



# IRF WORLD ROAD MEETING 2017

/ 14-17 NOVEMBER / DELHI / INDIA /

# CROSS/ ROADS

LINKING MOBILITY SOLUTIONS

## SPECIAL SESSION

### IRU

## Transport and transit facilitation in South and South East Asia Current initiatives and next steps

In June 2015 Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) signed the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA), to establish and regulate passenger, personal and cargo vehicular traffic. Protocols for its implementation are being finalised and it is expected to start soon. Furthermore, in 2016, the heads of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) comprising Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand called for signature of a similar agreement. These initiatives show that the region has recognized the importance of connectivity and transport facilitation on boosting trade and regional integration. Improved connectivity is essential to providing cheaper access to goods and services, creating more jobs and ultimately helping to alleviate poverty at a faster rate.

These initiatives along with international agreements such as WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, which have been ratified by all BIMSTEC countries, who are members of the WTO, could play an important role in promoting regional integration and enhancing economic development of the region. However, one should be aware that signature of an agreement is not the end of the process but the first step. Many agreements have been signed but not implemented. In fact, there are many challenges to turn these agreements into operation. BBIN MVA and WTO TFA are framework agreements, which need to be equipped with other tools to be able to serve their purpose.

To this end the region needs to look at the experience of others on how to address the challenges, which may arise during the implementation of these agreements. The existing global standards, international transport facilitation tools, best practices and UN relevant conventions and agreements, which have already been tested, tried and supported transport and transit in other regions, could be taken into account by the regional players.

In that context, India's accession to the UN TIR Convention in June 2017 is one of the steps, which will definitely facilitate transport and transit in South and Southeast Asia and could significantly simplify the implementation of BBIN MVA as well as the WTO TFA. Before India, Pakistan and China recognized the benefits of this facilitation tool and joined the TIR system in 2015 and 2016, respectively. This model could be followed by other countries of the region for improving intra- and inter-regional connectivity.

Therefore, the objective of this special session is to discuss with the relevant experts the current status of the regional initiatives on transport and transit, the prospects of benefits arising out of these agreements and to assess how the existing global standards and best practices such as the TIR System could support the implementation of such initiatives.



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CITY PLANNING  
SMART MOBILITY  
GREEN INSTITUTIONS  
INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS  
RESOURCE COORDINATION  
CONNECTED WORLDS  
AUTONOMOUS DRIVING  
DATA-DRIVEN

## Speakers :

1. Kazem Asayesh, IRU
2. Bipul Chatterjee, CUTS International
3. Mr Sandeep Kumar, Central Board of Excise and Customs
4. Mr A D James, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
5. Mr Bhupinder Singh Bhalla, Joint Secretary, SAARC, Department of Commerce
6. Mr. Sathish Reddy, Consultant, Asian Development Bank
7. Mr. Pritam Banerjee, Director, DHL Group.