



Presentation

Louis Shakinovsky

Chairman of ECAR

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am Louis Shakinovsky. On behalf of ECAR and as Chairman of ECAR I welcome you to our lunch debate. It is pleasing to note that you have accepted our invitation in great numbers. I take this as a token that you and the public at large share our view that the issue we are going to debate is one of high political, legal, economic and social importance.

Let me briefly introduce ECAR. ECAR is an alliance of 10 independent EU organisations with subdivisions in the Member States. They represent vehicle parts producers, parts distributors, independent repairers, a large cross-section of small and medium-sized enterprises (with an *EU-based* workforce of more than 1 million people), the European motor insurance industry as well as the 260 million motorist consumers in the Community.

ECAR has accompanied the Community's design legislation from its very beginning in 1993. We take pride in having contributed to investigating the factual background of the spare parts issue and to developing a coherent and convincing approach to its solution. Our objective is not to ask the EU legislator for any kind of protection or for any kind of subsidies. What we ask for is simply to have free competition for everybody in the huge EU market for vehicle spare parts and not a monopoly for the few.

The Commission's proposal to amend the design law Community-wide by a "Repairs Clause" would achieve exactly this. Although the proposal meets with broad approval in public and politics the legislative process has ground to a halt. *Why* this is so and *how* a new momentum can be created is to be discussed - beginning with the expert speakers who we are privileged to have with us.

I welcome from the European Parliament – in the order of their presentation - :

- Professor Medina who is involved in this dossier since 1993 and is at this stage rapporteur in IMCO and shadow rapporteur in JURI;
- Ms. Diana Wallis, of the Liberals' group, and
- Ms. Monica Frassoni, Co-President of the group of Greens.

And from the European Commission

- Mr. Erik Nooteboom, Head of Unit, Industrial Property Section in DG "Market", who shoulders the responsibility for this dossier for many many years.

Subsequently to the statements of these speakers some ECAR stakeholders will comment on the issue. Following that we are available for answering questions and entering into a debate with you.

The floor is now yours, Professor Medina!