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Driving Competitiveness – a Collective Call for Action

The Collective Call for Action was unanimously adopted at the IRU General Assembly on 9 May 2025

The IRU General Assembly, the voice of over 3.5 million companies operating mobility and logistics services, calls on governments to drive competitiveness through simplification, digitalisation and harmonisation.

A competitive economy needs competitive road transport. Commercial road transport is essential in moving people and goods across the globe, across the nation or across town.

Commercial road transport is fundamental to commerce and trade, connecting producers to markets, enabling businesses to thrive and allowing economies to grow. It is fundamental to social mobility and communities, bringing people to their place of work and to hospitals, schools, shops and leisure facilities. Moreover, it is the glue that links all modes of transport together, providing first and last mile connectivity, and making entire mobility networks and logistics supply chains efficient.

A competitive road transport industry can unlock significant benefits, including reducing transport costs, improving intermodal efficiency, maximising returns on public infrastructure investment, increasing tourism and trade flows, boosting workforce mobility and creating jobs.

While providing an essential service to businesses and societies, commercial road transport is faced with many challenges, notably the 3 “Ds”:

- Driver shortages and the availability of skilled labour
- Digitalisation and making the most of technology innovation such as AI
- Decarbonisation and related regulatory, financial and operational challenges

IRU therefore calls on governments, regulators and other industry stakeholders to drive a three-step plan to reinforce the efficiency of the commercial road transport industry and allow it to contribute more effectively to national and regional economic competitiveness:

1. Simplify

Governments should review and streamline existing rules and regulations to eliminate unnecessary administrative burdens, especially those that are onerous for SMEs. This includes, but is not limited to, reporting processes, the number of required control documents and public procurement.

2. Digitalise

Replace transport documents with data exchange solutions to speed up processes, increase transparency and reduce documents needed and costly storage. This includes, but is not limited to, e-visas, e-permits, e-journey forms, digital consignment notes such as those based on e-CMR, digital customs and transit processes such as e-TIR.

3. Harmonise

Standardise regulations impacting cross-border commercial road transport in a collaborative and globally coordinated way. This includes, but is not limited to, full

implementation of existing ratified UN Conventions and multilateral regional agreements.

The commercial road transport industry is ready to work in partnership with UN organisations, intergovernmental organisations, regional bodies, national governments and commercial partners to implement the above call for action for the benefit of prosperity, people and the environment.

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