MEDIA RELEASE

Closer cooperation on rail standards will benefit overall safety, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of rail systems

IEC and UIC sign global Cooperation Agreement

(Paris, Geneva, 18 June 2014) The development of an efficient, competitive and safe rail system directly depends on the ability of technologies, components and systems to interoperate beyond borders. To achieve these standards are crucially important. The International Union of Railways (UIC) and the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) have signed a Cooperation Agreement in Geneva, Switzerland. The Cooperation Agreement describes the role, scope, methods and means of collaboration between the two organizations in view of developing standards that will increase the safety, efficiency and cost-effectiveness of rail systems and benefit the whole railway sector.

A closer collaboration between the IEC and UIC will make best use of the extensive expertise of each organization and avoid duplication in the development of the standards needed for all aspects of the railway system.The Cooperation Agreement directly responds to the wish of stakeholders represented in both organisations and will bring about a real step-change in the rail industry.

The joint work is led by the SLG (Strategic Liaison Group), with representatives of each organization. Meetings will be hosted twice a year alternatively by the IEC and UIC. Among the first tasks of the SLG will be the development of a *modus operandi* related to the development and maintenance of standards, as well as the preparation of a work programme that is of mutual interest to both partners.

Under all these preconditions the Cooperation Agreement has been signed by Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General and by Mr Frans Vreeswijk, General Secretary & CEO of the IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) with the presence of Mr Gianfranco Cau, Secretary of the UIC Standardisation Platform, and Mr Franco Cavaliere, Chairman of the IEC TC9 (Technical Committee).

In the Annex the Cooperation Agreement also establishes a broad list of topics to start with that for the time being comprises four items: Train Communication Network, Overhead Contact Lines, On Board Multimedia Systems and Technical Vocabulary. This list is currently maintained by the SLG and is modified according to the needs and requirements of UIC and IEC Members.

At the signing ceremony Mr Vreeswijk stated: "*This renewed collaboration between our two organizations will ensure a pragmatic and productive approach to standardization that will result in real, tangible outcomes that will benefit the global rail industry as a whole*."

During the meeting Mr Loubinoux pointed out *inter alia* the importance of the UIC Standards (Leaflets and International Railway Standards) because of their worldwide implementation and of their fundamental role in the Electric/Electronic Sector for safety, security and IT (Information Technology) services for passengers and goods. He also underlined that nowadays IT technologies are put at the service of the Railway Sector in different areas, from the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters to the real time diagnostics for maintenance.

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With reference to this last cited element, Mr Cau added that, due to its technical content and the system vision, the updating of the UIC 557 “Diagnostics on passenger rolling stock” issued last year is an additional developed block where the IEC and UIC closely cooperated. He also declared that the UIC Members have the role of system integrators for their final customers, whether freight goods or passengers, and for this reason they are an essential player in the standardisation process.

Mr Franco Cavaliere stated: “*This Cooperation Agreement brings together the most important aspects of railway standardization: it not only covers the physical products but also the system and framework in which they are inserted*.”

About IEC:

The IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) brings together 165 countries, and is the world's leading organization that prepares and publishes globally relevant International Standards for the whole energy chain, including all electrical, electronic and related technologies, devices and systems. Among other things, IEC work covers transportation, including rail, aviation, shipping, electric vehicles and more. The IEC also supports all forms of conformity assessment and administers four Conformity Assessment Systems that certify that components, equipment and systems used in homes, offices, healthcare facilities, public spaces, transportation, manufacturing, explosive environments and energy generation conform to them.

IEC work also addresses safety, EMC, performance and the environment. *www.iec.ch*

About UIC:

UIC, the International Union of Railways, founded in 1922 and based in Paris, currently brings together 240 member railways – integrated companies, operators, Infrastructure managers – from over 90 countries and all 5 continents. Its main mission consists in promoting the development of rail transport across the world and organising international cooperation among its members. The main projects focus on technical harmonisation and international railway standards, research, development of freight (international corridors) and passenger business (including high speed), sustainable transport, safety and security, expertise development and education. UIC develops close cooperation links with over 50 international organisations and professional associations and has consultative status to the United Nations. See www.uic.org

CONTACTS

IEC: Gabriela Ehrlich geh@iec.ch +4179 600 5672

UIC Rail System Department: cau@uic.org, tieri@uic.org

UIC Communications Department: veron@uic.org