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Geneva, 13 June 2013

IRU AMMAN DECLARATION "ROAD TRANSPORT: DRIVING REGIONAL AND INTERCONTINENTAL TRADE"

*Unanimously adopted at the 7th IRU Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference in Amman,
Jordan on 13 June 2013*

Conference delegates

Considering that

- Professional road transport is no longer merely a mode of transport but has become, in today's globalised economy, a vital production tool in every supply and logistics chain, driving economic, social and environmental progress throughout the world;
- Strengthening inter-regional trade and transport linkages between the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and Africa is imperative for effectively developing inter-continental and regional trade and tourism;
- Border waiting times reach days and even weeks in the Middle East and other regions across the Euro-Asian landmass and Africa and account for 57% of time lost during transport, according to the empirical analysis of over 200,000 border crossings conducted during the 4 phases of the IRU's New Euro-Asian Land Transport Initiative (NELTI), in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Islamic Development Bank (IDB);
- The findings equally demonstrated that these border waiting times have the parallel negative effect of creating an environment conducive to encouraging unofficial payments, which can account for over 30% of transport costs according to the IRU's NELTI;
- Tried and tested multilateral trade and road transport facilitation instruments, such as the UN Harmonization and TIR Conventions, allow significant reduction in border waiting times;
- The IRU's Model Highway Initiative (MHI) was designed to further facilitate trade and international road transport as a complement to the effective implementation of the key UN multilateral trade and transport facilitation instruments as a means to develop the necessary ancillary infrastructure to permit road transport to drive progress, prosperity and ultimately peace throughout the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and Africa;

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- Vocational training, as provided by the IRU Academy, is imperative to build professional capacities to ensure that the road transport industry can play its pivotal role in driving economic development, social equity and environmental protection.

Recalling that

- The 22nd Session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport of the League of Arab States (LAS), which was held in Cairo on 29 October 2009, invited the 22 Arab States to accede to and implement the TIR Convention as a key to develop further trade and ensure economic growth across the Arab world;
- The 24th Session of the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport of the LAS, which was held in Alexandria on 26 October 2011, called upon the 22 Arab States to accede to and implement the ADR Agreement on Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road and develop professional training of drivers carrying dangerous goods in compliance with the international standards;
- The 5th Meeting of the Road Committee of the Transit Transport Coordination Council of the ECO, which was held in Islamabad on 17 April 2012, called for the: re-activation of the TIR System in Afghanistan; accession of Pakistan to the TIR Convention; implementation of Real Time SafeTIR and TIR Electronic Pre-Declaration (EPD) systems along the planned Kyrgyz Republic-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) and Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul (ITI) inter-regional trade itineraries; as well as necessary feasibility studies to be conducted to develop these itineraries according to the IRU Model Highway Initiative (MHI) principles;
- The 26th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), which was held in Belgrade on 11 June 2012, welcomed the joint efforts of the BSEC, IRU and the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank in developing the regional road infrastructure along the Black Sea Ring Highway network in compliance with the IRU MHI principles;
- The 27th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC, which was held in Istanbul on 15 December 2012, established a Task Force to elaborate a road map for the BSEC Pilot Project on the introduction of the International Vehicle Weight Certificate under Annex 8 to the UN International Agreement on Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods.

Call upon governments to

- Implement, as a priority, the key UN facilitation instruments, such as the Harmonization and TIR Conventions, including the IRU's IT risk management tools, namely Real Time SafeTIR and TIR Electronic Pre-Declaration (EPD) to reduce border waiting times;
- Maintain and develop, in public-private partnership, roads and roadside installations, as well as border crossing points, secure truck parking facilities, as per the IRU's Model Highway Initiative (MHI) after the key UN trade and international road transport facilitation instruments have been effectively implemented and report the location and availability of safe and secure parking areas via the interactive IRU TRANSPark parking area internet tool;

- Take action to end all discriminatory measures against commercial road transport vehicles, both domestic and foreign, and allow transport operators to use the most convenient routes for their export-import and transit operations respecting the principle of Freedom of Transit as enshrined in Article V of the GATT;
- Support the further development of efficient and cost effective intermodal transport solutions such as Ro-Ro shipping in the Gulf region as well as on the Caspian, Black, Red and Mediterranean Seas;
- Facilitate the unimpeded issuance of visas to professional drivers with long-term validity and for an unlimited number of entries;
- Expedite vehicle fleet modernisation through the reduction or elimination of import duties on trucks involved in international haulage and encourage the development of attractive leasing mechanisms;
- Actively promote and support the vocational training as provided by the IRU Academy with a view to enhancing the efficiency, professionalism, safety and sustainability of the road transport industry.

Call upon transport operators via the IRU and its Member Associations to

- Increase international road freight transport efficiency, professionalism, safety and sustainability by making best use of the vocational training provided by the IRU Academy as well as implementing the most innovative transport technologies and techniques;
- Establish sustainable business partnerships and networks to better meet growing international trade and thus international road transport demand between the Middle East, Europe, Asia, and Africa;
- Continue to work in public-private partnership with the competent authorities and always strictly comply with the applicable national laws as well as the provisions of all relevant multilateral trade and road transport facilitation conventions.

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