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**FRENCH MINISTRY OF ECOLOGY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENERGY
MR. ALAIN VIDALIES – MINISTER OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT, MARINE AFFAIRS AND
FISHERIES**

**Ref: protest against the application of French protectionist legislation to Romanian
transport companies**

Dear Mr. Minister of State,

On behalf of the National Union of Road Hauliers from Romania (UNTRR) - employers' professional organization which promotes nationally and internationally the interests of Romanian transport companies performing road transport of passengers and goods,

We would like to express our serious concerns related to the **protectionist measures introduced recently by the French legislation, affecting directly our members:**

- **First, on 11st of July 2014 France adopted Law no.2014-790 to combat social and unfair competition, which forbids professional drivers to spend the regular weekly rest in the cabin of the vehicle. This legislation is targeting mainly foreign/Eastern drivers and not the French drivers who naturally spend their weekly rest at home.** Failure to comply with this law is sanctioned by huge and unjustified fines up to 30 000 Euro and one year imprisonment. Although until today no application norms were issued by the French Government, French enforcers started fining Eastern drivers from Romania and Poland for spending their weekly rest in the cabin!
- **This year, Macron law draft for boosting growth and activity in French economy introduces a French minimum wage of 9.61 Euro/hour, abusively providing that foreign (Romanian) drivers performing international transport and cabotage on French territory should be paid by their Romanian employers with the French wages negotiated by collective labor agreements at transport sector level in France (9.79 Euro/hour?!).**

In this way, France and other developed Member States like Germany and Belgium are raising barriers to Eastern EU competitors by accusing them of social dumping, a term used more and more for justifying these protectionist measures. The "social dumping" allegation is misused since the differences between Western and Eastern EU wages are not an unfair practice but a consequence of different living and social standards within EU. If analyzing the real situation on EU transport market, Western Member States would understand that **Eastern hauliers don't take Westerner's jobs, but do their jobs!**

The protectionist actions undertaken by French Government are severely affecting the **freedom to provide services in EU** – a fundamental principle of the EU Single Market. In this dangerous approach, EU is going towards self-destruction. EU is more powerful united than divided and it is very important to realize this until it is not too late.

Aiming to raise the awareness of French Presidency and Government on all the above mentioned challenges affecting not only Romanian road transport industry but also EU's unity and its competitiveness on the global market, our association organizes a protest against the application of French protectionist measures to Romanian transport companies. UNTRR and its members will protest in front of French Embassy in Bucharest on 18 March 2015, acting in coordination with other road hauliers associations from the Eastern Europe in our common approach against neo-protectionism in Europe.

Trusting that the French Embassy in Bucharest will convey our messages to the French Presidency and Government in order to urgently solve this critical situation, we are looking forward to receiving your kind reply and we assure you of our highest consideration.

Yours faithfully,

**Secretary General
Radu DINESCU**

