Dr Jennifer Blanke  
Director and Senior Economist  
Global Competitiveness Network

Geneva, 14th April 2009

Martin Marmy  
Secretary General  
International Road Transport Union  
3, rue de Varembé  
CH 1211 Geneva 20

Dear Mr Marmy,

It was a pleasure to address the IRU’s General Assembly last Friday, 3 April 2009 and present the World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Report (GCR) with a perspective on reducing the impact of the economic crisis.

As I explained during the presentation, the GCR clearly highlights the vital importance of efficient road transport in ensuring the productivity and hence competitiveness of any country in today’s globalised economy. As such, the Forum would encourage governments to put in place the appropriate measures to promote and facilitate road transport, as inefficient road transport hinders economic development. The GCR more generally underlines the importance of infrastructure and innovation for long term, sustainable economic growth and competitiveness. I was pleased to learn that these are two “i”s in the exemplary IRU 3rd strategy for achieving sustainable development.

Further, while the lack of infrastructure is a significant problem in some of the least developed countries of the world, inadequate procedures at borders are today one of the greatest impediments to trade and thus economic growth. This issue is explored in detail in the Forum’s Global Enabling Trade Report (GETR).

Finally, in light of the enormous cost to the economy represented by border waiting times, I would join you in encouraging governments to systematically transmit data to the IRU’s Border Waiting Times Observatory. This would make it possible to include a measure of reductions in waiting times through the implementation of more effective border crossing procedures in the Forum’s analysis.

Yours sincerely,

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