



## EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Commission to Bulgaria

Head of Delegation

Sofia, 16 November 2001

23 700 / P15.7.4.

**Subject:** PHARE CBC Programme, Bulgaria/Greece, Project No BG 9803-03-01 E79 Motorway Feasibility Study  
Design alternatives – Kresna Gorge

**Reference:** Your Letter of 7 October 2001 to Mr. Jacques Wunenburger

Dear Madam and Sirs,

We refer to your letter dated 07<sup>th</sup> October addressed to Mr Wunenburger

In the first instance we would refer you to the letter from Commissioner Ms. Margot Wallstrom referenced AB/gcA(01)11217D(01)130678 dated 13<sup>th</sup> September, which clearly details the Commission position on the subject of the proposed Struma Motorway, and the section through Kresna Gorge in particular. We confirm that the Delegation fully supports this position.

As you are aware the Commission is not responsible for the decision making process within the Republic of Bulgaria, this is the responsibility of the relevant government authorities. However, and as we have stated on more than one occasion, we expect these authorities to follow scrupulously the relevant legislation currently in force concerning Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). In addition, we have also stated that we would use our best efforts to ensure that the Bulgarian authorities take due cognisance of Community legislation in their assessment procedures. You may rest assured that no Community funding will be forthcoming for a project that has not been fully approved according to current legislation. Additionally, we have requested the relevant Ministry to organise a meeting with invitations to all interested parties so that everyone may be fully informed on the progress of the project and that specific areas of concern can be discussed.

We note from your letter that you make several subjective statements. In this regard we would suggest that you provide to the relevant Bulgarian authorities all your substantiative data so that they may investigate accordingly. This will indeed strengthen your submission and increase the understanding of the magnitude of the concerns you raise. In addition we trust that you have availed yourself of the opportunities to attend the several recent public consultation meetings in respect of Lulyn and Struma Motorways in order to be fully involved in the process. We understand that the Road Executive Agency, as the body responsible for the national road network, was represented at these meetings in order to explain in detail to the public the technical reasons for their selected and unselected alignments.

### As per Distribution List

## Disribution List

- 1 Mr. Andrey Kovatchev, *Balkani Wildlife Society*
- 2 Mr. Petko Kovatchev, *Centre for Environmental Information and Education*
- 3 Mr. Dimiter Vassilev, *ECO-CLUB 2000*
- 4 Ms. Anelia Stefanova, *Za Zemiata*

We further note that the spreadsheet attached to your letter (entitled Comparison of proposed alternatives for a motorway road bed through the region of Kresna Corine Site) does not include any cost estimate comparisons for the alternatives detailed. As you are aware when evaluating the overall feasibility of the proposed construction project many factors have to be taken into consideration. And we suggest that you, if you have any such details, attach a cost estimate to each of the alignments you propose.

Consequently, we urge you to continue to liaise with the relevant Bulgarian authorities and to provide them with all relevant data that you think will be of benefit to them and to the evaluation of the project. Similarly, we reiterate that the Commission will continue to attempt to ensure that all projects are approved according to the legislation prior to advancing funding for them.

We trust that we have allayed your concerns, and look forward to your continued co-operation with the Bulgarian authorities to bring this exciting and nationally beneficial project to successful fruition.

Yours faithfully,



Dimitris Kourkoulas

**Copy:**

Mr. Colin Walker, DG Regio  
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