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## **UIC advises the United Nations working party on Sustainable Development Goals in New York**

(New York, 7 January 2014) UIC Director General Jean-Pierre Loubinoux was invited to deliver a presentation during the Side Event of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals [1]. The event was organised jointly by UNDESA, UN Habitat and the SLoCaT Partnership on 7 January 2014 in New-York. This event is part of a cohesive plan of actions to support the strategic fundamental value of rail sustainability. It follows the launch in New York in 2011 in the presence of Vladimir Yakunin of the UIC Declaration for sustainability endorsed by more and more members.

The audience included delegates from national governments, development banks (including the World Bank and Asian Development Bank) and international experts in sustainable transport.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux stated that *"the world needs a Sustainable Development Goal dedicated to transport in order to drive the wider economic, social and environmental development agenda"*. He then went on to review the strong sustainability credentials of rail transport, and outlined how investment in rail is fundamental to establishing sustainable transport systems.

The case for rail as the backbone of sustainable transport systems was made with supporting evidence from the Handbook on Rail Energy & CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, recently published in partnership with the International Energy Agency [2]. This included the role of rail as a high capacity, high efficiency transport mode:

- Analysis of the data shows the potential for reducing carbon emissions through shifting to rail worldwide, railways generate only 3% of transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, while sustaining more than 9% of total transport activity.
- A trend for improving energy efficiency and lowering emissions, between 2000 and 2010 energy consumption & CO<sub>2</sub> emissions:
  - 1) per passenger-km decreased by over 30%
  - 2) per freight tonne-km decreased by 18%

Participation in this event will be followed up by engagement at the United Nations Climate Summit, 23 September 2014 [3], and the UNFCCC COP20 climate negotiations in Peru, December 2014. Participation at United Nation events allows UIC to advocate investment in rail to national governments and development banks.

The importance of recognition by UN bodies was recently underlined by UIC Chairman Mr Vladimir Yakunin in his address to the UIC General Assembly in December 2013, in particular for *"harmonisation of transport law, combined transport, the development of Eurasian transport corridors, ensuring transport safety, protection from unlawful interference, and sustainable development"*.

Notes to editors:

The UIC has been present at COP negotiations for over 10 years, to make the case that railways are a sustainable, low-carbon form of transport. UIC is the formal railway representative to the United Nations and has what is known as Observer Status at the talks. This means UIC is able to arrange attendance at these conferences for its members, and enables it to hold side events and exhibition stands as well.

[1] For more details please see [www.slocat.net/event/1114](http://www.slocat.net/event/1114)

[2] 2013 Railway Handbook is the second edition published jointly with the International Energy Agency, the full document and more background can be found here: [www.uic.org/spip.php?article3193](http://www.uic.org/spip.php?article3193)

[3] Further details are available here [www.un.org/climatechange/summit/](http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/)

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