

Message from Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General

High Level Passenger Meeting, Spiez, 12 June 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Due to unavoidable changes in dates and timings of UIC meetings, to my regret I am in the end unable to personally attend the High-Level Passenger Meeting in Spiez and spend these two days with you as I had planned. I do sincerely apologise.

This meeting is held in this beautiful location here at Thune Lake to mark the One Hundred Year anniversary of the BLS Lötschberg Bahn.

Therefore first of all I would like to express, on behalf of the international railway community and in my own name, my warmest congratulations and very best wishes to BLS, Bernard Guillemon its General Director and all members of the company attending the meeting. I also convey all my best greetings and regards to the attending Passenger CEOs and to the CER.

In my short message I would like on behalf of UIC to underline a few points which are relevant to our European members and in a broader sense are important for international passenger business development.

A first issue that I would like to raise is the satisfaction shared with CER, UNIFE and other associations of the rail sector, to have prepared and recently published the “ Challenge 2050” rail vision. This vision unanimously endorsed by the entire rail sector is therefore representative of the widest possible cross section of rail stakeholders. Built around the main pillars of policy, technology and services, it puts the issue of attractiveness of rail to the customer at the top of priorities. UIC was extremely happy to have been the coordinators for the preparation of this strategic vision which will be the guide to orient the activities of our companies and respective associations during the next decades.

Whilst in the Passenger market CER is currently fully committed to creating a framework for a liberalised passenger transport market and to represent the European Railways’s views vis-à-vis the Commission and Parliament in the debate on the 4th Railway Package, UIC- as the worldwide professional railway association- and the UIC Passenger Forum -as the technical working body dedicated to passenger transport-, concentrate their efforts on creating new perspectives, new synergies and new tools for improving rail competitiveness in the passenger sector.

Developments in the rail passenger sector can benefit from the global benchmarking and exchange of experiences between UIC members from all regions of the world. Activity of the UIC Passenger Forum has a strong focus on European passenger business and beyond.

One leading and permanent activity in the Passenger sector remains the promotion of High speed rail across the world.

The UIC's action is two-fold

- promoting high speed rail on all continents in organising congresses, conferences, information and training sessions on all aspects of high speed rail planning, construction and operations.

Such an information and training session attracted last week 40 participants from all over the world to Paris to become more familiar with the planning of high speed rail projects,

- dedicated studies related to specific aspects of high speed rail development and operations.

After a very successful edition in July 2012 in Philadelphia connected with "Washington Day" where several of you could have intensive and fruitful exchanges with US politicians and present the success stories of high speed rail in Europe, a next edition of UIC HIGHSPEED is in preparation for June (9-12) 2014 in Tokyo.

This event will provide a new opportunity for worldwide benchmarking on all the latest developments in this essential field of passenger transport.

Another strategic issue for railways is the planning, construction, operations and management of railway stations. Railway Stations have become a central issue with strong impact on railway image and on the company's financial results. They also contribute more and more towards citizens' quality of life through optimal integration into the urban environment.

In this context and thanks to the support of the SMGG, UIC, following the successful 2011 edition in Brussels, is preparing together with Russian railways RZD, the 4th "Next Station", international conference on Railway Stations, on 17-18 October in Moscow.

You all are cordially invited to play an active role in this global conference which will provide a unique opportunity to gain an overview of all the latest developments in terms of station design, planning and construction, sustainability, multimodality, optimising financial revenues, architecture and contribution to urban development, in Europe and throughout the world.

Considering the tools for improving rail passenger competitiveness and interoperability in Europe, UIC has been the key partner with the CER for all practical developments of the TAP TSI project. UIC has been supporting the CER in managing both phase 1 and phase 2 of the TAP TSI implementation. UIC has also prepared an agreement with ERA to be signed shortly to ensure an optimal relationship between UIC Leaflets and regulatory documents.

On a complementary subject we are aware that regulation will have a large impact on regional rail services. So the UIC is working with its members to develop a handbook that sets out good practice in areas such as contracts, ticketing, quality of services, cross border regional issues, financing.

So these points are just to mention some highlights of UIC actions aiming to make passenger transport more competitive, more effective and more successful in a near future, following the main orientations given by our Vision Document.

All these issues can of course at your convenience be developed in more depth by the UIC representatives at the meeting, Ignacio Barron, Marc Guigon and Dirk Ölschläger.

I would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank Marc Descheemaeker for his successful leadership as the Chairman of the UIC Passenger Forum and High Level Meeting. I also extend sincere thanks to all Passenger CEOs and their teams who actively contribute to the large number of activities and projects led or coordinated by this UIC Forum.

In thanking BLS again for their hospitality in Spiez, I wish all participants a very constructive and fruitful meeting.