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## **IRU emergency call for action on COVID-19 vaccinations for professional drivers**

**The General Assembly of the IRU, the world road transport organisation representing over 3.5 million companies operating mobility and logistics services globally, calls on governments to take urgent action to keep people and goods moving.**

Globally, there are around 65 million commercial vehicles on our roads and nearly 6% of all employed people worldwide work in commercial road transport. These people serve communities and industries every day. At the same time, our transport companies and our drivers are confronted with damaging decisions imposed unilaterally by governments, putting drivers, mobility networks and supply chains at risk.

The road transport industry is taking every hygienic precaution against COVID-19, and transport operators are implementing strict measures to protect their customers and drivers with dedicated health practices. High standards are also implemented concerning the carriage of documents to demonstrate compliance with health rules. However, with a misguided testing regime and missing vaccination regime, our drivers cannot be protected.

- Many of our drivers are often unnecessarily caught up in long queues at makeshift roadside test centres, putting them at a much higher risk of contracting COVID-19 than in their usual protected working environment in their vehicle.
- Unacceptably long waiting times at borders often lead to unnecessary detours sometimes exceeding 300 kilometres, as commercial vehicle drivers try to find less crowded border crossing points.

**To address this, the World Health Organization (WHO), alongside other international, intergovernmental organisations, needs to take urgent action and introduce a digital, global and mutually recognised vaccination certificate for commercial vehicle drivers.** In addition:

- Commercial road transport needs to be designated as an essential service, and professional drivers as essential workers.
- Taking note of existing regional initiatives, this certificate should cover all certified vaccines and be widely deployed.

**Furthermore, national governments need to urgently change the testing and vaccination regime.** More specifically:

- Exempting professional coach and truck drivers from COVID-19 testing at borders if certified tests have been carried out prior to arrival at the border, for example at company premises.
- Including and upgrading professional drivers in the priority lists of voluntary national vaccination programmes.

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