UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, together with Italian Railways FS Italiane open the 6th Global Rail Freight Conference GRFC in Genoa, Italy

The motto is “Modal Integration at the Service of Global Distribution”

( Genoa, 27 June 2018) For one-and-a-half days, the 6th UIC Global Rail Freight Conference (GRFC), one of the leading events dedicated to rail freight transport and logistics at world level, is taking place from 26 – 28 June 2018 in Genoa, Italy, at the historic venue of Palazzo Ducale. This event, prepared in a close cooperation between UIC and Italian Railways FS Italiane, is a landmark for all actors of the logistics chain. Genoa is the south terminal of the Rhine-Alpine Corridor, one of nine multimodal TEN-T Corridors under development to boost the growth and competitiveness of the European economy in a sustainable way and a port open to world trade.

This 6th UIC GRFC is held under the Patronage of the Region of Liguria with the support of a number of leading international organisations and associations including OTIF, CIT, BIC, ESC, IHHA, UIP, UIRR, UN Ro-Ro. BIC, Alstom and Ansaldo are sponsoring the event.

The motto of the 2018 GRFC edition is “Modal Integration at the Service of Global Distribution”. During the opening session, high level personalities addressed participants with several key messages.

Renato Mazzoncini, CEO FS Italiane, UIC Chairman, highlighted the challenges ahead: “The European land freight transport market is expected to grow by 30% by 2030, target of the COP 21/23 agreement, with a massive impact on environment and society. Rail freight transport currently represents only 11.9% of modal share in Europe and a growth of 30% by 2030 would not be sufficient to deliver a major positive impact to the world economic growth and to the advancement of the European transport system. Rail needs to grow its modal share to 30%. The estimated impact of a linear growth of rail modal share from 12% in 2018 to 30% in 2030 would be quite impressive. The economic gains would be around 100 billion euros thanks to fewer externalities, 290 million tonnes of CO₂ would be saved, 40,000 premature deaths from pollution avoided and 5,000 fatalities caused by truck accidents averted. The shift of freight transportation to Rail offers an exceptional convergence between the rail sector and the European climate challenge policy objectives. At world level the figures say that the rail modal share is 6.9 % while road is at 20.2% and navigation at 72.2%.

An effective strategy for establishing rail freight as the backbone infrastructure of global sustainable trade nowadays shall extend far beyond the transport sector and the railways. On the contrary it shall aim to deliver seamless integrated and multimodal logistics services with a global
outreach and we shall transform ourselves into a global integrated railway logistics player, open to innovation and to the greatest technological enhancements."

On the subject of sustainable finance, he said: “We agree on the urgency of activating the first stage to build a robust but dynamic “Sustainable Finance Taxonomy”, to ensure market consistency and clear guidance about what is green, social and related to good governance. To this end, current green bonds would be strengthened for instance in Europe by introducing an official EU Green Bond Standard (EU GBS) and considering an EU Green Bond label or certificate, subject to mandatory external review, in order to guarantee positive impact investments.”

And finally, he said: “The completion of the networks shall be accompanied with a harmonised deployment of ERTMS along the corridors, as it will be crucial to ensure improved use and increased density, allowing the supply of multiple and flexible service options. Furthermore, technologic and horizontal investments, such as those on ERTMS, will require sustainable and improved financial instruments, capable of combining public support with private investments and financial leverage, and I look forward to a fruitful discussion on this topic.

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, Director General of UIC, stressed the “uniqueness of the event how it is a privileged moment for all. Unique because this is a truly global event with attendees from China, all over Europe, Iran, India, South Africa, Russia, United States, Africa – Morocco, Senegal. This is the illustration of UIC’s work as a facilitator by the definition of specific cooperation activities among members in each of the six UIC Regions, in close cooperation with international organisations and regional institutions such as development banks. Unique because each edition looks at new aspects shaping our sector. This year’s edition:

- Welcomes trend-setters and creative thinkers
- Focuses on the sustainability challenge and also from a financial angle
- Is also proud to give the floor to a start-up who will present real blockchain demonstrators
- When looking at corridors, we will have the pleasure to discover new corridors and tangible developments

Two years ago, in Rotterdam, the moto was “Shaping the business of the future” where partnerships between modes were already at the heart of our discussions. The title of this year’s edition will go even further and will address “Modal integration at the service of global distribution” – wishing therefore to further capitalise on modal synergies and complementarities”. He added: “Trend-setters and analysts will share their experience and vision about what shapes our industry today and tomorrow. With the demand for transport increasing, we collectively need to work towards a sustainable society where each transport mode has to play its role. With innovation we can break new ground and address the current challenges of sustainability and productivity.

Corridors:
- A vector of growth both in Europe and in the rest of the world
- A vector of peace

UIC as the global railway organisation is particularly committed to support – in technical, operational, organisational terms – the development of competitive corridors for rail freight. Through its projects or cooperation structures such as ECCO the Stakeholder Group, UIC contributes to the definition and implementation of a more attractive and competitive offer on corridors, trans-European as well as transcontinental corridors”.

Several other prominent personalities also welcomed participants to the 6th Global Rail Freight Conference: Giovanni Toti, President of the Region of Liguria, Stefano Balleari, Deputy Mayor of
Genoa, responsible for Mobility and Public Transport, Carlo Borghini, Executive Director, Shift2Rail Joint Undertaking.

For one-and-a-half days, representatives of institutions, companies and the logistics world will exchange and debate on the following main challenges:

- Mega Trends in Global Logistics
- The race towards sustainability
- Sustainable finance
- Blockchain technology
- Globalisation, Innovation and Connectivity
- Rail freight corridor developments and the new Silk Roads
- Integrity of the Logistic Chain

CONTACTS

UIC Communications Department: com@uic.org

UIC Freight Department: gehenot@uic.org