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## Time to get on board: Rail is ready for climate action

(Sharm El Sheikh, 15 November 2022) The 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) brings together world leaders, civil society, and business organisations and associations in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt to discuss accelerating climate action and implementing prior commitments. It is the Egyptian presidency's vision that conversations move from negotiations and planning to implementation, with real action on the ground. Recent IPCC reports have highlighted the gravity of the climate crisis and the need for immediate and sustained political will, impactful action and effective cooperation. In this spirit, UIC is working with members and partners to highlight the real action taken by the railway sector as a key pillar of sustainable mobility of the future in a new paper '[Next stop 2030: The sustainable mobility we want](#)'.

Members of the transport community will attend the conference to promote equitable, healthy, green and resilient transport pathways, in Africa and across the world, as an important part of climate action. The rail community will advance the More Trains message, which highlights the work already achieved in reducing emissions, as well as what is still needed to further unlock the potential of the sector. The new More Trains video will be screened at COP27 and can be seen [here](#).

**Rail is already a sustainable mobility solution.** The global transport sector currently consumes a quarter of all final energy consumption and is responsible for nearly 40% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from end-use sectors, as it is heavily dependent on oil. Yet, rail is the most energy-efficient and least emissions-intensive mode, responsible for only 0.09 GT CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2021.

**The modal share of rail must grow in order to achieve the Paris Agreement climate goals.** Despite significant rail development and growth, rail's modal share has remained at 8.5% for a decade. By 2030, rail's modal share must grow by more than 40% to contribute to the emissions reductions across passenger and freight required to meet Paris-compliant levels. The expansion of rail networks, combined with appropriate

integration to other modes of transport, can significantly reduce emissions while bringing socio-economic benefits to cities and communities.

**Innovation and new technologies in rail are driving further emissions reductions.**

The energy efficiency of rail has improved by 25% in the last 15 years with total GHG emissions from railways having halved in the same period. Investments in alternative sustainable energy solutions, like hydrogen- or battery-powered trains, continue to show innovation in the energy and transport nexus. Together with the increased use of renewables in the rail power matrix, rail companies are working to close the gap between the current level of emissions and net-zero emission levels by 2050.

**The More Trains campaign advocates for a systemic transformation.** To significantly reduce emissions from the transport sector in the next decade, not only an incremental reduction of emissions from each sub-sector will be needed but a holistic transformation whereby modal shift will play a key role. The key asks from the rail community include:

- Commitment at the highest levels to *specific policy targets* and long-term planning;
- Policies that incentivise rail and *enable fair competition* with other modes integrating externalities;
- *Climate finance* for train, for tracks and for a just transition.

UIC is officially recognised as the voice of railways by the United Nations and has 'observer' status, meaning it is permitted a delegation in the 'blue' zone of COP each year. On this occasion, championing the voice of railways and representing UIC members, Vera Fiorani, CEO of RFI (Rete Ferroviaria Italiana) and Abdi Zenebe, CEO of Ethio-Djibouti Railways, together with Director General François Davenne and Head of Sustainability Unit, Lucie Anderton, will be in Sharm El-Sheikh, attending in speaking engagements and ministerial meetings.

Key partners have been supporting the initiative from the beginning, including Alstom. Cecile Texier, Sustainability & CSR Vice President, believes that railways have to be "used to their full potential to achieve Net Zero Mobility as soon as possible" and that the "More Trains Alliance will strengthen the rail industry's collective advocacy and visibility to this end".

Mikaël Lemarchand, SNCF Chief Sustainability Officer shares this view and adds that: "*The SNCF has been part of the Global Railway Sustainability Taskforce since the beginning, and we are happy to continue to support this alliance. Rail is part of the solution to overcoming environmental and societal transitions. Trains enable us to forge links between people, territories and nations, for a more united and sustainable society.*"

François Davenne, UIC Director General, sees it as "*just the beginning for More Trains. I see this alliance growing in number and diversity across our membership and partners, bringing poignant messages to policy makers and global stakeholders.*"

UIC has teamed up with Alstom, SNCF and many other partners and members to produce a new animated video and paper to launch at COP27.

More information is available at: <https://uic.org/events/rail-at-cop27-get-on-board>

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