

*During the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic which has a dramatic impact on LLDC, the most immediate concern for the road transport sector is to maintain mobility and supply chains in the safest way possible for transport workers and citizens while respecting the latest relevant government guidelines.*

*Transport operators are implementing strict driver health practices and higher standards concerning the carriage of documents to demonstrate compliance with health rules, but it remains difficult to comply with a patchwork of national initiatives and the overall economic downturn. As a consequence, commercial road transport, both passenger and goods, has been severely impacted by COVID-19. IRU's calculation show that the losses for the global road transport sector – passenger and goods – exceeded USD 1 trillion in 2020. Road transport companies that are mainly small and medium sized firms cannot easily cope with such an external shock and a wave of bankruptcies is imminent.*

*In this respect and as a pre-requisite for further implementation of the VPoA it is crucial that:*

- *Targeted financial support measures are deployed for road transport operators in LLDCs.*
- *The UN TIR Convention and related IT tools are used by LLDCs.*
- *Cross border coordination between LLDCs is ensured.*

*At the same time, IRU in close cooperation with UN agencies is supporting landlocked developing countries and transit countries in their endeavours with practical tools.*

- *To improve communication on enforcement procedures for vehicles, drivers and cargo, especially for quarantine areas, the UNECE, supported by IRU, launched an "Observatory on Border Crossings Status due to COVID-19" which gathers all updated information regarding border crossing limitations for LLDCs.*
- *IRU continued to undertake capacity-building efforts for landlocked developing countries and transit countries to implement the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets and support the process of a rapid digitalisation of the TIR procedures as this allows for transport in a secure load compartment carried out under customs control, and, therefore, does not require physical checks and therefore reduces contact between people at the border.*
- *IRU also facilitates and expedites administrative process related to electronic exchange of transport documents such as e-CMR and e-permits.*