

# ITF/IRU: JOINT DEMANDS FOR GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES

Transport workers and companies are the lifeblood of the global economy: connecting people, linking supply chains and keeping the world moving. Their work and services are vital to successfully responding to, and overcoming, the challenge of the Covid-19 outbreak.

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), the voice of over 19 million transport workers and International Road Transport Union (IRU), the voice of 3.5 million transport companies globally, have joined forces to raise the importance of their members and standing up for their interests during the Covid-19 pandemic.

This statement establishes key demands that governments and international bodies must address to ensure that supply and mobility chains are not unfavourably affected, either now or in the future, and to protect transport workers who are the heart of everything we do.

The Covid-19 pandemic has turned the spotlight on road transport – showing once more the indispensable role that road transport companies and their workers play in maintaining sustainable supply chains that ensure that medical products, food and other essentials reach each and every one of us.

Drivers and their employers are the silent heroes that deserve recognition, today more than ever. Their courage, professionalism and commitment are the driving forces that keep us all moving during this difficult time.

The most immediate concerns for the road transport sector are to keep essentials such as food and medical supplies moving, in the safest way possible for transport workers, whilst at the same time ensuring the economic viability and continuity of both passenger and freight transport companies and the jobs they represent.

With nearly 6 percent of all working people worldwide employed in the road transport industry, mainly in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), it is clear that road transport forms an essential part of a well-functioning global economy, particularly in times of crisis. As a result, the smooth functioning of mobility and supply chains, and the continuity of daily deliveries to consumers, is dependent on the viability of these road transport SMEs and the health and wellbeing of their highly qualified and experienced drivers.

## Therefore, ITF and IRU call governments and international bodies to act immediately to:

- Recognise that the job as a commercial vehicle driver is vital to the global economy, international supply chains and mobility of people.
- Designate road transport as a key service when delivering vital services such as the essential mobility of people, food and medical supplies during the Covid-19 response.
- Designate road transport workers as key workers and award them the same protection as other vital service workers during the Covid-19 response.
- Rapidly develop and implement standard practice in cross-border logistics in order to guarantee the safety, health and wellbeing of

drivers. This includes appropriate food and sanitary facilities at the roadside for long distance drivers through consultation with the road transport social partners, ITF and IRU, and industry experts.

- Protect essential current and future mobility services and supply chains by offering, as a priority, government support to road transport SMEs aimed at safeguarding employment.
- Initiate tripartite dialogue at the national level between governments, employers and unions to support the road transport industry and develop targeted action plans, including financial support.
- Ensure access to post Covid-19 financial assistance for the road transport industry, in particular SMEs, in order to support the continuity and resilience of mobility and supply chains.

- Demand respect to drivers by customers, shippers and authorities, this includes access to essential services, including clean sanitation facilities at loading and unloading points as well as border crossings for drivers.

**We must continue to pay tribute to the heroes of the road by loudly valuing their work, voicing their concerns and ensuring that their needs are met.**

IRU

