



Speech given by Jean-Pierre Loubinoux
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The spoken word alone prevails

Ministers, Excellencies,
Esteemed Representatives of the Turkish Authorities,
Dear colleagues and friends from the Rail sector,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and a personal pleasure for me to be back in Turkey, in the city of Istanbul, to take the floor at the opening of the Railway Sector Panel of the 11th Turkish Transportation Forum.

On behalf of UIC, the worldwide professional association of railways, and in my own name, I would like to express all my gratitude and warmest thanks to the organizers of this Forum, and first of all to the Minister of Transport of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Binali Yildirim, as well as to the Turkish Authorities for the invitation to UIC to represent the global rail sector at this leading event dedicated to transport developments in the Region. All my sincere thanks and best greetings also go to all our colleagues from the rail sector, in particular Mr. Süleyman Karaman and all representatives from TCDD who are actively involved, day after day, in the UIC activities and international cooperation projects.

Just to give to you an updated picture of **UIC, the International Union of Railways**. UIC was created more than 90 years ago, in 1922 (one year before the Turkish Republic!) with 51 railways from 29 countries. In 2013, UIC brings together 230 members from 92 countries on all 5 continents!

TCDD is one of the active members represented in all governance bodies (General Assembly, Executive Board and most of the specialized professional Forums and technical Platforms).

Mr. Süleyman Karaman is one of the UIC Executive Board members, he is a member of the UIC European Region and Chairman of the UIC Middle-Eastern Region (RAME). We at this stage would like to pay tribute for this intensive involvement in our international cooperation activities and thank him on behalf of all members.

The first point that I would like to raise with you at the opening of this Panel is a reflection on the current Renaissance of Railways in different parts of the world and the main Perspectives and Challenges as they appear today for this mode of transport, with a focus on international perspectives.

We are witnessing today, at global level, a real renaissance of the railways. Political decisions-makers together with major international institutions, have become aware, over the last decades, of the added value of railways in terms of performances – in particular over long distances – their large capacity, speed, safety and reliability, and contribution to sustainability and economic development Railways offer highly effective transport solutions with high-speed train services (achievements and projects exist in all parts of the world), passenger urban and suburban services in and around large cities, freight and logistics services. We are also measuring how railways can keep pace with the globalization of economy through the creation of large international – even intercontinental – freight corridors crossing many countries.

The 20th century has been marked by competitive development between modes of transport. In a new worldwide dynamic for railways in the 21st century, one of the key trends is intermodal complementarity. Each mode therefore needs to be able to share what it does best with others.

And it is vital to put this debate in the context of predictable developments of economy and trade.

Currently the world economy is hit by the crisis, in particular the financial crisis.

But this should not hide the very positive long-term outlook for changes in the transport demand worldwide.

Moreover, forecasts up to 2050 point to renewed growth in transport demand, at 80% for freight and 50% for passenger transport. Rail freight transport is expected to grow 8 times, passenger transport to grow 12 times.

This also means unprecedented investment prospects in the field of transport, which are estimated to be worth 11,000 billion dollars – 40 % of which will go to rail.

Two slides show the perspectives of development of the transcontinental transport needs between Asia and all other Regions, as well as the forecasts for the need of container services between Europe and Asia and on Intra-Asian routes.

The dynamism which can be seen today in Turkey's railway sector is symbolic of the renewed confidence – shared by politicians, investors, customers, citizens – in the vital role that this mode of transport can and will play in the development of the economy and peoples' well-being.

In this context, the Turkish Republic and TCDD are currently developing one of the most ambitious and most promising rail transport systems in the world, with the objective at the same time to facilitate mobility of people and offer effective freight transportation. In the name of UIC and the entire international community of railways, I would like to warmly congratulate the Turkish Government and in particular the Minister of Transport Mr. Binali Yildirim, the Turkish State Authorities as well as the Turkish State Railways led by Süleyman Karaman for their outstanding achievements in the railway field.

Let us mention first of all the planned inauguration next October of the Marmaray Project, the first seamless physical railway link between Europe and Asia – an historic date for the geography and trade development of Europe and Asia – the fast expansion and commercial success of the High-Speed rail system “YHT”, the modernization of freight links including intermodal services as via the Van Lake and simultaneously the development of cross-border links with a number of neighbouring countries.

Turkey definitively appears as a great railway and multimodal Nation, which is invited to play an essential role at the crossroads between Europe, Asia and the Middle-East.

Currently, the integration of the current and developing Turkish rail system as part of the future transport system of the Middle-East is an exciting prospect. It opens extremely promising perspectives in view of the creation of future international railway routes and corridors between Europe and Asia as we mentioned, as well as Central Asia and all important neighbouring countries in the Middle-East. The rebirth of the railway “Silk Road” and “Spice Road” beginning in Turkey is part of these wide-ranging and extremely interesting projects aiming to revitalize rail freight transport over very long distances.

In this context I would like to underline the essential role played since a couple of years by Turkish State Railways TCDD and Mr. Karaman in chairing and orienting the regional cooperation activities in the frame of the **UIC Regional Assembly for the Middle-East (RAME)**.

This UIC Region covers the Middle-East countries as shown on the map. One of the priorities, under the Chairman’s authority and with an effective support from all members from the Region, is to elaborate until spring 2014 a “**Railway Vision for the Middle-East**”. This strategic document, as they already exist for Europe or for Asia and Pacific, will present in a coherent manner all the railway projects and achievements in the Middle-East Region – including interconnections with other modes. This “Vision” document will constitute a vital component for communications with all influential stakeholders.

Further cooperation activities developed in the UIC Middle-East Region under chairmanship of TCDD and with the UIC Headquarters’ support, aim to develop interoperability and standardization, exchange on best practices in the technical, operational, commercial and human resources field.

For example, in addition to professional seminars and technical workshops, Training and Educational Programmes are being proposed to all railways from the region under coordination of the TCDD Rail Training Centre of Eskisehir (MERTCe), with a new focus on young managers and staff.

If we consider a **more global scale**, Turkish Railways are an active partner in UIC as the unique worldwide professional organization of railways.

The association chaired since 2013 by Vladimir Yakunin, President of Russian Railways (RZD), is mainly tasked with promoting the development of rail transport in all regions of the world, and to support its members in all their strategies and efforts to make rail transport more attractive, more competitive and cost-effective, more sustainable.

Actions of UIC carried out since 1922 take very different shapes, as the exchange of know-how and best practice, preparation of railway standards and specifications, organization of seminars and conferences, etc.

In opening his Chairman's mandate, President Yakunin defined 3 strategic guidelines for our international railway association: **Innovation, Integration, Involvement** of members.

As priority issues for international cooperation he put the focus on Developing **International Freight Corridors, promoting Railway Standardisation, Information Systems including Signalling and Traffic Management, Safety and Security, Sustainable Development.**

UIC in order to meet its objectives and increase its effectiveness, has recently signed a number of **agreements and memoranda with a number of leading international organizations** and is regularly **cooperating with over one hundred international institutions, professional associations** or technical bodies.

The **following slides** cannot give a comprehensive overview of all activities and projects handled in the framework of the UIC cooperation bodies (over 200 projects!).

They just aim to show the diversity of the actions currently developed with the objective to make railway an attractive and competitive transport system optimally meeting expectations from the customers, the economy and the society as a whole.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.