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2nd successful International Conference on Traffic Management and Train Control-Command and Signalling Systems “TM & CCS” in Tokyo: Towards more convergence and the need to establish a common core functionality (Tokyo, 7 – 9 June 2010)

More than 200 representatives from the railways, supply industry, research centres, national authorities and leading institutions are meeting in Tokyo, Japan, on 7 – 9 June (with a technical visit in Sendai closing the conference), to discuss and take stock of progress in railway signalling, control-command and telecommunications at global level. All the players involved in these key areas are continuing their efforts to common core functionality within the near future.

(Paris / Tokyo, 8.6.2010). Following a successful 1st conference held in Istanbul in October 2008 at the kind invitation of Turkish Railways (TCDD), this 2nd edition held in Tokyo gives experts the opportunity to continue to share information and experiences, as well as to find possible answers to enable a converging base functionality to be established in the future. These fruitful exchanges follow the Common Declaration on the “Mission of the UIC TM&TCS Conference” signed in Istanbul in 2008. This declaration invited participants of the 1st conference to promote and support technological innovations around the world and to play a continuous role in each region for the development and growth of signalling and telecommunications systems such as these.

For this second edition, more than 20 countries were represented, among them the USA, Korea, Kazakhstan, Russia, Iran, Japan, Finland, France, Latvia, Italy, Poland, Belgium, UK, Sweden, showing significant interest in this area of the railways.

The conference was jointly organised by UIC and East Japan Railways (JR East) which hosted the conference close to Tokyo’s Central Railway Station, at the kind invitation of Mr *Yoshio Ishida*, Vice Chairman of JR East and UIC Chairman.

“It is no coincidence if this 2nd edition is held in Asia, insofar as it’s certainly nowadays one of the most dynamic areas, based on rapid expansion in high speed rail, technical achievements in signalling systems and information systems” said Mr *Jean-Pierre Loubinoux*, UIC Director General. As an illustration of the huge activity in this part of the world, railways transported 14 billion passengers in 2007 in the Tokyo area, and 5.5 billion by JR East, with approximately 17 million of these passengers using JR East every day. Taking into account the various advantages and potential of the railways, *Jean-Pierre Loubinoux* added that *“the railways bridging people from the Atlantic to the Pacific is no longer a dream but a reality”*.

In his opening keynote speech pronounced on 7 June, Mr *Yoshio Ishida* welcomed the participants and was very satisfied by the number of participants who had come from all regions of the world. He looked back to three years ago, when the conference was first established, reminding participants that it was the Executive Board in Delhi in March 2007 which mandated him to lead an initiative to establish the basis for the migration to a global train control system with a long-term view. *Mr Ishida*

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underlined the importance of this legitimate global initiative in order to develop safer, more reliable and more comfortable railways, underlining that this issue was not easy to achieve. But continuous efforts by all players to improve it would surely lead to railways having a consistent advantage over other transport modes.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux reminded participants that “UIC initiates more than 200 projects of universal interest”, and among them those “confronted with rapid technological development where railways are not necessarily in a leading position, in other words automation, telecoms, IT, global navigation, etc.”. If the strategic issues have been identified – convergence of core functionalities, identification of best practices, particularly in terms of LCC, *Life Cycle Costs* done with the help of the supply industry – modularity and flexibility of all solutions remain a necessity. For him, the keys to success are based on the need for more collaboration and bringing all players closer together. It is necessary to put together the “know-how”, to create the framework of unity and to link the work carried out in the railway signalling domain, taking into account the issues of leading world organisations, in reference to the recent international agreements or memorandum of understanding signed by UIC with the World Bank, UNECE and UNESCAP, etc.

He concluded with a few words that could also have been used as the motto of the conference: “*This convergence would be a good signal...for a good signalling conference*”.

Different UIC experts delivered speeches as part of the seven sessions dealing with the conference topics, such as *Emilio Maestrini*, UIC Director for the Rail System Department, *George Barbu*, UIC Expert on Global Signalling, who moderated various sessions, *Dan Mandoc* who made a presentation on Train-Ground radio-communication and *Cho Ho Kwon* (UIC, Korail) who presented the “System Architecture to converge traffic information”.

The CER Deputy Director, *Libor Lochman*, who took the floor to present the European overall vision on train management and traffic control, interoperability-oriented TM&CCS, underlined the “need for multimodal traffic control arrangements”.

The different sessions, dealing with traffic control in general (complex scheme for train management, primarily based on a set of operation instructions with regard to how trains operate over the network) enabled the issues of train detection and train integrity to be identified specifically as big challenges for the future of CCS technology. Fruitful discussions and interesting presentations served as an opportunity for open, relevant and comprehensive information exchange to take place on the state-of-the-art, technologies, future needs, requirements and vision of future signalling systems. Both the technological as well as human aspects formed part of the discussions and presentations.

This conference gave an insight into development trends, focusing on strategic issues and working towards more convergence. Various signalling systems were presented such as PTC (to be implemented in the USA), ATACS (Japan), ERTMS (implemented in some European countries, like on the Thalys or Italian High speed train, cases presented during the conference by speakers from SNCF and RFI), GPS, EOT, ATC-ATS (“Automatic Train Stop” and “Automatic Train Control”) used for commuter lines in the Tokyo Metropolitan area and contributing to enhance safety and availability.

The next edition is expected to take place in the USA in 2012.

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