



INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

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10 new membership applications approved and emphasis placed on standardization at UIC's 79th General Assembly.

(Paris, 15 December 2011). The 79th General Assembly of the International Union of Railways (UIC), the international professional association for the railways, was held on 8 December in Paris at the organisation's headquarters. The meeting was preceded on 7 December by the Regional Assemblies for Europe and Africa – with a Technical Information Day aimed at all members held in parallel – and by the Executive Board.

The General Assembly was chaired by Mr Yoshio Ishida, Vice-Chairman of East Japan Railway Company and Chairman of UIC, together with Mr Mauro Moretti, CEO of the FS Group and Vice-Chairman of UIC, and Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director-General. Several chairmen and CEOs of member railways took part in the Executive Board and General Assembly, including Vladimir Yakounine (RZD), Vinay Mittal (IR), Guillaume Pepy (SNCF), Chairman of UIC Europe, Mr Huh Joon-Young (Korail), Chairman of UIC Asia, Mohamed Rabie Khlie (ONCF), Chairman of UIC Africa, Robert VanderClute (AAR, USA), Chairman of UIC North America, and Guilherme Quintella (EDLP, Brazil), Chairman of UIC Latin America.

The General Assembly in Paris was the kicking off point for UIC's 90th anniversary celebrations, which will take place throughout 2012. Founded in 1922 as a result of two diplomatic conferences with the aim of harmonising the building and operation of railways on an international scale, UIC has never stopped developing and moving forward with its task, and – reminded the Director-General, Jean-Pierre Loubinoux: "UIC has become the professional organisation as we know it today, seeking to help the international railway community." The celebrations began with a photographic exhibition, mounted with the archives of member railways and based around the theme "90 years of railway progress – a story told by UIC members".

Following the opening of the assembly by Chairman Yoshio Ishida, Director-General Jean-Pierre Loubinoux reminded participants of the difficult periods experienced by a number of members over the last year, whether it be natural disasters such as in Japan, political instability affecting certain countries or effects of the world economic and financial crisis impacting all sectors of the economy. These difficulties, however, have served to re-strengthen the ties between members and the railway community.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux gave a presentation at the start of the General Assembly on the actions implemented in 2011, aiming specifically to boost visibility, transparency and control of costs related to all the activities and projects led or coordinated by the association. He

then presented the key activities conducted by the forums and Freight, Passenger, Rail System and Fundamental Values departments (including research, sustainable development, safety, security and expertise development). This action as a whole was acknowledged by the members of the assembly.

The 5 themes of world cooperation, open to all UIC members, were also reviewed: sustainable development, signalling, freight (including intercontinental corridors), safety, security and standardisation.

With regard to the important issue of standardisation, the assembly approved the action plan of the IRRB (International Rail Research Board) presented by its chairman Mr Boris Lapidus (VNIIZhT, Russian Railways), as well as the work undertaken by the Working Group on Standardisation and development of future relations with ISO, with the aim of concluding a technical cooperation agreement at a later date.

On the subject of enhancing UIC's profile on the world stage, the General Assembly approved the cooperative links established with a number of institutional and governmental partners such as recently with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), NATO and the EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development).

The results of the association's accounts for 2011 were also approved by the assembly as well as the financial guidelines for 2012. It should be recalled that this budget was voted at a time of severe economic crisis which is impacting members, and will continue to have a significant influence on their development in 2012.

The chairmen of the 6 UIC regions (Africa, North America, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle-East) then presented the prospects for railway development in each of the 6 regions as well as the railway cooperation activities to be coordinated in 2012 by each regional assembly.

New membership applications approved

The General Assembly approved 10 new applications for UIC membership:

- Asia: CARS – China Academy of Railway Sciences (China), MTZ, rolling stock manager (Mongolia), UBTZ, passenger and freight operator (Mongolia)
- Europe: HS1 (UK), RhB – Rhätische Bahn (Switzerland), SAD, passenger operator (Italy)
- Middle-East: QRC – Qatar Railway Company, governmental authority (Qatar), JHR – Jordan Hejaz Railway, passenger and freight operator (Jordan)
- South America: Rio Trilhos, transport authority (Brazil), CPTM, local transport authority (Brazil)

The General Assembly was furthermore informed of the appointment – by decision of the Director-General – of Dr Miklos Kopp, former Director-General of Hungrail (Hungary), as the new director of the UIC Freight Department. He succeeds Oliver Sellnick who has rejoined Deutsche Bahn.

In addition, Mr Boris Aksenov, Deputy Director of the Accounts Department at Russian Railways (RZD), was appointed as a new member of the UIC Budget and Audit Committee, chaired by SNCF.

About UIC – International Union of Railways

UIC, the international railway association which celebrates its 90th anniversary in 2012, counts 200 members across 5 continents (railway companies, infrastructure managers, rail-related transport operators, etc.). UIC's members represent 1 million kilometres of lines, 2,800 billion passenger-km, 9,500 billion tonne-km, and a workforce of 6.7 million people.

UIC's chief task is to promote railway transport around the world and help its members to meet all the current and future challenges of mobility and sustainable development.

UIC's cooperative undertakings aim to boost the railway system's competitiveness and interoperability, particularly on an international scale. The 700 technical leaflets which make up the "UIC Code" constitute a technical benchmark across the globe. UIC also comprises 8 forums and cooperation platforms, 6 regional assemblies, 30 study bodies coordinating circa 180 railway projects, world congresses, conferences and information sessions organised each year, as well as a host of services offered to its members.

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