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## 5th UIC Global Rail Freight Conference opens today in Rotterdam:

### *'Shaping together the Business of the Future'*

(Paris, 22 June 2016) Today the International Union of Railways, UIC, is opening the 5th UIC Global Rail Freight Conference organised under the Patronage of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. The Conference, bringing together all the freight and logistics actors, is being held in Rotterdam (the Netherlands) on 22 and 23 June 2016 at Van Nelle Factory. The global conference follows the TEN-T Days organised in Rotterdam by the European Commission and the Business Conference organised by the Dutch EU Presidency.

The UIC Global Rail Freight Conference GRFC is supported by UIC Member ProRail (Dutch Railway infrastructure manager), OTIF (Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail) and United Nations UNECE, ITF from OECD, as well as by a number of international and railway associations: BIC, CIT, GCU, UNIFE, UIP, ERFA, Rail Cargo, UIRR, etc.

Under the main theme "*Shaping together the Business of the Future*", the UIC GRFC 2016 is addressing among others the following topics:

- From Shanghai to Rotterdam: the landbridge concept 10 years on,
- Strategies to deliver opportunities and enhance effectiveness,
- Rail Freight 4.0: innovation and digitalization for global solutions,
- The workforce of the future: digital skills and human capital.

The Official opening of the Conference gave the floor to high level representatives from the political and business world.

Among them, **Jean-Pierre Loubinoux**, Director General UIC, who *welcomed all the participants on behalf of the International Union of Railways*, **Pex Langenberg**, Vice Mayor of Rotterdam in charge of Mobility who *welcomed on behalf of the city of Rotterdam*, **Mark Frequin**, Director General Mobility, Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, **Hugo Thomassen**, Director Capacity Management on behalf of **Pier Eringa**, CEO Prorail, Dutch Rail Infrastructure Manager, **Emile Hoogsteden**, Vice President Containers, Breakbulk & Logistics, Port of Rotterdam, **Salman Babayev**, Vice President of Russian Railways (RZD), representing **UIC Chairman Oleg Belozеров**, Herald Ruijters, Acting Director B, DG MOVE, European Commission.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General said: "*I'm very pleased that UIC ensures the bridge between the important events that took place at the beginning of this week, the TEN-T Days and the Corridor Day of the Dutch EU Presidency, and our two-day conference that will highlight the latest developments of world trade and international markets, and the perspectives of optimally integrating rail freight into the global transport and logistics chain.*"

*The 2016 edition of the GRFC conference has the ambition to provide a clear picture of new perspectives connected with the need for mobility and growth of world trade, the creation of new opportunities (corridors, dedicated logistics offers, new technologies as digitalisation) and all forms of cooperation, partnerships and synergies. These perspectives of regular growth connected with the creation of new trade flows and new routes, definitively open promising perspectives for rail freight, in combination with other transport modes. This conference will dedicate an important part of the sessions and debates to presentations of these new opportunities in Europe and in various regions of the world. Since the last GRFC Conference, all these dreams are increasingly taking the shape of reality, thanks to the involvement and continuous commitment of all stakeholders: governments, railways, their multimodal partners, financial institutions, international organisations”.*

He followed by saying: “UIC as the worldwide organisation grouping the entire community of railways is fully committed to contribute with all its cooperation structures to the development of an effective rail freight transportation system as the backbone of a balanced and optimised multimodal transportation mix.

*I can confirm that UIC and the worldwide railway community are strongly supporting the Declaration made by EU Transport Ministers at the Business Conference organised by the Dutch EU Presidency during the TEN-T Days, aiming to promote the development of competitive rail freight transport, in particular along rail freight corridors.*

*UIC will continue to concentrate its actions on improving the four issues of interoperability, reliability, quality and commercial success of railway operation on European corridors as well as corridors linking Europe to neighbouring regions.*

*I would like to just mention the cooperation work achieved at the level of freight CEO Task Force, Global Transport Expert group (GTE), Combined Transport Group (GTC), ECCO project, GCU, GRFC Conferences, etc. This action is carried out in close cooperation with all international partner institutions, OTIF, United Nations, ITF, World Bank, Regional Development Banks such as EIB, ADB, etc.”*

Further information to follow in the next UIC press release.

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