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IRU RESOLUTION
on the “UN Decade of Action for Road Safety”
adopted unanimously by the International Road Transport Union General Assembly
Geneva, 16 April 2010

Background Paper
CSD18/2010/BP2

Geneva, 16 April 2010

The International Road Transport Union (IRU), representing truck, bus, coach and taxi operators through its 180 Members in 74 countries on 5 continents,

Considering that:

- The IRU Road Safety Charter was unanimously adopted and signed by all IRU Member Associations during the 29th IRU World Congress on 22-24 April 2004 in Yokohama;
- Road safety has always been, is and will remain a top priority issue for the road transport industry and that for true professionals every accident is one accident too many;
- The road transport sector is committed to avoiding human suffering caused by accidents and, therefore, considers accident prevention as a key priority;
- The road safety record of commercial vehicles has significantly improved over recent years, both in accident rates and severity;
- Buses and coaches are the safest passenger transport mode;
- The involvement of a commercial vehicle in an accident does not mean that the commercial vehicle is the cause of the accident and that only limited, dedicated statistics are available regarding accidents involving commercial vehicles and even less is known about the cause of these accidents;
- The findings of scientific studies such as the European Truck Accident Causation Study (ETAC) highlight that the main cause of an accident involving trucks is “human error” (85.2%). Other factors such as weather conditions (4.4%), infrastructure (5.1%) or technical failures of the vehicle (5.3%), played only a minor role;
- The recommendations of the ETAC Study stress that knowledge transfer and training, as provided by the IRU Academy is key to target effectively the main cause of all accidents and thus significantly decrease the number of road accidents;
- A main tool to improve road safety is driver support through innovative active and passive vehicle safety systems.

Welcomes:

- The Moscow Declaration of 20 November 2009, adopted by the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety: Time for Action, in which participants called on governments and the international community to include road safety as a global policy issue and to make specific recommendations for action;

- The UN General Assembly Resolution of 3 March 2010, with which governments declared the decade 2011-2020 as the “Decade of Action for Road Safety” with the goal to stabilise and then reduce traffic fatalities around the world by increasing activities conducted at national, regional and global levels;
- The Plan of Action for the “Decade of Action for Road Safety”, as the guiding document to support the implementation of the objectives of the Decade of Action, in particular the setting of ambitious targets for reducing fatalities by 2020, increasing the global funding for road safety strengthening, increasing knowledge transfer and thus, human capacity-building to better address road safety, improving the quality of data at national, regional and international levels, and monitoring the progress on a number of predefined road safety indicators.

Taking into account the above, and considering the fact that the IRU Presidential Executive on 24 February 2010, has committed USD 2 million to implement appropriate projects to effectively improve commercial road transport safety provided that this important commitment by the profession is matched by credible partners involved in the promotion of road safety or by the international donor community, the road transport industry, represented by the IRU and its Member Associations calls upon all public and private partners to:

- To introduce on a voluntary basis, and before they become mandatory, proven effective active and passive safety systems, such as lane departure warning systems, advanced emergency braking systems and electronic stability programmes;
- Identify the main cause of accidents involving commercial vehicles by supporting accident causation studies which apply the ETAC methodology and which help to improve road safety by effectively targeting those main accident causes;
- Support and promote effective, harmonised and internationally recognised standards for vocational training of road transport professionals which have been developed by the IRU Academy and which have been endorsed by the World Bank, the International Transport Forum, the United Nation Economic Commission for Europe, the European Commission, the European Transport Workers Federation, the European Training Foundation and are supported by the International Labour Organisation;
- Work together with the IRU, its Member Associations and the business community to achieve ambitious national accident reduction targets by effectively implementing training of commercial vehicle drivers and commercial road transport managers.