



## **TRIPARTITE OF COMESA, EAC AND SADC**

# **TRIPARTITE GUIDELINES ON TRADE AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION FOR THE MOVEMENT OF PERSONS, GOODS AND SERVICES ACROSS THE TRIPARTITE REGION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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**29 July 2020**

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### **1. PREAMBLE**

- 1.1. Taking cognisance of several Statements by the Ministers responsible for Health and other relevant Ministers in the Tripartite region in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- 1.2. Aware that Member/Partner States are taking a number of measures at the National and Regional Economic Community (REC) levels to contain the COVID-19 pandemic;
- 1.3. Recognising that the World Health Organization has and continues to provide guidelines on what measures need to be taken during this period of the pandemic;
- 1.4. Taking into account the guidelines developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO) on facilitating the movement of goods to contain the COVID-19 pandemic;
- 1.5. Noting that domestic, interstate and international travel by persons and movement of goods have proven to be some of the main ways the COVID-19 virus is spreading among communities, nations and globally and the need to allow safe trade and transport facilitation for economic growth while containing the spread of the Corona virus;
- 1.6. Aware that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the usual movement of persons, goods and services in the Tripartite region;
- 1.7. Acknowledging that to sustain lives of the peoples of the Tripartite region, the movement of persons, goods and services has to continue uninterrupted;
- 1.8. Considering the need to facilitate the interstate movement of persons, goods and services in the Tripartite region during the COVID 19 pandemic period;

- 1.9. Recognising that COVID-19 pandemic is a serious global crisis affecting Member/Partner States that has brought to the fore the challenge of protecting the health of the population whilst avoiding undue disruptions to the interstate movement of persons and the delivery of goods and services across the Tripartite region;
- 1.10. Recognising that, despite the incidence of the pandemic, the implementation of regional policies on the movement of goods, services and persons should continue to be governed by the principle of market integration and regional cooperation between the Member/Partner States;
- 1.11. Acknowledging that in their responses to combat COVID-19, Member/Partner States should continue to be guided by a collective commitment of maintaining open and connected supply chains working collaboratively to identify and address trade disruptions with ramifications on the flow of goods and services within the Tripartite region;
- 1.12. Recognizing that it is in the collective interest of all Tripartite Member/Partner States to ensure that trade routes (road, rail, air and sea freight) remain open to facilitate the flow of persons and goods, including essential supplies;
- 1.13. Noting the need to mitigate any negative impact by COVID-19 on the established Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) arrangements with regard to the movement of goods and services within the Tripartite region, it is important that Member/Partner States adopt common measures to safely and efficiently maintain the flow of goods and services within the region taking into account the guidelines given by the African CDC, ICAO, WCO, IMO and WHO on measures to be taken during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, and
- 1.14. Recognizing the unique situations of Island States including Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius and Seychelles and the landlocked countries while facilitating movement of goods and services. Further, noting the need for Tripartite Member/Partner States to conform to minimum uniform procedures, regulations and standards in order to reduce the spread of the corona virus and minimize disruptions in the supply chain for goods and services across the Tripartite region.

*The Tripartite Member/Partner States hereby adopt the following Guidelines as minimum uniform regulations, procedures and standards in order to reduce the spread of the corona virus and minimize disruptions in the supply chain and to facilitate movement of goods and services across the region during the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

## **2. OBJECTIVES OF THE GUIDELINES**

The main objective of the Guidelines is to contain the spread of COVID-19 whilst facilitating trade and transport for safe, efficient and cost-effective movement of goods and services across the region during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **The specific objectives of these guidelines are to:**

- 2.1. Complement regional and national measures against the COVID-19 pandemic aimed at protecting citizens against the pandemic by limiting the spread of COVID-19 through transport and mobility across borders;
- 2.2. Safeguard the existing trading arrangements (regional and global supply chains) in order to minimize the disruption to cross-border trade in goods and services, whilst striking the balance between primarily ensuring public health on one hand and the need to sustain national economies, livelihoods of citizens and food security;
- 2.3. Ensure smooth and uninterrupted movement of goods and services during the COVID-19 pandemic by balancing, aligning, harmonizing and coordinating COVID-19 response measures with the requirements for trade and transport facilitation;
- 2.4. Facilitate and encourage local production and trading in essential goods and services within the region during this COVID-19 pandemic such as food, medical equipment and medicines, including medical supplies, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) so as to increase their availability from within the region; and
- 2.5. Enhance regional awareness on measures instituted against the COVID-19 pandemic with regard to measures aimed at ensuring safe movement of goods and services in the region and mitigate/eliminate stigmatization of drivers and crew on spreading the virus.

### **3. GUIDELINES**

The Guidelines facilitate and support Tripartite Member/Partner States in implementing the policies and measures to combat COVID-19 recommended by World Health Organization (WHO), World Customs Organization (WCO), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Maritime Organization (IMO) and African Centre for Disease Control (AfCDC). The Guidelines incorporate in Annex 1 the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Management and Monitoring of Cross Border Road Transport at Designated Points of Entry and COVID-19 Checkpoints.

#### **3.1. CROSS BORDER ROAD FREIGHT TRANSPORT OPERATIONS**

Subject to National Legislation, goods and services shall be allowed to flow between Member/Partner States while observing public health measures on safe trade. However, subject to Member/Partner State COVID-19 restrictions, priority shall be given to the following goods and services:

- (i) Food, agricultural inputs and supplies; perishable products and veterinary supplies;
- (ii) Medical equipment and medicines, including medical supplies, hospital supplies, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- (iii) Cleaning and hygiene products including face masks, face shields, hand sanitizer, disinfectants, soap, alcohol for industrial use, household cleaning products and personal toiletries;
- (iv) Chemicals, packaging, equipment, spares, maintenance materials, raw materials and ancillary products used in the production and processing of food products, medicines and other essential goods and services;
- (v) Security, emergency and humanitarian relief services;
- (vi) Fuel, including coal and gas;

- (vii) Other goods and services that a Member/Partner State considers as critical during the COVID-19 pandemic, shall be allowed to move, however, it is incumbent for the Member/Partner State to inform other Member/Partner States and notify other stakeholders through the COMESA, EAC and SADC Secretariats Websites; and
- (viii) Where a Member/Partner State is unable to accept the flow of all goods and services from other Member/Partner States while observing public health measures on safe trade the Member/Partner State must inform other Member/Partner States and other stakeholders through the COMESA, EAC and SADC Secretariats who shall post such notifications on their respective Websites.

### **3.2. TRADE AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION**

Tripartite Member/Partner States must continue to facilitate the safe movement of goods and services from and to other Member/Partner States by:

- 3.2.1. Providing adequate PPE, other medical supplies and equipment for and conduct regular screening and testing of frontline personnel at border crossings and checkpoints such as Public Health, Immigration, Customs, Law Enforcement and other Border Agencies;
- 3.2.2. Categorising Cross Border Truck Drivers, Pilots and Crews as workers undertaking transportation of exempted goods and services shall be classified as undertaking essential services and facilitate their movement;
- 3.2.3. Directing Transporters, Transporters Associations and Logistics Service providers to adhere to the requirement of having a maximum of only two (2) to three (3) person crew per truck including the driver;
- 3.2.4. Screening and testing all drivers/pilots and their crew before departure at designated/accredited testing facilities. in order to ensure continued safe movement of goods and services in the region while observing the WHO recommended measures:

- i. Immediately isolating any persons, including drivers/pilots/crew, that exhibit symptoms or test positive in line with set national Guidelines and treat those with symptoms in accordance with the COVID-19 protocols under the supervision of the Health Authorities;
  - ii. If a driver or crew member is showing signs or symptoms of COVID-19 and tested positive, the truck will be decontaminated before it is allowed to continue to its final destination and the driver or crew Member must be referred to a treatment centre at operator's cost (unless the costs are waived by the host Member/ Partner State). The driver or crew will be isolated at the government designated facilities at the operator's cost (unless the costs are waived by the host Member/ Partner State); and
  - iii. In the event that crews are isolated or quarantined while in transit, truck owners/operators shall make necessary arrangements for a backup crew to ensure that the goods are delivered to the intended destination. Member/Partner States shall expedite the movement of backup crews after they have been cleared by Health Officials;
- 3.2.5. Treating drivers and crew who are tested for COVID-19 and found to be positive in the host Member/Partner State where the test was carried out, Member/Partner States are urged not to repatriate infected drivers and crew to the country of origin to avoid the spread of COVID-19, unless requested to do so by the country of origin of the driver/crew. In the latter case, the countries concerned shall ensure that such repatriation is handled with utmost care to avoid contagion by the infected driver/crew. All repatriation or treatment costs, as the case may be, shall be borne by the operator (unless the costs are waived by the host Member/ Partner State);
- 3.2.6. Allowing drivers/pilots and crew members that hold a valid negative COVID-19 clearance certificate issued by the country of departure in the last 14 days to proceed to deliver or collect the goods as per the provisions of Annex 1, while observing the national laws and regulations;
- 3.2.7. Considering and implementing electronic surveillance monitoring systems, as may be agreed by Member/Partner States, for management of the registration of cross border trips, recording, monitoring and surveillance of driver wellness including medical test results for specified communicable diseases such as COVID-19, tracking of

vehicles, loads and drivers, contact tracing, queue management at ports, border posts and other facilities and statistical analysis and reporting;

- 3.2.8. Providing hygiene facilities at each transport node, such as air and sea ports, Inland Container Depots, Container Freight Stations, Road Side Stations/Truck Stops, border posts and inland terminals as recommended by WHO and the National Governments.
- 3.2.9. Adopting a joint inspections and coordinated approach at all designated points for entry and exit of goods and providing access and adequate personnel at these points;
- 3.2.10. Directing transport operators and their associations to:
  - (i) Collaborate with Health Officials to design and implement a sensitization program for cross border operators and their employees;
  - (ii) Register all cross-border trips through an approved national platform and system;
  - (iii) Test drivers/crews/pilots prior to commencement of their cross-border trip and allow only personnel that have tested negative for COVID-19 to proceed with the trip;
  - (iv) Inform their driver/crew members with negative COVID-19 test certificates that Member/ Partner States may opt to perform random testing for quality assurance;
  - (v) Instruct drivers of cross border trucks/vehicles to complete Trip Sheets /Logbooks which show their stops, destination and times during the trip. The Trip Sheet / Logbooks must be kept in the custody of the driver during the trip and shown to Law Enforcement and Health Officials on demand. Trip Sheets and Logbooks must be stored at the offices of the Operator and should be made available to Law Enforcement and Health Officials when required to facilitate contact tracing and investigations;
  - (vi) Operators to collaborate with governments in exploring how vehicle tracking data can be used for tracing and investigations;

- (vii) Ensure that cross border drivers carry sufficient face masks and shields, hand sanitizers, water and soap for the WHO recommended hygiene purposes;
- (viii) Instruct drivers not to carry unauthorised persons such as hitchhikers;
- (ix) Instruct cross border drivers to maintain at least 1 metre physical distance between persons at all times throughout the trip; and
- (x) Provide isolation facilities for crews and employees who show signs and symptoms and or test positive for COVID-19.

3.2.11. Urging each other to:

- i. Promote local production of the items required to contain COVID-19 pandemic, for example, medications, sanitizers, protective gear, ventilators etc; and
- ii. Facilitate Intra-Tripartite export/transfer of medical supplies and relief items such as food items amongst the Member/Partner States from surplus areas to deficit areas.

**3.3. GAZETTED TRANSIT ROUTE**

- 3.3.1. All transporters should use gazetted transit routes along the transport corridors as well as interconnecting routes;
- 3.3.2. Drivers are required to declare their final destination and are urged to stop only at designated points along the transport corridors;
- 3.3.3. Governments should designate specific points along the transit routes throughout the region where drivers and crew can recuperate whilst minimises contacts with the local communities, such resting places be communicated to other Member/Partner States through the REC Secretariats; and

- 3.3.4. Governments should submit to REC Secretariats detailed corridor maps including the following details-designated routes, check points, lists of designated safe and secure parking facilities, fuelling stations and quarantine centres for cross border road transport vehicles in transit and performing deliveries/pick-ups.

### **3.4. HANDLING OF CARGO AT POINTS OF ENTRY / INTERNAL BORDERS**

- 3.4.1. For simplification and automation of trade and transport facilitation processes and documents to reduce face to face interaction and delays at ports and border crossings, Member/Partner States are encouraged to:
- (i) simplify and automate trade and transport facilitation processes whilst ensuring that all legal documents are in place and customs and other regulatory requirements are complied with;
  - (ii) introduce or enhance pre-clearance of goods and single window processing;
  - (iii) accelerate the creation of online applications and platforms for the processing, clearance of imports and exports, application, issuance and renewals of licenses and permits, registration of drivers, operators, vehicles and loads, payment of fees and for information dissemination and sharing;
  - (iv) implementing and integrating the SMART Corridor building blocks that monitor through ICT, the physical movement of drivers, vehicles and loads and documentation flows through ports, borders, weighbridges and COVID-19 testing, quarantine and isolation facilities; and
  - (v) Adopt common and integrated electronic surveillance and monitoring systems for drivers, vehicles and loads.
- 3.4.2. To the extent possible, cargo clearance should be facilitated at all designated entry points by joint / multi-agency teams including Customs, Standards bodies, Health, Immigration, Security, Police, Port/Border control in a one-stop mode of operation to minimize the time taken to clear goods, drivers and crew;
- 3.4.3. Any controls instituted by any individual Member/Partner States should be applied in a considerate and proportionate manner;

- 3.4.4. Governments and transporters will adhere to and provide health and hygiene facilities as per the WHO recommendations and national measures for COVID-19.
- 3.4.5. Allow use of warehousing facilities to address the liquidity challenges faced by importers and minimization of spread of COVID-19 by people inspecting cargo; and
- 3.4.6. Customs and other Agencies to facilitate the movement of goods by allowing scanned documents in lieu of original documents that may take longer to be physically couriered and in order to minimize physical contacts / interactions.

### **3.5. MOVEMENT OF GOODS IN TRANSIT / INLAND DELIVERIES**

- 3.5.1. Drivers and crew in transit to other Member/Partner States and those delivering goods and services inland, should be facilitated to move through their territory to inland destinations as needed and their safety should be guaranteed in situations where travel restrictions have been put in place;
- 3.5.2. Transporters are compelled to ensure that drivers and crew are screened or tested before they start the trip and wear masks when in proximity of persons other than the crew members throughout the trip;
- 3.5.3. Under the prevailing circumstances, it might take longer for some goods in transit to reach exit customs offices. Customs Administrations are required to waive the time-limit between customs office of departure to the Customs office of exit;
- 3.5.4. Shipping lines are urged to waive charges on containers delays during this pandemic period; and
- 3.5.5. Member/Partner States and transporters are required to disinfect the trucks carrying cargo before and after loading or unloading.

**3.6. PAYMENTS AND COMMUNICATION SERVICES**

- 3.6.1. Member/ Partner States may waive fees on Port/Border handling charges for essential goods required during this period;
- 3.6.2. Member/Partner States are urged to facilitate the use of electronic payments, such as mobile money to significantly reduce the use of cash to curb the spread of COVID-19;
- 3.6.3. Member/Partner States to urge service providers including banks and telecommunication companies to lower transaction costs on money transfer, data and roaming charges; and
- 3.6.4. Member/Partner States are urged to accept payment in US dollars or other convertible currencies for border and Port charges where necessary.

**3.7. APPLICATION OF CUSTOMS LAWS AND INTERPRETATION**

- 3.7.1. Taking into consideration the mobility restrictions to contain COVID-19 which might delay communication of Customs decisions to field officers, Customs Administrations are urged to give field officers delegated powers to decide on how to handle essential goods and services; and
- 3.7.2. Subject to national laws and regulations, Ports and Customs Administrations are urged to waive fees, storage and handling charges and warehouse rent relating to essential goods that are imported during the COVID-19 pandemic and are not transferred to the respective destination due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**3.8. INSPECTION OF GOODS FOR QUALITY AND SAFETY**

- 3.8.1. Notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic, goods with direct impact on human health, safety and environment shall continue to be inspected for quality and safety;
- 3.8.2. Inspection Agencies in the Member/Partner States are urged to devise measures to expedite the inspection process; and

3.8.3. Priority should be given to inspection of essential goods.

### **3.9. EXCHANGE AND SHARING OF INFORMATION**

3.9.1. Member/Partner States are urged to continuously share information on the COVID-19 pandemic with each other and with the REC Secretariats;

3.9.2. Government agencies, traders and cargo handlers are urged to share information on challenges encountered in the movement of goods and services during this period of COVID-19 pandemic to facilitate timely response;

3.9.3. The Member / Partner States and the REC Secretariats are to designate contact persons and their designations who will facilitate the exchange and sharing of information in accordance with international health regulations;

3.9.4. Member / Partner States and the REC Secretariats will continuously conduct awareness and training interventions to ensure availability of the necessary capacity and readiness to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

3.9.5. Member / Partner States are urged to submit to the REC Secretariats, documents on COVID19 national declaration, policies, laws, regulations and notifications and Secretariats shall post such documents on their respective websites for information sharing and dissemination.

### **3.10. CROSS BORDER ROAD PASSENGER TRANSPORT**

3.10.1. Subject to National Laws and Regulations, Inter-State mass movement of persons by buses/minibuses or other vehicles shall be allowed to resume through mutually agreed and recognized arrangements between the country of origin, country of destination and country/ies of transit, prior to the development and adoption of Tripartite guidelines for cross-border passenger transport:

- (i) Citizens and residents returning to home countries/places of residence will be subjected to the gazetted regulations in the country of origin and country of destination on screening and testing as well as isolation or quarantine, if deemed necessary;
- (ii) The following will be subjected to local regulations on screening only according to local regulations unless in the screening they show symptoms of COVID-19 then they shall be subjected to isolation and quarantine if deemed necessary:
  - (a) Security, emergency and humanitarian relief services as may be agreed between Member/Partner States;
  - (b) Engineering and maintenance support services (including engineers and support staff) supporting the production of goods mentioned in section 3.1;
  - (c) Transportation of work crews and teams under special arrangements between Member/Partner States (e.g. teams working on cross border transport projects such as Kazungula Bridge and One Stop Border Post); and
  - (d) Diplomatic personnel in accordance with rules established by Member/Partner States.

3.10.2 Inter-state movement of persons by all modes of transport shall be allowed subject to existing bilateral, multilateral and corridor agreements between and among Member/Partner States once arrangements for safe travel are made, such as testing of all passengers before they travel as is done for drivers and crews as per the SOPs in Annex 1 of the Tripartite Guidelines.

3.10.3 The following conditions must be met by operators and stakeholders who may wish to apply for the exemptions in 3.10.1 above:

- (i) Reduction in number of passengers in a bus, mini-bus or other vehicle and enforcement of public health measures of 1 metre distance apart;
- (ii) Provision of WHO recommended hygiene facilities on the vehicle, at the bus terminuses, borders and other places the cross-border buses may stop;

- (iii) Information dissemination by operators to passengers on COVID-19 preventative measures in the languages of the travellers (where possible); and
- (iv) Completion of travel history questionnaires by passengers/travellers and ensuring that completed travel history forms are submitted to Port Health Officials.

### **3.11 REGULATION OF OTHER MODES OF CROSS BORDER TRANSPORT**

For air, rail, inland waterways and maritime modes of transport, the following will apply:

- (i) Member/Partner States to consult and agree on the suspension of interstate transport services and the conditions for services that will be allowed to continue;
- (ii) Interstate travelling of persons should be discouraged and where it takes place it should be according to travel advisories, rules and procedures put in place by country of origin, transit and destination. Physical distancing of at least 1 metre must be applied;
- (iii) Hygienic facilities recommended by the WHO be provided on the vehicle and at terminal areas and during travel<sup>1</sup>;
- (iv) Information dissemination by the driver, pilot, crew and operators to passengers on COVID-19 preventative measures must be conducted in the languages of the travellers (where possible); and
- (v) Harmonised regulations, increased facilities and capacity to test passengers in addition to drivers and crews, to facilitate interstate travelling of persons shall be encouraged for economic growth and poverty alleviation while containing the spread of COVID-19 guided by WHO compliant and harmonized Tripartite guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> WHO Guidelines on Management of ill Travelers at Points of Entry – international airports, seaports, ground crossings – in the context of COVID-19 outbreak.  
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/points-of-entry-and-mass-gatherings>

#### **4. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The REC Secretariats in consultation with Member/Partner States and other key stakeholders and partners should:

- (i) review national trade and transport related policies, regulations and response measures and identify inconsistencies;
- (ii) based on the review, select best practices and propose to the Member/Partner States harmonized policies, regulations and measures;
- (iii) put in place a mechanism to enable Member/Partner States to share information on COVID-19 response policies, regulations and guidelines, best practices and experiences in the implementations of the various measures;
- (iv) urgently establish from their staff a Tripartite Regional Transport and Trade Facilitation Committee (TRTTFC) comprising Experts experienced in Transport and Trade Facilitation and Logistics, Customs, Immigration, Public Health and Security to assist and coordinate Member/Partner States and Corridor Groups in implementing the provisions of these guidelines during COVID-19;
- (v) mobilize resources to facilitate the effective and efficient operation of the TRTTFC to address the challenges of the current situation and coordinate the implementation of the Guidelines;
- (vi) based on lessons learnt, propose recommendations on revisions and updates to current policy instruments in order to ensure that they have adequate and comprehensive provisions for the region to coordinate responses to future emergencies that might arise from epidemics and natural disasters;
- (vii) develop additional guidelines as may be required for combating COVID-19 and facilitating trade and transport;
- (viii) urge Member/Partner to expand the mandate of National Transport and Trade Facilitation Committees (NTTFC) or establish a similar body comprising officials from the Ministries responsible for Transport, Health, Police/Army, Customs, Immigration and Trade. This body should coordinate the implementation of these guidelines and resolve operational issues at borders or checkpoints arising from lack of consistent communication of policies during the COVID-19 period and/or interpretation of these policies. Telephone numbers and emails of these NTTFC should be displayed at borders/checkpoints and shared with all

Member/Partner States etc. This is for speedy resolution of issues at borders and checkpoints in case of misinterpretation of current policies; and

- (ix) Review and update these Guidelines to respond to any changes that may affect implementation of the provisions therein.

## **ANNEX 1:**

### **TRIPARTITE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOPs) FOR MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF CROSS BORDER ROAD TRANSPORT AT DESIGNATED POINTS OF ENTRY AND COVID-19 CHECKPOINTS**

#### **I. OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of these SOPs is to facilitate the safe road transportation of all passengers, goods and services, and to promote business continuity and resumption of cross border activities across the region while preventing the spread of the COVID-19 across the Tripartite region.

#### **II. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

The SOPs provide guidance on specific measures which will be implemented to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through cross-border road transport.

The Corridor Trip Monitoring System (CTMS) and the Enhanced Regional Electronic Cargo and Driver Tracking System (RECDTS) which have been developed, and other systems as may be agreed by Member / Partner States, for management of the registration of cross border trips, recording, monitoring and surveillance of driver and crew wellness including medical test results for specified communicable diseases such as COVID-19, tracking of vehicles, loads and drivers and crew, contact tracing, queue management at ports, border posts and other facilities and statistical analysis and reporting, will assist Member/Partner States in implementing the SOPs.

The SOPs cover the requirements that drivers and crew must meet at each stage or phase of a cross border trip:

- (i) Before Departure from Member/Partner State of Departure;
- (ii) Entering Member/Partner States Territory (Transit or Destination);
- (iii) On arrival at Member/Partner State of destination;

- (iv) Management of driver, crew members and passengers while in Member/Partner State of destination;
- (v) On departure from Member/Partner State of Destination; and
- (vi) At Check points.

### **III. KEY CONSIDERATIONS: TESTING, QUARANTINE SITES, TRUCK STOPS, CATERING AND SANITATION**

#### **a. Testing of drivers, crew members and passengers**

- i) Member/ Partner States shall use real time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) or any other molecular test such as the following: Reverse Transcriptase Quantitative PCR (also used by GeneXpert), Reverse Transcriptase loop mediated RNA amplification, Recombinase Polymerase Amplification and mutually recognise the test results;
- ii) Driver, crew members and passengers shall test for COVID-19, at either the one stop health post or any other designated testing facility in the country of departure;
- iii) Such test results shall be valid for 14 days;
- iv) Member / Partner States agree to mutually recognize each other's COVID-19 test certificates;
- v) In case crew members or passengers enter another Member/Partner State's territory after the period of validity, a re-test shall apply;
- vi) Member/Partner States must perform screening for drivers, crew members and passengers. [.....] Random testing, not exceeding a 5% sample, can be performed, provided that, where screening also entails testing, drivers/crew or persons holding valid negative certificates are permitted to proceed with the trip without having to wait for test results at the entry points; and
- vii) Notwithstanding (vi) above, Member/Partner States can perform tests beyond 5%, if deemed necessary, depending on the prevailing pandemic circumstances.

**b. Truck stops, catering and sanitation**

- i) Member Partner States shall provide all drivers with information on the truck stops they can use on the designated routes on the corridors and services available in such locations; and
- ii) Catering, sanitation and fuel services shall be available at specific truck stops/roadside stations along the routes/corridors that comply to public health measures as prescribed by national authorities.

**IV. REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

**a. Requirements before Departure from Member/Partner State of Departure**

Member/Partner States shall facilitate at their own cost, testing of drivers and crew members at designated testing points and expedite release of test results report to expedite movement of goods;

In order to ensure safety of the public, drivers and crew members, the Transport operator should ensure the following:

- i) All drivers and crew shall be tested for COVID-19 before the commencement of each cross-border trip;
- ii) Only drivers and crew who test negative for COVID-19 will be allowed to undertake a cross border trip;
- iii) All drivers and crew members should be in possession of a valid COVID-19 certificate valid for 14 days issued by the Member/Partner State before starting their cross-border trip and leaving the country of departure;
- iv) Adequate provision of alcohol-based sanitizer, water, soap, and masks for drivers and crews to sanitize and protect themselves;

- v) All drivers and crew members have company identification cards which should be produced together with official identification documents of [...] drivers and crew members to law enforcement agents and health officials upon request;
- vi) When loading cargo onto trucks, drivers and ground staff must adhere to infection prevention measures, including wearing protective clothing and masks; and
- vii) All drivers and crew members are cleared by health officials after COVID-19 symptoms and temperature screening at the border post, while exiting the country of departure.

**b. Requirements for entering Member / Partner States Borders (Transit or Destination)**

- i) Health Official will complete the COVID-19 control forms and clear crew members after symptom and temperature screening using a thermal gun or thermal scanners on all persons aboard a vehicle;
- ii) All person on board a vehicle should be cleared and given a duplicate to carry with them until they complete the trip;
- iii) Health Official will provide drivers with the Member / Partner State Trip/Log Sheet with designated stop points/truck stops which drivers shall complete along the route and drop off at the point of exit or quarantine facility;
- iv) Member / Partner States shall provide [...] drivers with the map / list of truck stops along corridors/routes including the GPS coordinates of the truck stops/roadside stations/designated stops along the routes/corridor;
- v) Health Officers will provide drivers with information, education and communication materials on infection prevention and control of COVID-19, including the Toll-free numbers for more information on COVID 19 and related support services;

- vi) COVID-19 Control Protocol for driver and crew members should be presented to immigration, customs and security officer before leaving the point of entry and/or at any check point within the country of transit or destination;
- vii) Member/Partner State may opt to perform random testing of drivers and crew members presenting with a negative test for quality assurance.
- viii) All vehicles where a driver or crew member tests positive for COVID-19 or is assessed to have symptoms for COVID-19, must be disinfected by health officers at cost of the operator;
- ix) All drivers and crew members shall observe infection prevention control measures and wear face masks while in transit, as appropriate;
- x) Trucks must stop only at designated truck stops as stated on the list / map of truck stops provided by the authorities while entering the country;
- xi) Member/Partner States shall provide toll-free numbers where drivers can call in case of emergency breakdown or any other emergency; and
- xii) Drivers/co-drivers are prohibited from picking up hitch-hikers at any point on their journey.

**c. Requirements on Arrival at the Member/Partner State of Destination**

- i) Member/Partner States shall develop specific protocols for off-loading trucks to ensure infection prevention and control measures are adhered to;
- ii) Member/Partner States shall designate or provide specific location with adequate and suitable health services, accommodation, meals, sanitation and security (or quarantine facility) to accommodate drivers and crew members while in the country;
- iii) Drivers and crew members must observe infection prevention and control measures, while they are off-loading or loading cargo;

- iv) Drivers and crew members must wear new set of gloves and masks during off-loading of cargo;
- v) Ground staff off-loading cargo must wear gloves and masks;
- vi) When loading cargo onto trucks, drivers and ground staff must adhere to infection prevention measures, including wearing protective clothing and masks; and
- vii) In case protective clothes are not available, disinfection of ground staff loading or offloading trucks should be considered.

**d. Requirements for Management of drivers and crew members while in Member/Partner State of Destination**

- i) Member / Partner States shall designate or provide specific place with adequate and suitable health services, accommodation, meals, sanitation and security for drivers and crew members while in the country where necessary, at operators' cost;
- ii) Such areas or quarantine facility must ensure that drivers and crew members are safe and observe infection prevention and control measures;
- iii) During their stay in the country of destination, drivers and crew members must comply with public health measures including use of hand sanitizers, frequent washing of hands, wearing of masks and minimize contact with the local community; and
- iv) Upon arrival in the country of destination, Health workers must cross check whether or not the driver complied to the trip itinerary prescribed at the point of entry to rule out any contacts with local community as uploaded onto the electronic platform.

**e. Requirements on Departure from Member/Partner State of Destination**

- i) Drivers with a documented negative result for COVID-19 dated 0 – 14 days old must be allowed to return to the country of origin without retesting unless they display signs or symptoms of COVID-19;
- ii) A new trip log sheet must be delivered to the driver to ensure compliance while travelling;
- iii) While exiting the country, Officials shall verify the following: a valid negative result for COVID-19, and a dully completed log sheet.

**f. Requirements at Checkpoints**

- i) Drivers shall present the COVID-19 Control Protocol for Trip Registration Form at all check points along the journey;
- ii) Drivers shall present their Trip Log Sheet at every checkpoint along the journey; and
- iii) Drivers and crew members must comply with the rules and regulations as gazetted by the host Member/ Partner State.