

June 12, 2009

IRU and Transport Ministers join forces

Almaty – The [5th IRU Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference](#) and joint Ministerial meeting concluded that road transport has become not only the main engine of economic growth, but also the key driver of prosperity and peace on the Eurasian landmass and throughout the world, owing to its unique availability, flexibility and door-to-door services, capable of interconnecting all businesses along the Silk Road to all the main world markets.

The [IRU Almaty Conference Declaration](#), unanimously adopted by all participants, highlights that “road freight transport provides an efficient distribution system contributing to trade and socio-economic integration, international peace and wealth creation”, and calls for governments to “acknowledge the favourable features of road freight transport and to facilitate the development of road freight transport...and thus ease access for land-locked countries in Central-Asia to export and import markets.”

Closing the IRU conference, IRU Secretary General, Martin Marmy, stressed, “It is our duty and common task to make known to decision-makers and to all Governments that if many countries are landlocked to sea transport, absolutely no country is landlocked to road transport! The IRU’s New Eurasian Land Transport Initiative has shown that over 30 % of the road transport time along the Silk Road is lost at borders due to inappropriate border crossing procedures, rather than to commonly, but wrongly perceived lack of infrastructure, which impede trade growth along the entire Eurasian landmass.”

The [Ministerial Declaration](#) jointly signed by over 15 Transport Ministers convened in a parallel meeting stresses “Road transport represents a highly efficient and flexible mode to link neighbouring countries and regions as well as carry out trans-continental transport operations, whenever needed, particularly to transport valuable and time-sensitive goods.”

The joint Ministerial declaration also highlights the Ministers’ decision, in line with the G20 statement, to further facilitate road transport to allow it to drive a quicker economic recovery by effectively “implementing UN Conventions on international road transport as well as WTO rules on the freedom of transit; coordinating national and regional transport policies; simplifying documents and rationalising charges and taxes; introduce transport technology improvements allowing an integrated multi-modal approach; cooperating to remove barriers to smooth international road haulage simplification of documents and rationalisation of charges and taxes, thus leading to a better utilisation of existing or planned infrastructure capacities and reducing pressure on over-saturated ports in Asia and elsewhere in the World.”

Both Declarations ended with an invitation to all actors to mobilise resources and focus efforts on reviving the Silk Road by promoting and further facilitating daily road transport operations on a commercial basis as well as encouraging public-private partnership to permit road transport to drive economic recovery, prosperity and peace.

See the [Conference highlights](#).