UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, co-organised a series of events with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) from 20 – 24 May 2019 in Manila

It includes the UIC Asia – Pacific Projects Seminar, the Asia-Pacific Railway Innovations Forum and the 27th Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly (APRA)

(Manila, 23 May 2019) UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, organised together with the Asian Development Bank, a series of events from 20 – 24 May, at ADB Headquarters in Manila. These events gave the opportunity to participants, UIC members and partners, and also ADB Developing Member Countries (DMC), to take note of the latest projects in progress or planned for 2020, the latest developments in the region or to share regional issues during this week.

This week is a concrete illustration of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UIC and ADB on April 2012 and its extension until the end of 2020 with the ADB-UIC Knowledge Partnership Programme 2018-2020 and of all the added value of the cooperation between both organisations.

A first Seminar, starting the week, dedicated to the UIC Asia-Pacific Projects was held on 20 May. More than 20 projects were presented.

The Asia-Pacific Railway Innovation Forum, held on 21-22 May, was the occasion to discuss the future of railway systems.

Co-organised with ADB, this event was attended by around 400 participants from the railway and industry sector. Many topics were discussed on first day such as the digital revolution with big data in railway asset management, smart stations, smart ticketing, cyber security. The second day was dedicated to the future trends concerning railway signalling & train control, private sector engagement and regional railway initiatives.

Mr Bambang Susantano, Vice President for Knowledge Management, ADB, said: “Railways have an important role on economy. They are changing through new technologies. For many countries, it is complicated to industrialise. This forum will expand our knowledge for new technologies.”

Mr Timothy John Batan, Undersecretary for Railways, Department of Transport, Philippines, highlighted that railways are not a new technology and we continue to build on our experience. We need to think to how to better operate and maintain the network of assets. Our industry is fundamental as a tool in delivering a more comfortable life.
Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General gave his welcome speech: “Today, we are facing once again a new industrial revolution. The fourth one: the digital revolution […] By 2020, more than 100 billion IOT will be disseminated around the world. This will generate an increase of 15 trillion USD of the GDP.

The five main domains of our sector that could profit of this are: information, distribution, ticketing, payment with the input of QR codes and facial recognition and online services and IT on international corridors. These evolutions will have to keep in mind two major aspects: the first one involves the basic principles since rail was invented, refers to safety and security. The digital impact on potential risks must be strictly managed in the international context with a permanent and reactive approach of cyber security, the second one is to preserve human intelligence from the potential predominance of machine intelligence. Everything that cannot be digitalised will be of even more value.

This is the reason why, according to my opinion, the concept of artificial intelligence (AI) has to be seen more as an intelligent assistance (IA). For me, all I said can be summarised in a new vision for smart connectivity at the service of smart mobility within and between smart cities and smart corridors: a sustainable integrated connected intelligent chain of mobility.”

On 23 May the 27th edition of the UIC Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly (APRA) was chaired by Mr Lu Dongfu, General Manager, China Railway Corporation (CR) and was attended by 79 participants from China, Kazakhstan, Japan, Korea, Azerbaijan, Georgia, India, Korea, Indonesia, Australia, Russia, Thailand, Philippines, Afghanistan.

Mr Lu Dongfu opened the meeting saying: “The 27th UIC APRA is the first APRA held since I assumed the position as the chairman. Here, on behalf of China Railways and in my own name, I would like to express my gratitude to the colleagues of UIC APRA for their trust and support. I would also like to thank the hosts of this conference, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Philippine National Railways (PNR), for their support and thoughtful arrangement, and extend my most sincere greetings to all the peers and colleagues attending this conference.

The Asia-Pacific Region is the largest part of the global economy, and the UIC Asia-Pacific Region is also one of UIC’s most dynamic. Now we have members from 18 Asia-Pacific countries and regions, and the total mileage of the rail network in these countries and regions has reached 360,000km, constituting the most influential and important part of UIC. Today, we get together to discuss the work tasks and development prospects of UIC APRA, and we will make decisions on our next steps. I hope that all of our colleagues will adhere to the development concept of “opening, sharing and connectivity” and take this conference as an opportunity for in-depth dialogue and exchange to promote the implementation of various initiatives, action plans and projects of UIC APRA, achieving integrated and common development.”

He was followed by Mr Bauyrzhan Urynbassarov, Managing Director for Infrastructure, Director of KTZ branch “Direction of the backbone network” who represented the Vice-Chairman, Mr Sauat Mynbayev, Chairman of Kazakhstan Railways (KTZ), who said: “Recognising the importance of UIC activities in the Asia-Pacific region, I am strongly convinced of a further need to strengthen cooperation and step up efforts to jointly pursue the objective of developing rail transport. […]"
Taking this opportunity, on behalf of Mr Sauat Mynbayev, Vice-Chairman of UIC APRA - Chairman of the Board of KTZ, let me announce the KTZ proposal to host the 30th anniversary meeting of UIC APRA in the Republic of Kazakhstan at the end of 2020.”

Then, Mr James Leather, Chief of Transport Sector Group of ADB highlighted that ADB has assisted governance in the rail sub-sector and is responding to climate needs. ADB also invests in knowledge development and in sharing ideas on best practice.

Mr Junn B. Magno, General Manager, Philippine National Railways (PNR) gave his speech: “Last year, when the PNR Representative attended in Bangkok, Thailand we were considered as a provisional member and due for admission and ratification of our nomination. It is thus momentous for PNR that our first full pledged attendance in APRA is done in our own country. Since that day, we have continuously communicated with UIC and as much as possible use the standards of UIC such as in naming of fleet and car body markings and identification. We have also been a strong advocate of using the standards in the UIC leaflets in the design of our new projects North South Commuter Railways (NSCR) and its extensions even amidst the standards being insisted by ODA (Official Development Assistance) partners.

As PNR undertakes most of the rail projects in the Philippines, it is of paramount importance that the best industry practice is integrated to our system and how do we intend to do that? By exposing ourselves to other rail jurisdictions ‘tested and proven practices, principles, design and technology. We have to look up to the standards and industry best practices if we have to emerge as a strong rail administrator and regulator in very near future […].”

Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General said: ” We have the opportunity to do this 27th APRA in the HQ of the ADB, one of the goals I wanted to achieve many years ago when we signed the Memorandum of Understanding with this organisation.

We know that this organisation is more and more interested in the railway mode as a vector of mobility for goods and people, bringing social and economic development to the region. I am even more happy as this achievement will be the last Regional Assembly that I will attend. I want to highlight all the honour that we have received in the framework of the new governance, after the Russian Railways with now the Chinese railways as the chairman and KTZ, a long time supporting vice-chairman.

The presence of Mr Lu Dongfu is a testimony of the interest that CR brings to the multilateral discussions and the international railway cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region and to the importance of the work of UIC in general […]”

Mr François Davenne, UIC Deputy Director General, gave a welcoming speech by video: “I am always impressed by the vision and the quality of the many railway projects that are flourishing here. We have quite a lot of exciting projects together such as the 12th World Congress for Railway Research in Tokyo this year and the next UIC High-Speed Congress in Beijing to be held in 2020. I wait expectantly to meet you there, and to contribute to the innovative conclusions we will reach together.
I am convinced that UIC is the forum where you will be able to push forward your ideas, and I am deeply committed to this goal.”

**Governance**
The Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly was asked to take note of the nomination of Mr Sauat Mynbayev, now KTZ (Kazakhstan Railways) Chairman, as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming period of two years, starting on 1 January 2019 until 31 December 2020.

The Assembly was also asked to note the nomination of Mr Son, Byeong Seok, President and CEO of Korail, as the representative of Korail at the UIC Ex Board and UIC Asia-Pacific Management Committee until December 2020.

**Membership**

In terms of Membership, the Assembly approved Tongji University (China) and the Minister of Transport and Main Roads of Queensland, Australia as Affiliate members. The final decision will be given at the UIC General Assembly on June 2019.

The UIC Asia-Pacific region now has 44 Members.

An overview of the seven ongoing projects for 2019 was given and there are currently 32 projects for 2020 which have to be approved at the next General Assembly.

**Signature**

UIC signed an Action plan for Cooperation on rail transit development with the Economic Cooperation Organisation.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**

UIC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Monash University’s Institute of Railway Technology (IRT) on 22 May 2019 in order to consolidate the interaction and cooperation between the two organisations.

Monash University’s Institute of Railway Technology is part of this Australian university and one of the main technology service providers to heavy haul railway operations and leading mass transit railway systems.

This Memorandum is an introduction to future membership of UIC on the part of the Monash Institute of Railway Technology.

**Next steps**

Participants also took note of the future meetings scheduled in the framework of the UIC Asia Pacific Region:

- 28th APRA, 28 October 2019, Tokyo, Japan
- UIC WCRR, 29 October – 1 November 2019, by RTRI, Tokyo, Japan
- UIC Digital Conference, 14 – 15 May 2020, Perth, Australia
- 29th APRA, 13 May 2020, Perth, Australia
- CORE 2020, 11 – 13 May 2020, Perth, Australia
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