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World-wide Application of the TIR System

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TIR is a tried and tested tool that facilitates trade to drive global growth and inclusive development. It is an excellent solution for the digital economy and is used every day by thousands of transport and logistics companies, drivers, and customs officials. The TIR system is promoted under the auspices of the United Nations to make it as widely available as possible for all countries wishing to make use of it. In 1984, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) adopted a Resolution which recommends that countries world-wide examine the possibility of acceding to the Convention and introducing the TIR system. Furthermore, it recommends that international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and in particular the Regional Commissions of the United Nations, promote the introduction of the TIR system as a universal Customs transit system. It is the key to faster border crossings for truck drivers, which means lower costs for transport and logistics companies and customs authorities. TIR also directly contributes to implementing key goals of the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) such as measures to enhance transparency, clearance of goods, freedom of transit and customs cooperation, and the publication and availability of information.

Main principles of TIR system are: secure vehicles or containers; international guarantee; TIR carnet; mutual

recognition of Customs controls; controlled access; delivery safety.

In light of the expected increase in world trade, further enlargement of its geographical scope and the introduction of an electronic TIR system (so-called *eTIR-system*), it is expected that the TIR system will continue to remain the only truly global customs transit system.

The eTIR project aims towards the full computerization of the TIR system. Data exchange platform is available for all actors involved in the TIR system. Secure exchange of data between national Customs systems is related to the international transit of goods under TIR Convention. The eTIR project allows Customs to manage the data on guarantees, issued by guarantee chains to holders.

The TIR Convention also contains specific technical requirements for the construction of the load compartments of vehicles or containers, in order to avoid smuggling. In addition, only carriers authorized by customs are allowed to transport goods under the TIR procedure. To cover the customs duties and taxes at risk throughout the journey, the Convention has established an international guaranteeing chain which is managed by the International Road Transport Union (IRU). IRU is also responsible for the printing and distribution of the so-called TIR Carnet, which serves both as international Customs document and proof of guarantee [1].

Many countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and South America are looking to join TIR to experience the benefits it has brought to Europe and Central Asia over the last seven decades. TIR now connects more continents and countries than ever.

India's Cabinet has approved the country's accession to the UN TIR Convention, the global standard for international freight customs transit. This milestone decision will facilitate goods transport and transit, putting India and her neighbours at

the centre of efforts to boost overland trade and regional integration across South Asia and beyond.

In the light of the recent Motor Vehicles Agreement to improve cross-border transport between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal, the government's decision on TIR will fast-track the region's potential to become a productive trade hub.

TIR will also be critical in helping India implement the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement, which entered into force last month. The streamlined international system for the movement of goods by road and other modes will, in particular, enhance India's International *North-South* Transport Corridor, a key trade route between Central Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States in the north, and southern ports in India and beyond, such as Chabahar in Iran. Qatar has become the 73rd country to ratify the United Nations' TIR Convention, the global standard for customs transit, to facilitate trade and the seamless and secure movement of goods across its borders. Qatar's ratification is an important milestone for improving road and multimodal transport in the region, and a sign of the country's integration into global transport and trade norms. The General Authority of Customs has officially nominated IRU's member, Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as the TIR national guaranteeing and issuing association in the State of Qatar.

Due to the large blue-and-white TIR plates carried by vehicles using the TIR convention, the word *TIR* entered many languages as a neologism, becoming the default generic name of a large truck.

References:

1. Mode of access: <http://www.unece.org/tir/about.html>. – Date of access: 13.03.2018.