

H.E. Mr Antonio Guterres
Secretary General
United Nations
2 United Nations Plaza
10017 - NEW YORK, N.Y.
United States of America



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Geneva, 23 November 2020

Your Excellency,

In these challenging times, our thoughts are with all who are working hard to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. In this respect we hope that you and your colleagues are staying safe and healthy.

IRU, as the world road transport organisation, represents more than 3.5 million road transport operating companies, and is the implementing partner of the UN TIR Convention. The road transport industry is working night and day in response to COVID-19 to ensure people and goods continue to move. At the same time however, we are extremely concerned about the pandemic's severe impact on the industry.

IRU's General Assembly recently adopted a COVID-19 call for action to governments based on alarming new research, which you will find enclosed. In summary, it shows:

- Road transport losses, in both passenger and goods transport, are set to exceed USD 1 trillion globally in 2020.
- Government financial packages are failing to reach the road transport industry.
- Default and insolvency risks in our industry are extremely high.

Without immediate, coordinated national and international action, an enormous number of road transport operators will go bankrupt in the coming months, causing irrevocable damage to mobility networks and supply chains and the global economy as a whole.

Our call to action is therefore urging governments to immediately:

- Deploy targeted financial support measures – including direct cash grants for road transport operators, and reduced taxes and charges for commercial road transport operations.
- Make more use of the digital tools that already exist – including eTIR, eCMR for road freight transport and e-ticketing for road passenger transport.
- Coordinate action at a global and cross-border level – with a special focus on rules and restrictions related to border crossings.

We ask for your kind support in bringing our call to action as well as our research findings to the urgent attention of your governmental members to ensure that the road transport industry will be able to survive and drive the economic recovery.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'U. de Pretto', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Umberto de Pretto
Secretary General

Enc.