Road safety: pedestrian protection, commitment by the European automobile industry

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The Council adopted the conclusions which support the efforts undertaken by the Commission to obtain a commitment by the European automobile industry to improve pedestrian safety as well as the willingness of manufacturers to work further to achieve increased safety for vulnerable users. The Council emphasises the need to guarantee: - the legal validity of the measures envisaged and their compatibility with existing regulations, especially as regards the provisions on the type-approval and acceptance of vehicles, - transparent and uniform inspection and follow-up procedures, - the independence and objectivity of the bodies responsible for testing, - perfect competition between manufacturers, by preventing the marketing of vehicles which do not meet the requirements laid down. In conclusion, the Council emphasises that it still considers it important to adopt binding directives for all new road safety and environmental protection requirements and that the voluntary commitment cannot be introduced as a process that would discharge the political authorities from their responsibilities vis-a-vis public opinion. It invites the Commission, in addition to the measure withdrawing bull-bars, to propose as soon as possible an amendment to Directive 74/483/EEC and to examine the possibilities for banning their use on the road in the medium term. The Commission is also invited to continue preparation of directives that might supplement and, if necessary, replace the voluntary commitment.