

IRU TBILISI DECLARATION

"ROAD TRANSPORT: INTERCONNECTING EVERY BUSINESS AND EVERY TRANSPORT MODE BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA"

Unanimously adopted at the 6th IRU Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference in Tbilisi, Georgia on 17 June 2011

Conference delegates

Considering that

- In today's globalised economy, professional road transport is no longer merely a mode of transport but has become a vital production tool, driving economic, social and environmental progress throughout the world.
- The world economic crisis has hindered general economic development and international economic cooperation except in regions where road transport has been promoted and further facilitated to expedite economic recovery, recognising efficient international road transport as a pre-requisite for economic growth everywhere and in particular for landlocked countries along the ancient Silk Road.
- Border waiting times, reaching days, if not weeks in some regions across the Euro-Asian landmass, account for 40% of time lost during transport, according to the findings of the IRU's New Euro-Asian Land Transport Initiative (NELTI), and create 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 international trade and road transport as a complement to the key multilateral trade and transport facilitation instruments, which must firstly be fully implemented, and as a means to develop the necessary ancillary infrastructure to permit road transport to drive progress, prosperity and ultimately peace along the ancient Silk Road.
- Vocational training, as provided by the IRU Academy, is imperative to build professional capacities to ensure that the road transport industry can play its vital role in driving economic development, social equity and environmental protection.

Recalling that

- The IRU Almaty Declaration, which was unanimously adopted at the 5th IRU Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 12 June 2009, urged governments to facilitate road transport in order to allow access of local products to world markets, to link businesses at regional and local levels and to integrate national economies into a chain of sub-continental, continental and trans-continental cooperation.

Call upon governments to

- Implement, as a priority, the key UN facilitation instruments, such as the Harmonization and TIR Conventions to reduce border waiting times.
- Develop and apply anti-corruption action plans.
- 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 trade and 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.
- Apply reasonable fees and charges to international road freight transport that correspond to economically justified costs.
- 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 on the Caspian, Black and Mediterranean Seas.
- Facilitate the unimpeded visa issuance 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 in new markets along the ancient Silk Road.
- 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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