

OPENING REMARKS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT ISSUES AND PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Odessa, Ukraine

9 September 2014

Janusz Lacny
IRU President

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

On behalf of the International Road Transport Union and the entire IRU membership,

I am pleased to greet you at this annual conference traditionally held by the International Road Transport Union and ASMAP Ukraine every September. This conference, which takes place for the first time in the beautiful city of Odessa, is a great opportunity for us to meet and discuss the current situation in the road transport industry.

I am delighted by the presence of many special guests who found the time to come here and who insisted to be present at all cost, in spite of the current, very difficult political and economic situation in the region, in order to join us today to share their experience and expertise and contribute to the discussions and decisions of the conference.

I would like to welcome:

- Mr Maksym Burbak, Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine,
- Mr Anatoly Makarenko, Deputy Head of State Fiscal Service of Ukraine
- Mr Igor Palitsa, Head of Odessa State Administration,
- Representatives of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and governmental authorities of Ukraine,
- Mr Valery Chechelashvili, GUAM Secretary General, and representatives of all participating international organisations,
- Presidents and representatives of the IRU Member Associations,
- All road transport operators and related businesses.

My sincere gratitude especially goes to the ASMAP Ukraine and, personally, to my friend, Leonid Kostiuhenko, who, despite incredibly difficult times, still maintains the tradition of holding this important international event and who invited us to Odessa.

As you all know, road transport has played an increasingly central role in the efficiency of globalised supply chains. By serving international trade, road transport drives economic development and prosperity.

To ensure that road transport can more efficiently drive trade, non physical, administrative barriers must be removed at borders and I am confident that this conference will help us collectively identify how to harmonise, streamline and optimise procedures at borders, more specifically by the full implementation of the UN Harmonization and TIR Conventions.

In this regard, all governments must imperatively fully respect international law and the treaties which they have duly signed.

This particularly applies to the TIR Convention and to those who believe that they can turn a blind eye to international law, let alone to their national and regional laws. The IRU and its Members are not against fair competition with any other transit system, but road transport operators must be able to decide on what transit system to use.

In this respect, Ukraine has always been an example as regards the successful implementation of the TIR System, thanks to a very efficient public-private partnership between Ukrainian authorities, notably the Customs Authorities, the Ministry of Infrastructure and ASMAP Ukraine.

Indeed, Ukraine has, for many years, been one of the biggest beneficiaries of the TIR System worldwide with up to 500,000 TIR operations effectively started or terminated yearly, in full security, on Ukrainian territory.

Ukraine has also provided many innovative ideas which have paved the way for significant improvements to the TIR System, not only at national level, for example through the efficient computerisation of the system and the implementation of TIR-EPD and Real-Time SafeTIR, but also on at global level by proposing concrete improvements to the TIR Convention within the UN TIR bodies.

The IRU very much appreciates the constant constructive involvement of Ukrainian delegates within these UN bodies, such as at the meetings of the Working Party 30 or the TIR Executive Board and trusts that this will continue to benefit the TIR System as a whole long into the future to make it even more efficient and competitive through new products.

Generally speaking, being competitive and successful in any business means always keeping pace with innovations in the industry and ensuring high professional standards through professional training.

As such, the IRU Academy, with the elaboration recently of new programmes on crash prevention and secure loading, provides a great opportunity to enhance the safety and security of road transport operations.

ASMAP Ukraine is exemplary in its contribution to improve road safety and transport efficiency through its training arm, TCC-AIRCU, an exemplary IRU Academy Accredited Training Institute (ATI).

In June 2014, TCC-AIRCU was among the top 3 IRU Academy ATIs for their excellent contributions and tireless efforts in driving learning and development initiatives to build the required leadership and competencies to support a sustainable, safe and efficient road transport industry.

During this conference, we will also honour the winners of the IRU International Contest "*Best Eurasian International Road Transport Operator*".

I know that it is not easy to win this contest. In fact, road transport and, in particular, international road transport has become the most regulated mode of transport. Hence, establishing and managing a successful road transport company is becoming increasingly difficult due to the multitude of regulations with which all transport companies need to comply regarding their trucks, drivers, road traffic, loads and customs.

Therefore, I will be delighted to see the winners of the contest on this podium.

In conclusion, it is only by joining our efforts that we will be able to achieve our common economic, social and environmental goals. No challenge will be too great to overcome if we apply the IRU motto "*working together for a better future*".

Therefore, I am looking forward to a very successful and productive conference and count on your active participation as this is your conference.

Thank you for your attention.

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