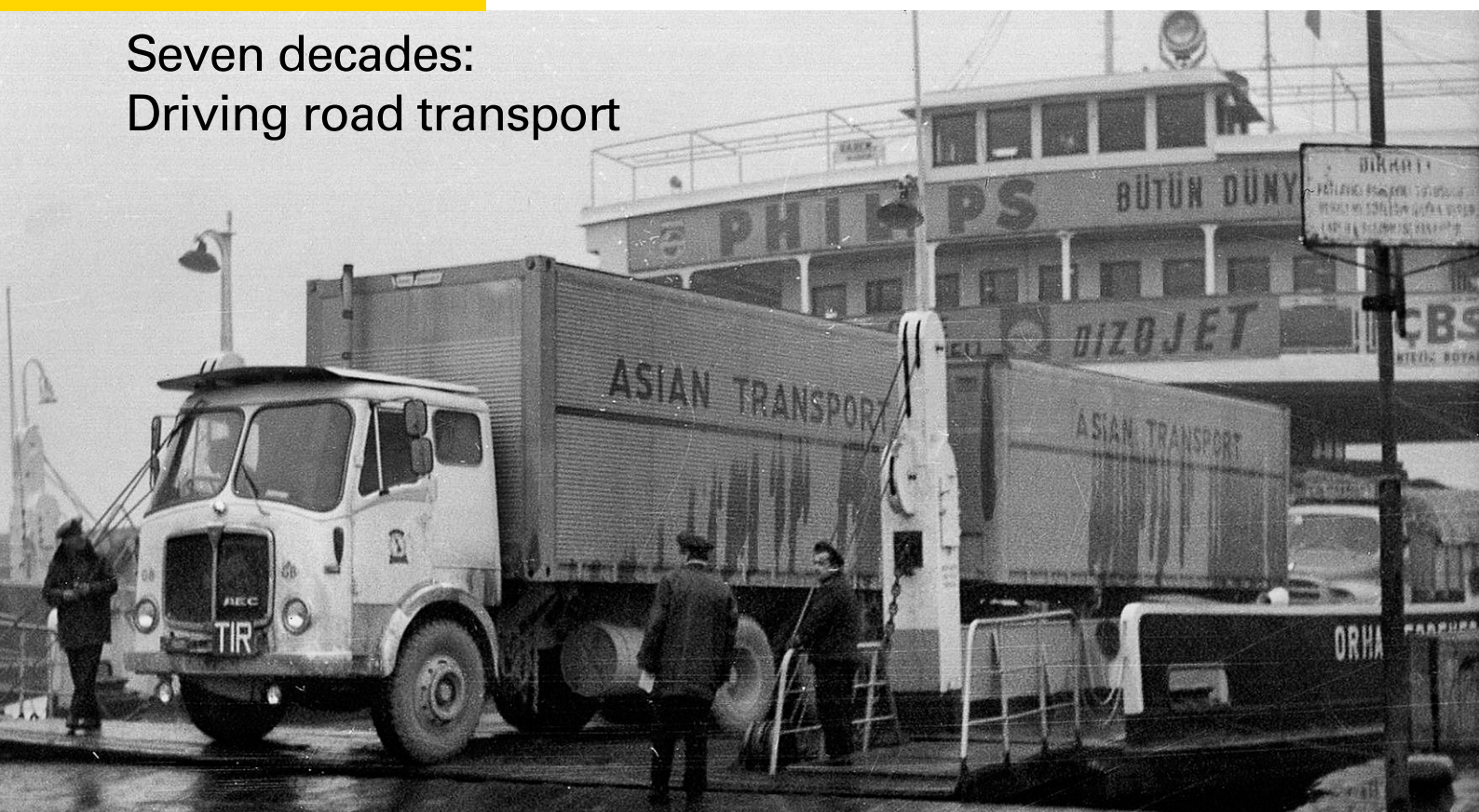


## Seven decades: Driving road transport



### The forties: Rebuilding Europe

IRU was founded in Geneva to help war-torn Europe rebuild devastated trade and commercial links. It began with an alliance of national passenger and freight road transport associations from eight European countries, to ensure that the road transport industry was represented at the newly created UN, which had been tasked with putting in place the frameworks for a new, post-war Europe.

IRU created the TIR system in 1949 – initially an inter-governmental agreement – it later became a global convention. TIR became **the** tool to facilitate post-war inter-European trade – within the context of fragile geopolitical relationships. The customs transit system enabled goods to flow across unstable borders as the economies and the communities of Europe began to recover. TIR became a tangible means to strive for prosperity.

“By representing the entire road transport industry worldwide, IRU plays a crucial role in helping to improve the safety record and environmental performance of road transport and ensuring the mobility of people and goods.”

**Kofi A. Annan, Former UN Secretary General**

## The fifties: Rewriting the rules of road transport

Representing road transport at the UN table meant that IRU was able to partner with governments to rewrite the rules of transport for the decades to come. Every UN convention relating to road transport, defining the roles and responsibilities within logistics and road transport, involved or was initiated by IRU.

The Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) was signed in 1956. This set out, for the first time, the responsibilities and liabilities of private parties involved in the transport of goods. Complementary to TIR, it is to this day the most widely used document on shipments between senders, receivers and transporters. It provides a record of the transport operation and contains essential information in relation to the load carried.

Many years later in February 2008, a protocol was added to the CMR Convention concerning the use of the electronic consignment note and now forms the bedrock of a global strategy to digitalise transport and logistics, as the industry looks to adopt game-changing innovations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With TIR, 1959 saw the first historic example of a public private partnership between IRU and the UN, as the two organisations came together to establish the UNTIR Convention. IRU continued to manage the system, which quickly became the global standard for customs transit.

## The sixties: Safe passage

Expanding IRU membership now included a number of Eastern European countries, and its reach was growing. IRU adopted a unique, global view of road transport amid a period of social shift and cultural conflict on the global stage. The sharing of best practice became one of IRU's touchstones – as the West moved into a period of greater prosperity.

IRU established two awards in 1966, recognising heroism and, significantly, safety. This represented a key moment, when safety and professionalism became a focus for the organisation. Driving all aspects of its work thereafter, IRU continues to advocate for international standards that improve safety, working with the United Nations, international organisations and government authorities on both formal and informal standards, in particular through IRU's Commissions on Road Safety, Technical Affairs, Legal Affairs and expert working party on Transporting Dangerous Goods.

## The seventies: The right mode

The advent and standardisation of shipping containers in the 1970s reinvented the way in which goods were transported. The need to operate intermodally was absolute. Replacing the 1959 version, a new TIR Convention was concluded in 1975, ensuring that **TIR** would become the best transit tool for intermodal transport, provided that at least one leg of the journey is carried out by road.







### The eighties: Brussels blueprint

With its established home in Brussels (created in 1973), IRU had a seat at the table of European policy making. The 1980s saw the European Parliament take the Council of the European Union to the European Court of Justice for its failure to develop a common transport policy. The Court's judgment of May 1985 finally kick-started progress on a common policy.

The legislative push towards the single European market heralded a turning point in transport policy, with market access balanced against EU-wide rules in areas such as driving and rest times for heavy commercial vehicles.

IRU has continued to contribute to EU policy initiatives and legislation, promoting an economically sound operating environment for road transport, ensuring fair competition, and working to ensure that the road transport industry plays a leading role in mobility, trade and tourism throughout Europe. This mission is all the more important in the light of Brexit, the Mobility Package and decarbonisation.

Progress on other fronts during the decade included the launch of the star classification system for coaches to improve quality, safety and comfort in the sector.

### The nineties: Sustaining road transport

Following the 1<sup>st</sup> Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 where 182 countries adopted Agenda 21, IRU was the first transport organisation to become involved in the UN plan for sustainable development and subsequently made it a constitutional obligation. Its Charter for Sustainable Development was adopted in 1996 and it developed the the 3 "i" strategy for achieving sustainable development, based on innovation, incentives and infrastructure.

Later, IRU's "30 by 30" Resolution was a pledge from the entire road transport industry to cut its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% by 2030 and significant progress has been made. Heavy commercial vehicles emit up to 98% less toxic emissions than 20 years ago.

The IRU Academy – the training arm of IRU – was conceived at the end of this decade, reinforcing the message that the professionalisation of the industry is at the heart of its ongoing sustainability. This has reflected in tangible outcomes – such as the benefits to the environment and safety with eco-driving and crash prevention training – as well as the economic and social factors at play with the increased prosperity that results from more efficient transport systems and improved access to personal mobility.

Sustainability remains high on IRU's agenda and it continues to work closely with the World Bank, the UN and the wider industry on driving sustainability targets and setting the global sustainability agenda for road transport.

## 2000s: Silk Road foundations

With the China Road Transport Association joining IRU, and knowing that China was emerging as a world power, IRU seeded the concept of the revitalisation of the ancient Silk Road. The New Eurasian Land Transport Initiative (NELTI) was conceived as an essential next step in the IRU strategy for interconnecting businesses in Asia and Europe along the Eurasian landmass to all major world markets, as well as increasing public and business awareness of the huge opportunities created by this land bridge.

Based on data from 200,000 border crossings, the NELTI study found that 57% of transport time was lost at these crossings, adding to increased costs of 38% due to unofficial levies, highlighting the potential for TIR to counter these issues.

As China's One Belt One Road initiative now moves ahead in 2018, IRU's longstanding, prescient work to reopen ancient Silk Road trade routes has gathered ground and has set the foundations in place for these recent developments which are transforming trade prospects for the region. Indeed, China places TIR as one of its top priorities for realising OBOR objectives.



## 2010s: Digital daring, global growth and a level playing field

Road transport is becoming increasingly digital, connected and automated: a revolution has begun.

2010 onwards has seen an acceleration of IRU's global reach, with China, India and Pakistan joining the TIR network. These are just three of the latest countries to ratify the TIR Convention, representing between them 40% of the world's population. IRU's expansion efforts have truly gone global.

TIR now has full digital and intermodal capabilities. There is a growing web of digital trade corridors inching around the globe – with TIR and e-CMR offering the global standard for digitalised transport.

The UN adopted a resolution which highlights the importance of e-CMR for bringing innovation to real life and signed a milestone agreement with IRU supporting the full digitalisation of the TIR customs transit procedure.

IRU has advocated “same service same rules” for new market entrants to a transformed taxi sector, while encouraging innovation across the board.

As urban populations multiply, buses and coaches are promoted as part of the solution to reducing the environmental footprint of personal mobility and IRU's Smart Move campaign highlights the potential benefits to cut emissions, create jobs, reduce road deaths and ease road congestion.

Guiding the industry into the future, IRU announced its World Congress in Oman in its 70th year – a platform to address current challenges and offer solutions to stay ahead of the innovation curve as the industry looks to the next 70 years.