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## Media Release

From the valley that resists and never surrenders, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012

# SECRET AGREEMENT UNVEILED BETWEEN ITALY AND FRANCE FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION TO COUGH UP € 3.3 BILLION

**THE TEXT OF THE JANUARY 30, 2012, ROME AGREEMENT  
ON THE TURIN-LYON PROJECT GOES PUBLIC  
THANKS TO THE NO TAV MOVEMENT**

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On January 30, 2012, the Franco-Italian agreement to kick off the new Turin-Lyon project appeared on the table of the Italian Ministry of Infrastructure in Rome, and was quickly ratified by French Transport Minister Thierry Mariani, and Italian Vice-Minister for Infrastructure Mario Ciaccia, but was lost sight of soon after.

The offices of the Italian Ministry were faced with numerous phone calls from MEP's who wanted to have a copy of the agreement because media did not report any details. The response of the Roman office was invariably: "We do not know where it was filed, we are sorry."

But as in fables, this document carefully concealed in Rome, appeared suddenly by magical dislocation on a table in Piedmont, and the No TAV movement has made it public. We now wait for the Italian Ministry to publish the Agreement and Annexes mentioned, but still not received, on the official website.

It is a 24-page document with 28 articles<sup>[1]</sup> prepared in order to convince the European Commission that Italy and France have agreed to implement the new Turin-Lyon project. We call to mind the fact that this agreement must first be ratified by the national parliaments.

According to the expectations of the two states, Europe will have to pay 40% of a project that would cost € 8.5 billion<sup>[2]</sup> (but in the French version the same initiative would cost € 8.2 billion<sup>[3]</sup>).

As confirmed by the four MEPs<sup>[4]</sup> that inspected the "non-site" of La Maddalena on Friday, February 10th, there is no certainty that the European Union will support funding 40% of this **Large Useless Project** for several reasons: the most important being the huge delays that have already accumulated, to date, in the project design

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[1] Rome Agreement of 30 January 2012: <http://www.notavorino.org/documenti-02/testo-acc-ita-fra-30-1-12.pdf>

[2] Italian Media Release: <http://www.notavorino.org/documenti-02/ita-mit-su-acc-30-1-12.pdf>

Media Release Ministre Ciaccia: <http://www.notavorino.org/documenti-02/ita-vice-min-ciaccia-su-acc-30-1-12.pdf>

[3] French Media Release: <http://www.notavorino.org/documenti-02/fr-min-mariani-su-acc-30-1-12.pdf>

[4] Sonia Alfano, Eva Lichtenberger, Gianni Vattimo, Sabine Wils

and geological surveys, **the lack of certainty about Italy's ability to fully fund the project** and, last but not least, the lack of a cost-benefit ratio that reassures financial institutions (including the European Investment Bank - EIB) that could help finance Italy and France.

The co-decision process taking place in Brussels between the European Commission and European Parliament to approve a new regulation on non-repayable financing of the TEN-T initiative will not terminate - if there are no delays - before 2013, and will come into effect in 2014.

All these uncertainties are confirmed by art. 1, paragraph 3, the main clause of this agreement, which refers to the Agreement of Turin in 2001 <sup>[5]</sup>:

**This Agreement does not constitute an additional protocol under Article 4** of the Agreement signed between the French and Italian Governments on January 29, 2001. **In particular, it does not deal with the start of definitive work on the parts of Italy and France**, which will require approval in an additional separate protocol, assuming in particular the definitive participation of the European Union in the project.

**This clause has been deliberately hidden** in the media releases of Italian and French Ministries, which instead emphasized the agreement stating that: "The new treaty permanently unlocks the construction work that by the end of the year should see the opening of the sites for the mega-base tunnel "and even" the Turin-Lyon, after many vicissitudes, and mishaps that have fuelled the scepticism that it could never be realized, can become one of the most important laboratories in the new approach to the implementation of the work with ... the aim to contain costs and avoid inflating the project."

**We hope that the media will now give this clause the attention it deserves.**

There is a significant possibility that the European Union could decide not to give European public money for this **Large Useless Project**.

In this case Italy, on its part could abandon the project, or disburse close to € 4.92 billion for the construction of the trans-alpine portion of the Turin – Lyon, instead of the € 2.7 billion indicated (which France actually calculated at € 3.01 billion), excluding of course future cost increases, which are the praxis in these projects.

**The signing of this agreement shows that Italy and France are collaborating to ensure the European Union shells out billions of euros in a Large Useless Project.**

**The No TAV movement has denounced this attempt which, under the guise of an apparent diplomatic negotiation to advance railway communications, seems to be a real assault on the due diligence that all governments have followed for decades.**

It is hoped that the European Commissioner for Transport Siim Kallas – along with reading the report that will be sent by the four MEPs who visited the Susa Valley on February 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> – make a definitive decision against the waste of funds through the cancellation of this **Large Useless Project** whose priority is only to transfer money into the coffers of Italy and France.

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*1989 - 2012, 23 years of popular opposition to the new railway Lyon - Turin*

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<sup>[5]</sup> Turin Agreement of 29 January 2001: <http://www.notavtorino.org/documenti-02/acc-ita-fra-2001.pdf>