



**“Transport for a changing word” –
Position Paper of the International Union of Railways**

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“Transport for a changing word”: while the theme this year appears to be extremely broad and open, these words refer to a reality in UIC’s daily actions and work.

- **Global context: we are living (travelling/moving) in a context of global economy**
- **Transport generates mobility, mobility which produces trade that is beneficial to the economy. In this sense, transport can only be global. If it is related to rail transport system:**
 - ✓ **Railways are the backbone of a transport system** where the various stakeholders and modes are becoming more closely associated and **complementary** – where previously they were in competition – ; through more interoperability, more interfaces, based on the development of more technical systems, **more business models established in synergy**, in order to optimise the added value of each mode
 - ✓ **Railways can play their role in this changing world by innovations**, bringing changes in concepts and technologies.
 - ✓ **Railways take care of the transmission dimension and the importance of educating the younger generations**

The new global challenges – bound up in an increasingly inter-dependent world – can only be overcome in the current context of trade globalisation if in future stakeholders have a real opportunity to make progress in the knowledge, management and even design of innovative transport chains, which are vital to ensure the development of our societies, businesses and regions.

Rail transport is being designed on a global level, and one of the main areas of UIC’s work is being carried out with the United Nations in particular, and other large associations and financial partners to study the emergence of corridors that facilitate the mobility of goods and

people across continents and trade between continents, notably the corridors between Europe and Asia and the project on Euro-Asian transport links.

UIC brings its technical assistance and expertise to bear on the regeneration of rail across all continents, connecting Asia with Europe, the North with the South, and Africa, given the potential this mode of transport now enjoys. This potential is reflected not only at national level but can also be perceived in a continental and even transcontinental context.

This implies focusing on rail's present ability to support globalisation by offering modal complementarities that capitalise on the strength of each mode to reduce time and cost, whilst offering customers safe, fast and environmentally-friendly products and services, and also taking full account of the external advantages of this mode of transport.

In a fragmented and changing world sustained by new prospects and populated by a large number of stakeholders, it is crucial to keep our attention focused on the real drivers of growth and ensure our actions aim to benefit the rail sector in a coordinated manner. In this regard I have a profound conviction – backed by the OECD's estimates that of the 600 billion dollars' worth of trade between Europe and Asia, only 1% is covered by rail transport – that 2014 is crucial for the development of corridors around the world, as part of the current trend to seek modal **complementarity**.

We are for example focusing our efforts on joint endeavours such as the “Electronic Train” project, which responds to the need for administrative interoperability examined in extended collaboration with the United Nations or other organisations such as OTIF, OSJD and CIT. In the long term the project will perhaps lead to direct and seamless rail transport from the Atlantic to the Pacific with **increased connections, mobility and economic opportunities, together with human development which will benefit our society.**

UIC, thanks to its central role as a technical platform and facilitator between different stakeholders, is pleased to continue playing a constructive role in achieving these goals, whilst maintaining a realistic approach in rail's potential development. This is itself dependent on the way in which markets develop in future in a world still scarred by the crisis, which has affected most countries these past few years.

But this difficult economic context encourages us to **invest and develop our innovative dimension**, for example in the development and harmonisation of new procedures relating to the tax and customs systems – themselves based on modern IT systems – providing information in real time thanks to advances in science and technology.

Finally, nothing can be developed in a sustainable way without **educating the younger generations ready to fulfil their talent** and the promises of innovation that this century brings them so they can build yet more.

The final word, **change**, does not only have political connotations: it is a reality both in terms of **technical** performance – **heavier, longer and faster trains** – **and denser and safer public transport** networks are emerging as new projects in the world's **major cities**. On this point, I can quote figures from the OECD predicting that over two billion people will move to cities with over 10 million people in the next 10 years. It is therefore clear that there needs to be changes in the concepts of inter-urban and intra-urban mobility which anticipate infrastructure schemes and more modern material capabilities.

Similarly, the revival of rail transport is also supported in the key strategic policy orientations of the transport sector by its **environmental relevance**, and there again, work conducted with the International Energy Agency – a member of the OECD – has enabled us to publish a Handbook of facts and figures highlighting the ecological, environmental and energy performance and impact that railways can have on modern societies either in developed countries or more through anticipation in emerging countries, particularly in the BRICS.

With all these possibilities ahead of us, on behalf of UIC and its Members I look forward to continuing our cooperation with the International Transport Forum in the years to come.

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