European Union (TEN-T) and the rail professional sector represented by UIC formalise Public‑Private Partnership for Railway Interoperability in Telematics.

(Paris, 17 December 2008). The European Commission has fulfilled its pledge to become a partner in the realisation of the Technical Specification for Interoperability for Telematics for Freight "TAF-TSI" by providing 780 000 € funding for the development of the Common Communications Interface. This interface establishes the communication backbone for the realisation of the "TAF-TSI", enabling the European rail freight stakeholders to exchange data in a standardised and secure environment.

The "TAF-TSI" regulation is an integral tool for making rail freight more competitive in Europe and meeting the needs of customers in the areas of transit time reliability and shipment information. The regulation is a means to ensure that efficient interchange of information is adapted so that the rail transport process may become economically viable and that freight transport on rail and can more efficiently address the intense competition in today's market.

'*This public-private partnership represents a firm commitment from both the European Union and the rail professional sector to implement the "TAF-TSI". It is a vital action in promoting international transport of goods by rail'*, said *Jan Sundling*, Chairman of the "TAF-TSI" deployment.

The International Union of Railways (UIC) as beneficiary of the grant, with the backing of the Swedish government, is acting on behalf of the "TAF-TSI" Common Components Group to develop the software product and system. The Common Components Group is made up of individual, private stakeholders who have formed a neutral organisation to finance, manage and develop the Common Components.

Luc Aliadière, UIC Chief Executive, states *"I am very happy to see that UIC is playing its role as the technical platform serving the interest of all railway stakeholders."*

Now that the project has been fully funded, development shall start in January 2009. The software shall be ready for roll-out by mid-2010.

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