

Commissioner Algirdas Šemeta  
European Commission  
200 Rue de la Loi  
Berlaymont  
B-1049 BRUSSELS

Vilnius, 10 February 2014

Dear Commissioner,

We would like to inform you about a meeting held today in Vilnius between the road transport associations from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland concerning the continuously worsening situation related to the non-functioning of the TIR Convention in the Russian Federation.

As you know, road transport operators from our countries are among the most active users from the TIR system, successfully conducting annually more than 600'000 transport operations under TIR to Russia, in full security, facilitating trade development between the EU and Russia.

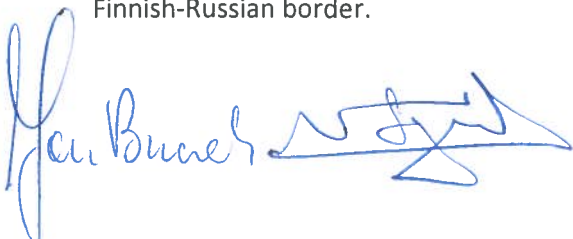
We are forced to note that, further to the initial illegal decisions taken by the Federal Customs Service of Russia (FCS RF) in violation of the TIR Convention on 4 July 2013, the situation has still not been solved and is even deteriorating, in spite of the unanimous support from the international community in favour of the TIR system, including the European Commission.

Indeed, currently, only three Russian customs offices accept TIR carnets for the import of goods to Russia, exclusively at the Finnish and Norwegian borders, in spite of the fact that, in the end of November 2013, the Russian Government had confirmed that the functioning of the TIR system shall be re-established with immediate effect on the whole territory of Russia.

Last week, this matter was again discussed in front of the highest body of the TIR Convention in the United Nations (Administrative Committee). During this meeting, the fact that the FCS RF continues to violate the TIR Convention was once again unanimously reconfirmed, and the Administrative Committee requested the immediate withdrawal of the FCS RF illegal measures.

Unfortunately, the FCS RF representative was once again unable to confirm during that meeting if Russian customs plan to reauthorize the TIR procedure in full at all Russian border crossing points of entry in the nearest future.

We are forced to confirm to you once again that the current situation has increasingly negative consequences not only for the road transport sector from our region but also more globally for our countries economies, notably due to increased costs, reduced competitiveness and current discrimination of our operators vis-à-vis Russian transport operators. Indeed, most of Russian operators can freely continue their transport operations under cover of TIR carnets through the Finnish-Russian border.



In the current context, we would like to urge the European Commission to take any possible additional steps to obtain, once and for all, clear reply from the Russian Government about whether Russian customs will reopen the TIR procedure at all Russian border crossing points in the coming weeks.

Failure to obtain any clear reply from the FCS RF in the next few weeks, we would like to appeal to the European Commission so that any other further adequate measures, including legal, are taken towards the Russian Federation.

We would be very grateful if the European Commission could confirm to us the exact status of the matter at latest by end of March 2014, so that our associations can take appropriate measures.

In this context, allow us to express our sincere thanks for the continuous support provided by the European Commission to solve this ongoing crisis in line with the provisions of the UN TIR Convention, 1975.

Your Sincerely,

Toivo Kuldkepp, Secretary General ERAA, Estonia

Valdis Trezins, President Latvijas Auto, Latvia

Algimantas Kondrusevicius, President LINAVAL, Lithuania

Jan Buczek, President ZMPD, Poland