

ROAD TRANSPORT: BRIDGING ASIA AND EUROPE 3RD EURO-ASIAN ROAD TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

***Organised by the International Road Transport Union (IRU)
Sponsored by IVECO***

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Iveco has sponsored the third IRU Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference, hosted by the China Road Transport Association (CRTA) and co-organised with the Ministry of Communications of PRC. The International Road Transport Union (IRU) assists bus and coach as well as taxi and truck operators throughout the world and briefs them on developments affecting their business. Through its national associations on every continent, the IRU speaks for the entire road transport industry. The Euro-Asian conference addressed the theme "Road Transport: bridging Europe and Asia", with a view to highlight the importance of transcontinental road transport links and co-operation for economic development.

"Since the adoption of the policy of reform and opening to the outside world, the achievements of China's road infrastructure have drawn world-wide attention. The road transport industry has also witnessed a remarkable development. Within the context of world economic globalization, increasingly strengthened regional economic cooperation, and ever-changing science and technology, China's road transport industry faces both opportunities and challenges. It is our historical responsibility to seize the opportunity and get well prepared for the challenges, in an effort to accelerate the development of China's road transport industry and enhance the road transport cooperation with all other countries throughout the world.", the Chinese Ministry of Communications declared. Mr. Feng Zhenglin, Vice Minister of Communications, stressed that "while opening wider to the outside world, the road transport industry of China attaches great importance to the communication and cooperation with countries all over the world and the international organizations concerned".

Paul Laeremans, IRU President, said: "This latest IRU Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference will help to remove barriers to international road transport across the entire Eurasian landmass – an essential precondition for realisation of the vision of a revitalised Silk Road. With many senior Chinese Government and road transport business leaders scheduled to participate, attendance at this event is a "must" for all road transport entrepreneurs in other countries looking to do business with China."

The conference was attended by 800 delegates and featured five sessions covering: economic growth and increased demand for road transport; international road transport as a key factor to economic and social development and cooperation; regulatory aspects and facilitation of road transport in Asia; Eurasian road infrastructure; best transport and logistics practices in Asia and Europe. Furthermore, a final joint session involved guest Ministers from several European and Asian countries, who discussed about the integration of road transport markets in Europe and Asia, and adopted a "Ministerial Statement" as a concrete sign of commitment in view of further concerted actions and policies.

In his welcome address Franco Fenoglio, Iveco International Operations & Business Development Senior Vice President, presented the conference as a "key opportunity to pave the way to closer relations with the transport industry stakeholders, in order to share the key industry trends, particularly with regard to technology". "We are investing at a global level to strengthen Iveco presence and capacity to serve global customers. We are convinced that China has a great market potential and we are fully committed to be an important player of China growth". As far as Iveco's global approach is concerned, "we consider local cultures a great asset and we are committed to invest on local resources to enhance skills and integrate Iveco in the local context", Mr. Fenoglio said.



Mario Astengo, Iveco Medium & Heavy Commercial Vehicles Senior Vice President, took part in the 5th Session, contributing a presentation on "Best Technologies Available to Serve the Asian Road Transport Market". "In the past decades, the actions aimed at improving cost-effectiveness in the manufacturing industries affected mainly that segment of the value chain related to manufacturing processes. Further on, the battle came out to distribution systems: emphasis on cost-bashing has led to an optimization of distribution related operation, which meant minimizing the costs per kilometer, basically through improving fuel consumption, enhancing driver's productivity, and reducing hardware related costs. Today, cost-effectiveness is ultimately sought in optimization of vehicle use, for instance through communication technologies, with a view to maximize the time the vehicle is in use and minimize the duration of stops", Mr. Astengo said. On the other hand, "It is highly likely that the Asian markets will develop through the same steps the Western market did over the last 60 years: but they will catch-up the 21st century's opportunities and challenges. China is rapidly equipping itself with state-of-the-art infrastructure and can put in good use the 60-year experience and know-how developed in the West in order to couple the best way technologies and infrastructure. However, an increasing pressure on costs will soon cause Asian markets to react by squeezing costs directly at the level of distribution system, that is jumping to state of the art solutions, hunting for cost-effectiveness", Mr. Astengo added. Therefore, in order to help reduce the total cost of ownership of road transport vehicles, "Iveco offers a leading technology in terms of fuel consumption, reliable performance, and payback period". As far as customer service is concerned, Mr. Astengo highlighted Iveco's state of the art solutions for telediagnosis and remote maintenance, cheap and fast. In a wide country like China, this is expected to be a significant competitive factor.

With regard to environmental care, Mario Astengo mentioned Iveco's Euro 4 and Euro 5 technologies currently available on the Stralis range, with emissions level ahead of timing requirements. He also stressed Iveco's strong commitment to look into alternative fuels for sustainable mobility.

Addressing the 5th Session's conclusions, Mr. Franco Fenoglio underlined some aspects that are particularly important to Iveco, such as people management and development, deemed a key factor to promote business sustainability and a continuous improvement in quality; technology, playing a crucial role for road transport operators to achieve cost-effectiveness and satisfy customer requirements; and co-operation among transport industry players, running their business at different levels of the value chain. "These three aspects will be important elements in the growth of the Asian Transport Market and in the co-operation between Europe and Asia", Mr. Fenoglio said. "The Asian industry will be suddenly facing the 21st century challenges, with no chance of undergoing the adaptation processes western operators pursued in the past decades, but on the other hand having the opportunity to leverage on that experience", he added.

In Mr. Fenoglio's words, the 3rd Euro-Asian Road Transport Conference was a means to help transport industry stakeholders not only in developing businesses and strategies, but also in establishing a fruitful Euro-Asian co-operation through continuous commitment.

Iveco

Iveco is a global company that markets a comprehensive range of vehicles and engines, and is committed to the transport world and to the satisfaction of its customers; it adopts cutting edge technologies and guarantees reliable performance and levels of excellence in the quality of its products and the services it offers customers all over the world. Iveco's strategy is to generate ever-higher profitability by concentrating on the customer and on the market, reinforcing the technological content and competitiveness of its products. Transport safety, Respect for the environment and Productivity on the road are key elements of its policy, together with Technological innovation and Lean enterprise. Iveco manufactures and sells over 160,000 commercial vehicles and 430,000 engines all over the world, achieving total sales of about Euro 9 billion. It operates 49 plants in 19 countries around the world, 15 Research and Development centres, and has a workforce of 31,000 employees and 844 dealers.

