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## EU Transport Chief Warns: Europe's Infrastructure Not Ready for Military Conflict with Russia

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Europe's current transport infrastructure is inadequate for rapid military mobilisation in the event of a conflict with Russia, according to the European Union's (EU) Commissioner for Transport, Apostolos Tzitzikostas. The warning comes as Brussels outlines plans to allocate €17 billion (approximately £14.5 billion) towards upgrading key roads, railways, and bridges across the continent to ensure defence readiness.

Tzitzikostas, speaking to *The Financial Times*, made clear that NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) forces would face serious logistical challenges if required to deploy across the EU's eastern flank. Existing roads and bridges are often too narrow, too weak,

or simply non-existent for the movement of heavy military equipment such as tanks, which can weigh up to 70 tonnes. Civilian infrastructure, designed with a 40-tonne limit in mind, would not withstand the demands of a wartime response.

The commissioner stressed that Europe cannot afford delays. “The reality today is that if we want to move military equipment and troops from the western side of Europe to the eastern side, it takes weeks and in some cases months,” he said. The EU is now working with NATO commanders to identify more than 500 critical infrastructure projects along four military corridors. These projects remain classified for security reasons.

To accelerate readiness, Brussels also intends to cut bureaucratic red tape that could hinder troop movement, with Tzitzikostas warning that Europe must avoid “tanks being stuck in paperwork” as they cross national borders.

This renewed focus on defence logistics comes amid broader war preparedness efforts. NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte recently warned member states that Russia could launch an attack on a European country by 2030. As the war in Ukraine stretches into its fourth year, fears of regional escalation are mounting.

The EU's strategy is aligned with a wider €800 billion rearmament initiative aimed at reducing dependence on American military support. This follows U.S. President Donald Trump's call for greater European self-reliance, as Washington recalibrates its global defence commitments.

Tzitzikostas also backed NATO's recent agreement to increase the defence spending target to 5 percent of GDP (Gross Domestic Product), with 1.5 percent specifically dedicated to defence-related infrastructure. “We cannot afford anymore not to be ready or be dependent,” he added.

Although the European Commission has earmarked €17 billion for military mobility in the 2028–2034 budget, senior EU diplomats have cautioned that the figure could be reduced during negotiations between member states.

As tensions with Moscow remain high, the urgency to modernise Europe's transport routes for military use is gaining momentum, with leaders increasingly acknowledging that outdated infrastructure poses a serious threat to the continent's defence capabilities.