

Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the Inland Transport Security Discussion Forum on Secure Parking Areas.

Improving parking areas for lorries along our roads and motorways seems self-evident. Considering driving times in increasingly dense traffic in spite of the crisis and in an economic climate imposing more and more restrictions, it seems logical that drivers of heavy goods vehicles be allowed to make use of the rest times that are imposed on them; in an environment offering a certain amount of comfort. As a result of the number of attacks on drivers of heavy goods vehicles, this comfort implies that they also have secure parking areas at their disposal.

Goods transported by road, the value of which increases year after year, thanks in particular to the shrinking size of high value technological goods, are being coveted by criminal activities. The economic interests at play require that goods be protected during the driver's rest periods.

It seems therefore logical that parking areas follow the same trends that we are seeing for houses, offices, factories or warehouses, for whom security measures are increasing year upon year.

This evolution cannot happen, however, without certain difficulties. If I take the example of Belgium, which is the most familiar to me, we have to admit that plans are having difficulty coming to fruition. There was only one secure parking area built on the initiative of the public authorities, yet to be completed I might add, that opened at the end of 2012; and it was rapidly the subject of criticisms by transport unions, who considered it to be too expensive, with insufficient facilities and not enough security.

I don't think this problem is unique to Belgium. In reality, the public as well as private sector encounters various problems when it comes to setting up new secure parking areas along the road network. We need to find new available areas or modify the existing concessions. The administrative steps are numerous for investments which do not always prove to be profitable. What are the expectations of clients in terms of security and comfort? It would seem obvious that the security of a site is not a sufficient single argument to attract clients. The quality of the facilities will be a decisive factor.

How to guarantee this quality? It seems that we have reached a consensus at an international level on the classification of parking areas into different categories in terms of comfort as well as security. The best means of setting standards or quality criteria are still to be determined. How to evaluate the facilities of parking areas and how to certify them? What role should the sector itself or external auditors play in this process?

The accessibility of secure parking areas is another issue. They should ideally be situated along roads or motorways or close to them and be easily accessible for heavy goods vehicles. Sufficient road signs to attract potential clients to these secure parking areas is also a key element, for the commercial appeal as well as for road safety.

As our Forum is focused on security, we should also be thinking about the method to be used in achieving this objective, namely the security of drivers and the goods transported. Is it preferable to turn to an armed guard or surveillance cameras? When we talk about secure parking areas, we tend to think in terms of walls, fences, electrification. Is this medieval concept of a "citadel" the only efficient means or can new technologies also

produce equally efficient results in a more relaxed environment. Specialists from the police force, industry and technologies of the future can certainly enlighten us on this subject.

All the speakers present at this Discussion Forum are actors in different areas of the secure parking sector. They will examine this complex subject from different angles and I have no doubt that in their talks and the discussions that follow, the various questions that I have raised will be touched upon and debated.

I hope that these debates will be enriching for all concerned. I wish you a fruitful Discussion Forum and I will now hand over to our host, Eva Molnar, Director of the Transport Division at the UN Economic Commission for Europe.