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ILO, IRU and ITF join forces against AIDS

Three world organisations will unveil the results of their alliance to fight HIV/Aids tomorrow, Dec 1st, World Aids Day. United Nations agency the ILO (International Labour Organization), world transport operators' organisation the IRU (International Road Transport Union), and global union federation the ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) will announce that they are producing a new multimedia 'toolkit' for battling the spread of the disease among lorry drivers worldwide, one of the sectors most affected by the virus.

According to the three organisations, experience shows that programmes targeting the transport sector - and specifically truck drivers - are most effective if carried out with the agreement of employers and employees. The Training Toolkit on HIV/AIDS in road transport is designed to enable workers, drivers, managers and instructors to respond to the epidemic in their workplace.

Extended periods away from home, waiting times at borders that can last several days, and the need for social interaction are some of the factors that contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS among workers in the international road transport industry.

Head of the IRU Academy, the IRU's education arm, Bruno Dingemans, explained, "Appropriate awareness-raising and targeted training are the keys to getting the most for and from workers. This unique synergy between representatives of all stakeholders concerned is the best solution to what has been happening in this sector. The Training Toolkit on HIV/AIDS will be integrated in the IRU Academy Driver and Manager Programmes, for implementation in 2008 by all IRU Academy Accredited Training Institutes (Aits)."

ITF General Secretary, David Cockcroft, commented, "Road transport workers have long been one of the groups most affected by the virus, and we are delighted to see the IRU Academy using its influence and know-how to help spread messages of prevention and treatment, and to put an end to discrimination. Similarly we applaud the ILO's initiative and undoubted efforts in this work."

Sophia Kisting, Director of the ILO's Programme on HIV/AIDS and the world of work and Elizabeth Tinoco, Chief of the ILO Sectoral Activities Branch, both emphasized the need for joint action. According to the *UNAIDS Report 2006*, HIV is spreading fast along major transport routes in different regions of the world. Transport workers are at risk by virtue of the nature of their work, but they are also well placed to contribute to the response. "On this World AIDS Day, we celebrate the leadership demonstrated by the constituents of the ILO to contribute to the national HIV/AIDS efforts through the world of work", said Dr

Kisting. "The ILO looks forward to implementing more sector-based interventions with constituents, focusing on the specific needs within each sector", stated Ms Tinoco.

The toolkit will comprise:

- A training of trainers manual/course for facilitators.
- A training course for management personnel of road transport companies
- An awareness raising and advocacy course for transport workers which can be used on its own or integrated in existing courses
- A DVD to promote the joint effort to combat HIV/AIDS in the road transport sector and raise awareness of the training materials and training opportunities that may be offered jointly or separately by ILO, IRU Academy and ITF.

The full package will be available in early 2008 and can be ordered from any of the three organizations via their websites:

www.ilo.org

www.iru.org

www.itfglobal.org

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