

SPEAKING NOTES

FOR

THE 4TH IRU-EU ROAD TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

9 OCTOBER 2014
BRUSSELS

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Secretary General

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great honour for the International Road Transport Union and for me as IRU Secretary General, to open this 4th IRU-EU Road Transport Conference, organised in partnership with the Italian EU Presidency, the European Parliament and the European Commission.

I sincerely thank the Government of Italy, and in particular His Excellency Marizio Lupi, the Italian Minister of Infrastructure and Transport and his team for their invaluable support in co-organising this Conference and even though last minute changes meant that he could not attend in person I do know that Mr Lupi strongly recognises the importance of innovation and of establishing effective cooperation to achieve results.

I would also like to thank very much the Vice President of the European Commission responsible for Transport, Mr Siim Kallas and his Cabinet, for his support in establishing today's conference as well as his support during his term as Vice President. We do not always agree on every issue, but we both strongly believe that cooperation leads to results and I'm pleased to say that the cooperation between the European Commission and the IRU is very solid and we continuously seek to find good compromises on all relevant issues and will continue to do so on innovating EU's sustainable development to benefit trade, growth and jobs.

For the first time, our conference has been co-organised with the support of the European Parliament. I would like to congratulate Michael Cramer on his recent appointment as Chair of the Parliaments' Transport & Tourism Committee and to sincerely thank him for his agreement to co-host this conference and the support provided in this regard by him and his team. This decision by Mr Cramer shows clearly that he also intends to seek the path of cooperation to make the transport system more environmentally friendly and efficient – surely by making efficient and innovative use of all modes - bicycles, road, rail, sea, air?

It is obvious that by working together all of us will be able to deliver to the EU's Citizens and businesses innovations that will bring a more efficient and sustainable transport system in the near future – with, I think we can all agree, road transport still playing a major role in driving mobility, tourism and trade.

Today we will have a debate to stimulate innovative thinking and thereby together shed light on our joint future. We at the IRU would like your views on where the road transport industry should be in 20 years time? How we can support and further strengthen efficient international trade and develop the sustainable mobility of people by road. The panel discussion that follows will explore what will be needed to improve overall efficiency, covering topics such as: ***Doing more with less immediately or is it better to focus efforts on driving more efficiently in the medium to long term?***

- *Will road ever be allowed to innovate freely on Weight and Dimensions within the physical infrastructure limits and if so what could be gained?*
- *How will journey planners and smartphone applications in the shared economy that are being put on market today affect the transport industry and the legislators?*

- *How can ITS contribute and what barriers need to be broken down for it to be widely available?*
- *Should automation be encouraged to drive efficiently and safely and if so how will issues such as liability, safety and passenger feeling be tackled?*
- *Is EU-wide harmonisation of enforcement necessary for better efficiency and how can it be achieved?*
- *What can the traditional bus/coach/taxi/truck operator do to be more attractive for businesses and citizens in the short term?*

How far and how fast should new innovations in road transport be taken and how will it inform and change legislation?

- *Will the infrastructure of today look like the infrastructure of tomorrow? When could we imagine an electrified core road infrastructure network for long haul and regular line coach transport? Would vehicles be ready and how could ITS support e.g. via platooning?*
- *How will urban transport look like in 20 years? Are we looking at urban distribution and mobility purely with electric vehicles in the shared economy and what role will drones play if any?*
- *How will legislators deal with innovative ideas as they have been totally unprepared for e.g. the new shared economy in the passenger transport area?*

It is my hope that the panel discussion will bring concrete and creative ideas that we, after this conference, together with all relevant stakeholders can take up in a reflect on group that should have the task of defining a roadmap for how the commercial vehicle of the future will look and operate in the road transport system of the future.

I can already say now that the IRU is fully prepared to take on the challenges of creating this roadmap in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders.

In this regard we have recently decided to establish an innovation lab that will ensure our involvement and leadership in developing the road transport system of the future – be that in regards to taking up new technologies that can lead to for instance more automation to ensure more safe and sustainable operations, using the most innovative vehicles equipped with alternatives to current propulsion systems.

Rest assured that we do not come empty handed to this discussion. Over the past years the IRU has worked hard to foster innovation in the road transport business. Indeed, innovation is the 1st pillar of our 3 “i” strategy for achieving sustainable development based on innovation, incentives and infrastructure. This has been done in a range of diverse areas, such as driver training that includes both traditional online training courses as well as a newly developed training course on environmentally friendly driving using the newest ITS technologies.

We have created an on-line simulation system for load securing to train operators and drivers to ensure road safety; developed electronic customs pre-declarations for TIR transport to further facilitate and secure trade; and, we are working on more ambitious TIR projects to make available the use of this trade facilitation instrument – the TIR System – available, fully electronically, to all modes of transport to the benefit of EU trade, growth and jobs.

The IRU developed the TRANSPark smartphone application, now available in Apple and Google Play store in 15 countries. An app that informs drivers on where to park safely so driving and rest times can be respected as well as to ensure that the security of the driver, goods and vehicle will be safeguarded.

We recently established the Global Taxi Network that will officially be launched at the International Taxi Fair in Cologne in early November. Work within this network will ensure that taxi smart-phone applications used locally, to book your licensed taxi service, will become certified and globally available. This will ensure that citizens in need of a ride do not turn to some of the cowboy services popping up on the marketplace with the risk that entails.

We have initiated the creation of the European Citizens Mobility Forum, a public-private platform of leading mobility stakeholders in Europe, which is currently working on a proposal for an EU “Action Programme 2015-2025” - a detailed road map on how to double the use of collective passenger transport in the EU.

I must also mention our participation in multiple EC funded projects dedicated to innovation within road transport that is ensuring that we are part of – indeed are leading – the future evolution of road transport.

You can understand that we are fully committed to the task of making the EU transport system and indeed road transport globally even better through the use of new technology and innovations. It is not only a priority, it is a must. He who does not embrace innovation will fail. We cannot afford to make this grave error as we will be held accountable for our actions or, moreover, inaction!

I can only stress once again that it is my strong wish that this conference will lead to the creation of a strong reflection group that includes all relevant stakeholders that together will define the roadmap to create the road transport system of the future to the benefit of the EU economy for the benefit of all EU citizens.

I thank you all for coming to the conference.

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