



# **TRAINING SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL ROAD HAULAGE IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

**STAGE 2: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE  
INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK ON ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT**

**MAJOR OBSTACLES HINDERING ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT  
AND THE NECESSITY FOR HARMONIZING ITS STANDARDS**

*Presentation Summary*

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# **TITLE OF THE PRESENTATION: MAJOR OBSTACLES HINDERING ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT AND THE NECESSITY FOR HARMONIZING ITS STANDARDS**

## 1.Introduction

It is argued that transport is the most essential element to any activity, be it economical, industrial, social or otherwise. Transport moves the goods from the location of manufacturing to its place of consumption. In most MEDA countries, Road Freight transport is the most commonly used mode mainly due to the following facts:

- 1.1 It is the most suitable mode for short distances, and the distance between most major cities in the countries of our region is relatively short (Amman to Damascus 200 km. Damascus to Beirut 120 km.,...etc)
- 1.2 It is the most accessible of all modes of transport. While to ride a ship or an aeroplane you have to go to the seaport or the airport, road transport can provide door-to-door service.
- 1.3 It is affordable to small businesspeople. A consigner can hire (or even own for that purpose) a truck to transport say 20 tons of freight and the truck will travel according to his/her own schedule, but he /she can not hire a ship or an aeroplane for that volume of cargo, and decide its schedule.

## 2. Importance of Road Freight Transport:

Road haulage, being the cheapest mode of transport for short distances, is commonly used in the region due to the relative short distances between most of the capitals of the neighbouring countries and their major cities. 100% of road freight transport between countries such as Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine and Saudi Arabia is done by road transport. The fact that any other mode of transport, whether rail or air or sea, will also need road transport to carry the goods to their final terminals (airports, seaports) make road freight transport imperative to any movements of cargo.

## 3.Main obstacles Hindering Road Freight Transport

Obstacles facing the development of road freight transport in MEDA countries are many. One can quote the followings as the major problems hampering the development of this industry:

- 3.1 Politics: The status of the political ties between the countries in the region and the political regime itself have a great impact on the movements of goods and cargo in & out of the country and between the countries.
- 3.2 Borders crossings: Borders crossing can be a hectic experience to road haulage due to the un-necessarily long procedures and many signatures from borders officials. Some borders still follow the old method of searching the cargo by taking off all or major part of the load of the truck. Also some borders in the region open only for 8 or 12 hrs. for road haulage and they require the movements of trucks to be by convoys. Rules and regulations that applied at many of those land borders are not clear or transparent and they constantly change without notifications to shippers or operators.
- 3.3 Legal and fiscal: This obstacle represents the difference and big discrepancy between laws and regulation governing the industry in countries of the region. The maximum axle load regulations and the vehicle dimension are good examples of such differences.
- 3.4 The fragmented and scattered ownership of the road haulage fleet ( e.g. in Jordan 85% of all freight fleet is owned by individuals) and the oldness of fleet. Most trucks are 25 years old and more.

3.5 The weakness and inefficiency of the freight forwarders, which results in delays at borders and at destinations.

3.6 The high cost of ton per km. Or of a round trip because trucks will have to make its return journey empty-ferry- due to government regulations that prohibits loading out of their countries to foreign operators.

3.7 The severe lack of statistics and data of the industry.

3.8 Terrorism of course made life more difficult to every body and especially to travellers whether people or cargo. Security procedures, naturally have become much more tight resulting in more waiting time, thus increasing the cost of the journey.

#### 4.The Necessity for harmonizing the standards of the Road Freight Transport

Laws, regulations and standards of this industry need to be harmonized in order to path the way for the advancement of the industry. In addition to axles load regulations and vehicles dimension, the road standards and the signs of roads need to be unified and simplified amongst the MEDA countries. To harmonize and unify freight shipment contracts and freight shipments waybill is a big necessity. The need to create a “passage- ticket” similar to the “trip-ticket” and the need to establish goods-insurance policy similar to T.I.R is evident

#### 5.Suggested Solutions

The solutions needed to overcome the obstacles mentioned before are, of course, derived from those very problems and responsive to them, such as:

5.1 Neutralizing politics.

5.2 Unifying and simplifying and automating (where applicable).

5.3 Substitute conveyes, and open border 24 hrs. a day.

5.4 Unify and harmonize laws and regulations.

5.5 Multilateral agreements.

5.6 Bank of the information for the Industry.

#### 6.Conclusions

The potential of road freight transport in the area is very promising, and it is becoming increasingly the most dominant mode of transport for this industry. With the advent of the Economical Globalisation, more pressure will be applied on the industry to shape-up. The obstacles preventing this extremely important industry from achieving its full-scale advancement are mostly man-made and artificial and can be solved.