

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to join the other participants in the works of the 83rd Session of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) of the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations. Even in a different format from the traditional one, the organization of the session remains a major event on the agendas of decision-makers and practitioners in the transport community.

I am fully convinced that this week's work will be particularly useful in order to identify ways to better manage both the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the contribution of the areas we coordinate to the recovery of our economies.

Today, we are all facing an unprecedented crisis that has posed major challenges, especially for the transport sector, which is vital for the economy.

At the same time, the crisis that has affected the sector and the unprecedented circumstances we have faced have strongly highlighted the benefit of the regional cooperation and European coordination and solidarity.

Many of the projects on the agenda of our meeting today are interconnected with priorities in the field at European level. In this regard, we welcome the European Commissioner, Mrs. Adina VĂLEAN's participation in the ITC works and emphasize our determination to support the European efforts for the development of multi-modal transport, the technological development for transport security, as well as the increase of the cooperation in the field of road safety.

The effects of the crisis caused by the pandemic will be felt on the long time term, but I believe that we can already draw lessons learned and **CONCLUSIONS**, derived from its impact at regional and international level in the sector of activity we coordinate.

- The first conclusion refers to the belief that the **response to the global challenges must be ONE that is COMMON, COORDINATED, BASED ON SOLIDARITY and COOPERATION**. We need regional solidarity, especially in such times, when, as we have seen, a first international reaction to the crisis was that of closing borders and managing the pandemic only at national level.
- **A second conclusion** concerns the importance of an **EFFICIENT, INNOVATIVE and PRAGMATIC MULTILATERAL ACTION FRAMEWORK**. It is imperative to strengthen national transport systems so as to ensure increased resilience to crises and possible discontinuities.
- **A third conclusion** refers to the **NECESSITY OF ADAPTING OUR TRANSPORT SYSTEMS TO THE POST-PANDEMIC PERIOD**, already characterized by displacements or relocations of production chains closer to our countries.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The development of connectivity, with a special focus on digitalization and the reduction of carbon emissions, has a key role in strengthening our economies on a sustainable basis and in intensifying trade relations are sufficient arguments to give our cooperation within the United Nations organization a greater pace and efficiency, a more focused approach to achieving results, a greater openness to consensus.

Thus, developing and strengthening our interaction, at Organization level, with our industry partners, for the benefit of Member States, should be a priority.

We welcome the European Commission's initiative to establish green lanes for all the transport modes, in order to ensure the functioning of the internal market and access to goods, both between the European Union Member States and with the neighboring non-EU (non-European Union) countries. The implementation of the initiative has been a crucial decision for the European Union economy and for securing the supply chains with essential goods.

From the lessons learned, our cooperation in the field should focus on:

- strengthening the **MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION**, taking into account the best practices and recommendations that have been adopted in the recent months, both at state and EU level, and by international organizations in the fields of transport [*and health*];
- enhancing efforts to **digitize transport documents**, respectively transport documents, such as: *eCMR* and *eTIR*, which are meant to reduce processing times, streamline transport services and promote intermodal transport, and
- **identification of civil-military mechanisms for timely response**, in order to better respond to the needs of the humanitarian community. That is a proposal we have put forward in the consultation on the ministerial resolution and we want it to be taken into account in future works.

To conclude, we welcome the endorsement of the ministerial resolution, supported by Romania, together with the decisions to be adopted during this session.

Thank you for your attention!