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IRU RESOLUTION ON MULTILATERAL TRADE, TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT FACILITATION

*Adopted by the IRU General Assembly
in Buenos Aires on 8 April 2011*

IRU Resolution to actively promote a multilateral approach to trade, tourism and international road transport facilitation to achieve economic development.

The International Road Transport Union (IRU), representing road transport operators through its 180 Members in 74 countries on 5 continents,

Considering that

- In today's globalised economy professional road transport is no longer merely a mode of transport but a vital production tool for goods transport and tourism programmes, interconnecting every business to all world markets through its unique high quality door-to-door service;
- The professional road transport industry, which is everywhere and at the disposal of everyone, and of which 95% are SMEs, contributes considerably to social and economic prosperity and ensures the achievements of the UN Millennium Development Goals;
- The recent economic crisis has prompted many governments to adopt protectionist policies and take unilateral actions, which impede trade and tourism, or negotiate limited bilateral agreements;
- G20 Leaders call to put an end to protectionism and to facilitate trade, tourism and road transport at the London Summit in 2009 has fallen on deaf ears;
- The lack of success to date of the Doha Round in preserving the freedom of transit principles as per GATT Article V of 1994 may further impede trade and economic development;
- Recent problems with the functioning and the appropriate allocation of multilateral freight licence quotas, such as the ECMT quota, have resulted in strained bilateral negotiations, which threaten transit and hence, international trade;
- UN analyses have demonstrated that in developing countries over 40% of transport time is lost at borders. This figure is also confirmed by the IRU NELTI project. Indeed both analysis confirm that border waiting time is a major impediment to international bus and coach services and to economic growth in the respective countries;

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- Scientific studies have shown that for every 1 dollar lost due to penalties on road transport at least 2 dollars are lost for the economy in terms of missed business opportunities, proving that any penalty on road transport is an even bigger penalty on the economy as a whole.

Urgently calls upon Governments to

- Acknowledge that the promotion and facilitation of international trade, travel and road transport is the most efficient way to expedite economic recovery;
- Put an end to protectionist measures which impede international trade, travel and road transport, hence economic development;
- Preserve, defend and apply the “freedom of transit” principle as enshrined in GATT Article V;
- Implement the appropriate measures to effectively harmonise market conditions;
- Implement a multilateral approach in facilitating the legitimate movement of people and goods across borders and remove practical obstacles to road transport operators by effectively implementing the key UN facilitation instruments, such as the Harmonisation, TIR and CVR convention;
- Promote and support the conclusion of multilateral agreements such as the international agreement on regular bus and coach lines (OmniBUS);
- Apply, along with existing bilateral authorisation systems, step by step, multilateral authorisation systems on the basis of economic facts alone.

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