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IRU - ETF JOINT STATEMENT AND LIST OF TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION CONCERNING THE EU TRANSPORT WHITE PAPER

The IRU and ETF call on the EU to refocus the implementation of the White Paper around the following objectives.

a) Sustainable EU road transport requires a well balanced regulatory framework, able to protect employees, make transport more efficient and contribute to decent work. This should make the sector more attractive and better able to offer jobs.

The White Paper talks about 'reconciling the social and competitiveness agenda in road transport'. The correct application of the existing rules must be seen as a first priority.

The IRU and ETF call on the EC to establish a detailed strategy to establish a correct, thorough and harmonised application of all relevant road transport legislation. The aim would be to close the gaps in the legislation, and consolidate the legal framework so that the sector benefits from a coherent body of law that fosters occupational health and safety, road safety, fair competition and transport efficiency.

Control of these rules must exist within a common enforcement space with consistent legal interpretations, control standards, information and data exchange between Member States and high quality training for enforcement authorities. There should also be aligned control, appeal and sanction systems ensuring that controls are non-discriminatory.

All legislation, including horizontal social legislation, like the Posting of Workers Directive must be efficient and enforceable and well adapted for a mobile workforce like road transport.

b) A sustainable EU Road Transport sector must be based on legally binding social standards, sustainable social practices and fair conditions of competition for all with fair market practices and rules.

The road transport sector is sensitive to economic change and operates in a highly competitive environment, which may in some cases lead to illegal employment practices. These have a harmful impact on the sector's viability, on social and working conditions in the sector, place responsible employers and workers at a competitive disadvantage, damage working conditions and disproportionately undermine the image of the industry.

The ETF and IRU reiterate their position that illegal employment practices will not be tolerated. The social partners will do everything possible to address illegal employment practices.

To maintain a sustainable road transport sector, a sustainable price for transport must be the norm. This must reflect all operational costs charges.

The IRU and the ETF reiterate their position expressed in the 2008 common declaration on illegal employment, that the EC must implement mechanisms to regulate co-responsibility in

the supply chain. These mechanisms should limit the ability of clients to use dominant market positions and consequently impose contract terms on operators that can undermine compliance with social rules.

c) EU road transport must be based on a fiscal and operational level playing field between modes.

The White Paper lacks targets for the uniform application of external costs and full infrastructure charging across all freight transport modes including railways with a fair and non-discriminatory pricing system.

The implementation of the White Paper must address unbalanced fiscal burdens and competitive distortions that exist, such as between collective passenger transport by road and airlines (VAT, fuel duty etc.).

d) Move away from a modal shift strategy towards an effects based strategy that removes the negative impacts of road transport at source and promoting green road transport.

The Transport White Paper needs to be implemented with concrete measures to support research and development activities that will lead to breakthroughs in green vehicle technology and clean fuels for commercial road transport.

The White Paper needs to be implemented with a strategy and action plan for doubling the use of collective passenger transport. The EU must recognise that buses, coaches and taxis are the safe, environmentally-friendly and affordable alternative to private cars.