



## **ONE MILLION SIGNATURES AGAINST LONG-DISTANCE LIVE ANIMAL TRANSPORT IN THE EUROPEAN UNION REACHED TODAY!**

Earlier today, the one-millionth signature was registered on the [www.8hours.eu](http://www.8hours.eu) website. This massive mobilisation of European citizens is calling for an end to long-distance journeys for animals sent for slaughter in the European Union.

This is one of the largest animal welfare campaigns ever conducted in Europe. It was launched by Animals' Angels - an international organisation which has documented hundreds of cases of severe suffering endured by transported animals - together with Danish MEP Dan Jørgensen,

The long duration of the journeys of animals destined for slaughter in the EU often causes them intense suffering, as has been consistently reported over the years by Animals' Angels investigators. Current EU legislation makes it possible for animals to be transported for several days, even though it is scientifically proven and acknowledged by the Commission that the suffering of the animals increases with the duration of the journey.

"This is a historic moment for all those who care about animals. The call of one million citizens cannot be easily ignored by the EU institutions" - said Christa Blanke, founder and Director of Animals' Angels. "But this is just a fundamental milestone in a campaign that will end only when long-distance journeys of animals sent for slaughter are banned in the EU. We have been documenting the suffering caused by animal transports around Europe over many years, and we have seen that all improvements of transport rules are insufficient if long-distance journeys continue to be allowed".

"In reality what goes on today on the European roads is animal cruelty. This has to be stopped. The European Commission has so far disregarded the demand for new rules for animal transports. But it will be difficult for the Commission to ignore one million citizens" - said Danish MEP Dan Jørgensen, and adds: "I have made the signal to the responsible commissioner for animal welfare, John Dalli, many times, that the rules for animal transports need to be changed. Unfortunately he does not see the need to respond properly to this call. But he is wrong, and he should act now. If not he will have to explain to the EU citizens why he insists on letting this cruelty go on".

The collection of one million signatures from EU citizens is part of a larger campaign ([www.8hours.eu](http://www.8hours.eu)) calling for a maximum overall 8-hour limit for journeys of animals sent for slaughter. The campaign is also supported by 109 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from 19 member states and all political groups. Furthermore, 119 MEPs have so far signed Written Declaration 49/2011, tabled in the European Parliament at the end of November, which calls for an 8-hour limit for live animal transports.

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### Notes:

The main piece of European legislation currently regulating live animal transport is EC Regulation 1/2005. This allows horses, other equines and pigs to be transported for 24 hours, then have a 24-hour rest period and then start again; cattle, sheep and goats can be transported for 14 hours, then a 1-hour rest, then transported for a further 14 hours, then a 24-hour rest and then start again; unweaned calves, lambs, foals and piglets can be transported for 9 hours, then a 1-hour rest, then

transported for 9 hours, then a 24-hour rest and then start again. These cycles can be repeated indefinitely.

The European Parliament demanded a limitation of transport time back in 2001: "The duration of transportation should be limited to a maximum of 8 hours or a distance of 500 km in the case of cattle, horses, sheep and pigs that are not intended for special breeding or sporting purposes." (Resolution of the European Parliament, adopted on 13 January 2001 in Strasbourg).

The most recent video of animals being transported from the EU to Turkey: <http://youtu.be/rNiXxN2Kj3s> . Copies are available for media purposes.

Further information about this campaign is available on the [www.8hours.eu](http://www.8hours.eu) website.

Animals' Angels website: [www.animals-angels.org](http://www.animals-angels.org)

List of supporting organisations available at: <http://www.8hours.eu/support> .

Photos and videos are available on request.

The text of Written Declaration 49/2011 is available in all EU languages on request. It will become an official position of the Parliament if it is signed by the majority of Members of the EU Parliament by March 15<sup>th</sup> 2012.

For interviews with Christa Blanke, Founder and Director of Animals' Angels, please contact Adolfo Sansolini, Coordinator of the 8hours Campaign: +44 7983 586 295

For interviews with Dan Jørgensen MEP, please contact Niels Fuglsang, Political Advisor: +32 48 95 46 037.