



RECOMMENDATIONS
of the virtual workshop on the digitalisation of transit facilitation tools
(commercial transport and customs documentation)
(11 March 2021, virtual meeting)

We, the delegates of the virtual workshop on the digitalisation of transit facilitation tools (commercial transport and customs documentation), organised by IRU, the world road transport organisation, in cooperation with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO),

COMMITTED to further strengthening cooperation on trade, economic development, production, agriculture, transport, customs, information technology, innovation and other spheres of mutual concern in the interests of open, inclusive, innovative, green and sustainable development;

FULLY AWARE of the fundamental changes underway in cross-border trade, transport and logistics caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;

RECOGNISING the importance of the early introduction of digital technologies in the transport and logistics sectors, and cooperating with transport, customs, phytosanitary and other authorities when organising international transport and transit;

STRESSING the pivotal role of road transport, which underpins all economic activity, and is a crucial link in all intermodal supply chains;

RECOGNISING the exceptional importance of UN agreements and conventions to facilitate international road transport and streamline procedures at border crossings, as well as the availability of legal frameworks for the transition to paperless documents, in particular Annex 11 to the TIR Convention and the Additional Protocol to the CMR Convention concerning e-CMR;

WELCOMING the statement by the UN Secretary General (March 2020) and the joint statement by the heads of UN regional commissions and specialised agencies (17 September 2020) on the implementation of digital solutions, such as eTIR and e-CMR, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Moscow Declaration of the SCO Council of Heads of States (10 November 2020) and the Joint Communiqué of the SCO Heads of States on Simplifying Trade Procedures (Qingdao, 10 June 2018), the Declaration of foreign ministers from more than 30 landlocked developing countries, following the virtual meeting as part of the 75th UN General Assembly (New York, 23 September 2020), the recommendations of the joint thematic event of SCO and UNECE "Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development along the transcontinental Eurasian transport corridors" (Geneva, 27 February 2020);

REAFFIRMING support for China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and interest in continued joint work on this project;

COMMITTED to the early practical implementation of the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Creating Favourable Conditions for International Road Transport;

AGREEING to promote joint work on the development of existing multimodal transport corridors and the creation of new ones;

EMPHASISING that the professional competence of employees of transport companies is instrumental to improving the quality and competitiveness of transport services;

hereby address national governments, international organisations and all stakeholders concerned by the development of inclusive, innovative, green and sustainable transport, and recommend to:

- amend national regulatory provisions and standards so that they comply with the relevant international and UN conventions and agreements, providing seamless cross-border transport and transit, ratify such documents and promote their early implementation;
- take urgent collective action across all transport modes to digitalise the industry and effectively pave the way for intermodal freight transport and full logistics interoperability;
- in close coordination with the countries concerned, ensure stable transport flows during emergencies, like the current pandemic, and adopt sanitary and epidemiological recommendations for facilities along transport routes in light of the unfavourable epidemiological situation related to COVID-19;
- promote a swift transition to paperless documents for international transport, particularly through the use of UN tools, such as eTIR and e-CMR, as well as building a common trusted network, which will meet the needs of all key actors in the supply chain, avoid physical checks and reduce physical contact at borders, thus preventing the spread of COVID-19;
- set up "green corridors" for commercial road transport to maintain transport connectivity, support transit freight traffic and ensure the free movement of goods and services in intracontinental trade, particularly of medicines and medical products, equipment, food and daily necessities, which is extremely important for landlocked countries;
- promote trade between SCO Member States by simplifying customs procedures, decreasing the number of customs formalities for the import, export and transit of goods, increasing transparency, and developing cooperation and information exchange between the competent authorities;
- promote the implementation of arrangements under the Agreement between the Governments of the SCO Member States on Creating Favourable Conditions for International Road Transport and, while maintaining the required level of security, ensure the free passage of vehicles of the parties through their territories, including vehicles travelling under the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention, 1975);

- enhance the attractiveness and strive to make full use of the transit potential of the SCO Member States by further developing transport cooperation, including through the development of new and the upgrading of existing international highway and rail routes, multimodal transport corridors and logistics centres, trade and tourism, the introduction of digital, innovation and energy-saving technologies, the streamlining of cross-border procedures in keeping with international best practices, and the implementation of other joint infrastructure projects;
- continue working on harmonising weights and dimensions regulations, including axle loads and other parameters of the vehicles used for international road transport;
- facilitate visa procedures and issue multi-entry long-term visas to professional drivers, swiftly introduce digital visas (e-visas);
- continue positive practice of holding joint events by IRU and SCO in the interests of expansion of transport and communications and transit capabilities of the SCO Member States, including with reliance on the potential of the SCO observer states and dialog partners.

11 March 2021

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