligent Car Strategy:

1. Industry must be able to innovate.

We need to guarantee the conditions for industry to innovate, in order to offer the consumers better and more affordable products. We need to continue and increase funding to this sector through the Research Programme. Co-operative Systems have a great potential to improve both safety and efficiency, and we need to continue research in this area, based on the common pan-European architecture.

In "clean vehicle" research, we have started international collaboration with Japan and USA to make comparative data on the impact of ICTs in reducing CO2 in road transport possible.

Based on the recommendations of the eSafety Forum, I will also propose early next year a set of new measures on energy efficiency in transport, as a part of a more general "ICT for energy efficiency" strategy.

2. Industry needs a strong and consistent lead from policy makers.

I have always promoted voluntary approach as a means of getting new technology to the consumers. But sometimes when the progress is sluggish or when we want to reach full penetration of safety critical technologies, we need to take stronger measures.

The Commission has just made a proposal for mandating a number of technologies, including ESC for all vehicles and Advanced Emergency Braking and Lane Departure Warning Systems for large vehicles. These proposals are based on the Global Technical Regulations and test methods developed under the United Nation's ECE framework.

In the case of ESC, this means that soon all cars will have ESC, which would never have happened without regulation. This is in line with the European Parliament discussion last week, which stressed very strongly that ESC be made available in all vehicles.

In the case of eCall we are of course also looking into possible regulation. We have, however, conducted negotiations with

automotive industry on the voluntary approach in a very constructive atmosphere. We are preparing a report to the Council and the European Parliament on this.

3. Joint efforts on user awareness.

Last but not least, we need to continue with the User Awareness actions. We need campaigns like ChooseESC! and Intelligent Car events, as the one in Versailles last year, which have proven very successful. Internet is a powerful tool, as the very popular Intelligent Car quiz demonstrated.

The topic of the next campaign of eSafetyAware! will be decided by its members. There is no lack of candidate technologies, for example the lane departure warning system, collision warning/emergency braking systems, etc.

I cannot offer today an answer to this complicated issue, but I can promise that we are willing to find an optimised solution together with you.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that by working together we can make the best possible use of Information and Communications Technologies in the transport sector. I have highlighted some of my thinking in this area, and I look forward to sharing my vision for our future mobility and a strategy to turn challenges to opportunities. I am sure that by acting together we can achieve safer, cleaner and smarter mobility in Europe. To Choose eSafety is to choose life!

Thank you for your attention.