UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, has successfully held its 93rd General Assembly

UIC General Assembly elects Gianluigi Vittorio Castelli as UIC Chairman and confirms FS and TCDD renewal mandates for 2019-2020

(Paris, 10 December 2018) The Executive Board meeting and the 93nd General Assembly of UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, were held on 7 December 2018 at UIC headquarters. The meetings were chaired by Mr Gianluigi Vittorio Castelli, Chairman of Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane (FS) and UIC Chairman, in the presence of Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General and Mr Isa Apaydin, Chairman of the Board and Director General of Turkish State Railways (TCDD) and Vice-Chairman of UIC. A keynote speech was given by Mr Jean Todt, President of the International Automobile Federation (FIA).

Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General, said: “This 93rd UIC General Assembly was successfully organised at UIC HQ in conjunction with two UIC Regional Assemblies (the African Regional Assembly and the European Regional Assembly) and also two special events. One, a very high-level panel, attracting members and partners with a panel composed of high-ranking speakers such as Ms Nancy Vandycke, Programme Manager, Sustainable Mobility for All initiative & Economic Adviser at the World Bank, Mr Young Tae Kim, Secretary General of the International Transport Forum ITF, Mr Don Upson, Co-founder of CES Las Vegas, Mr Bebop Gresta, Chairman of Hyperloop Transportation Technology, Mr Gianluigi Vittorio Castelli, Chairman of UIC and Mr Jean-Daniel Tordjman, President of the Club of Ambassadors. At the same time was also organised the fourth UIC Digital Conference and the third remit of the Digital Awards. All these awards to startups, together with the UIC Innovation & Research Awards, gave the opportunity to young students or young startup companies to share their expertise and their interest in rail development within UIC. All these events organised during the 6th and 7th of December gave the possibility to members and partners and the staff of UIC to openly share and connect their knowledge, their work and their aspirations to develop forward our association at the service of the rail worldwide community”.

UIC Governance
The UIC General Assembly elected Mr Castelli as UIC Chairman and confirmed the renewal of the mandates of FS and TCDD (2019-2020) to guarantee stability of governance and continuity of business. Mr François Davenne will succeed Mr Loubinoux as UIC Director General as of mid-2019 (after a six-month transition period) for a four-year mandate. Mr Davenne said: “My mission will collectively be to define what can be rail perspectives. I will learn from all of you internally and externally. Thank you for your great confidence”.

Report from the UIC Chairman

“First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my predecessor, Renato Mazzoncini, who led UIC in boosting cooperation in the railway sector worldwide. In August, I was proud to take over the mandate that was given to Renato and I am pleased to ensure the continued FS commitment. Bringing value to the work of our association for the benefit of its members and our customers will remain my main goal. The takeover of the chairmanship arrived in a challenging time for UIC, as we are currently managing the transition of the Director General of Services. Jean-Pierre Loubinoux has served for more than ten years with outstanding commitment and dedication. Finding his successor was not an easy task, but we reached a census in the last General Assembly. Mr François Davenne will serve as new Director General of UIC after the six-month transition period for a mandate of four years.

Let me say that the renewal of the mandates of FS and TCDD (2019-2020) will give us the opportunity to advance as smoothly as possible for the sake of stability of governance and continuity, in line with the UIC statute. Mr Apaydin and myself met in Berlin in September and we agreed we will supervise this transition period carefully”. He added that “In 2018, UIC and its members confirmed the capacity to organise a number of successful activities and events that brought us to work together and in partnership with all the stakeholders involved in the mobility and environmental sector […]. Among the major ones, the first Global System Conference on Signalling & Telecom, tenth World Congress on High Speed Rail, the International Level Crossings Awareness Day (ILCAD), the sixth UIC Global Rail Freight Conference”.

Next steps

Mr Gianluigi Vittorio Castelli said that “All of this gives us evidence of the vitality and creativity of railway companies and infrastructure managers around the world and demonstrates the rail operator community’s readiness to meet new and even more ambitious challenges”.

He then discussed some of these challenges in greater detail.

Digitalisation and Digital Transformation

“The brief list of actions and achievements I just described show that the rail operating community (ROC) understands the benefits of digitalisation and that it can master to a certain extent the
pervasive application of secure, ubiquitous and reliable digital technology across all aspects of its corporate, industrial and commercial operations.

Digitalisation, however, is not an end in itself: it should be viewed rather as a shift to a new technological base similar, to a certain extent, to the move towards the electrification of the rail system in the last century. Digitalisation, in fact, underpins all other technological advances, some of which, as we have seen, are already being deployed by UIC members worldwide in a great variety of areas including automation, intermodal and logistics integration, operations management, energy management, customer-centricity of passenger and freight solutions, and others. But digitalisation technology must give us more than that - it must provide us with the new technical, organisational and business capabilities that are required to anticipate and respond to changing customer habits and needs with new tailored services. It must allow us to design and adopt new business models to bring these services to market; to anticipate and respond to challenges emerging from new “digital native” competitors. It must also enable us to access new sources and instruments for financing, to leverage new sources and organisational models of skilled human resources, to establish and manage networks of innovation partnerships, just to name a few.

In other words, we must use digitalisation to enable a comprehensive human and industrial transformation - a digital transformation – of rail companies into effective actors of the digital economy, which is where demand for mobility is increasingly being generated by citizens and businesses who, themselves, already live and work in a digital environment.

Promoting and accelerating this transformation should be our next goal, for which UIC members worldwide have been equipped with a powerful tool: the UIC Digital Platform”.

Research and Innovation

“In the Digital Platform’s initial outcomes feature a template of how we can move UIC from an organisation that merely “houses” projects to a global shared R&D organisation of the sector that can shape the future of rail mobility. I’d like to suggest that collaborative worldwide research and innovation on hard challenges facing the sector should become, in fact, UIC’s main mission in the coming years, pooling human, financial and material resources of willing members.

It is in the context of this renewed mission that, furthermore, UIC will be able to reinforce its reputation and standing vis-à-vis the institutions and other industries, and to bring to actual fruition new instruments such as the formal agreements with the UITP and other organisations, or the UIC TrainRail initiative you will hear about later in the meeting.

Finally, R&D can, and should, become the principal engine that feeds the standardisation process with ground-breaking International Railway Solutions (IRS) on which so much of the economic competitiveness of the sector depends”.

Mr Castelli also spoke about automation and robotics and platform businesses (Amazon, Google, Uber), amongst other subjects.
International Railway Corridors
“Freight corridors are developing throughout Asia-Pacific, linking east to west and involving different initiatives and projects from many stakeholders, including intergovernmental organisations, funding institutions and multimodal companies, with railways forming the backbone. However, successful business and operations should be supported by internationally-recognised and applied interoperable solutions and standards that we must keep pursuing at UIC”.

Standardisation
“Standardisation is a key tool to increase the development of our business and a crucial component in terms of competitiveness.
UIC is the fundamental body for the ROC as it is the most railway operation and service-oriented one. As its core business, UIC provides solutions for those operations issues that the ROC faces on a daily basis. Through its framework of voluntary, consensus-based standards, International Railway Solutions (IRS) provide a vital economic and safety-related support to developing the railway system of tomorrow.
The aim is to develop quality support for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the services that the railway operating community provides to the end user.
IRSs are a really useful technical basis for procuring goods and services. They are a useful technical support for appropriate regulation. Most importantly, IRSs must lead to cost reduction options that support system development through product and system optimisation and best practices. I am deeply satisfied with the recent creation of a transversal unit dedicated to standardisation issues. Its first year of work - and with 44 IRSs approved - demonstrated clear signs of dynamism and useful tools such as a work programme. Moreover, I am very pleased about the renewed confidence and smooth relations with the standardisation bodies and manufacturers.
I strongly support the need for reducing competition with those bodies and developing complementarity. Both will lead to an optimum efficient use of limited human and financial resources. I must also underline the great effort put in developing quality and time-efficient standardisation processes”.

Sustainable Development and the Economic footprint study
“The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into effect in January 2016, and they will continue to guide UN development programme policy and funding until 2030. Achieving the SDGs requires the partnership of governments, private sector, civil society and citizens alike to make sure we leave a better planet for future generations. There is no country in the world that is not experiencing first-hand the drastic effects of climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise and are now more than 50 per cent higher than their 1990 level. Further, global warming is causing long-lasting changes to our climate system, which threatens irreversible consequences if we do not take action now. UIC can play an important role highlighting the importance to invest in railway transport.”
The economic footprint study is an initiative that needs to be expanded and deepened, because it brings benefit to all companies and to the industry as a whole. I would expect that the footprint on economy and society provides the full rail picture and I would say more when we get to this point in the agenda.

Mr Castelli concluded by saying: “Associations like UIC exist and serve for long-term objectives and need to have also a long-term agenda. Interoperability and leaflets are one of them, a platform to exchange technical know-how is another.

Other strategic long-term priorities might be found among the Strategic Development Goals and we will reflect how to better focus on that.

My final personal commitment: I believe it is very important to keep cooperating and close the gap that exists among the UIC Regional Assemblies, which I am planning to attend. Listening carefully to the regional interests could be the bridge to further develop global initiatives.”

Mr Isa Apaydin, Chairman of the Board and Director General of Turkish State Railways (TCDD) and Vice-Chairman of UIC, said “I would like to suggest our members and community focus on the activities where knowledge and experiences will be shared mutually in line with the targets below:

- Providing a safe, fast and comfortable railway operation in accordance with the latest technological developments,
- Integrating the railway infrastructure with other modes of transportation,
- Ensuring an efficient capacity and safe traffic management system in the international railway network,
- Increasing the productivity of the labour and machinery by applying effective maintenance and repair in the railway lines”.

Report from UIC Director General on the organisation’s activities

UIC Director General, Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, gave an overview of the main activities performed at UIC headquarters and by UIC’s working bodies over the past year.

He highlighted the various actions undertaken during 2018 to keep the association stable. These actions can be categorised under the 3 Ps (productivity, professionalism and promotion). In terms of productivity, income expenses were kept under control, resulting in a slight surplus in the accounts, and auditing tools were also improved. With regard to professionalism, numerous initiatives were deployed both internally and externally to improve the efficiency of UIC staff at the service of its members and to better explain the added value of UIC to the members through the “UIC Days” and new e-learning training sessions. In respect of promotion and in the context of UIC’s efforts to develop awareness of the association through social media, it is important to highlight that more than 200 websites developed by UIC attract 200,000 visits each month (for uic.org). All of the strategic issues in terms of governance, standardisation and technical competencies identified as objectives at the beginning of the year were fulfilled. Statutory meetings
(regional and general assemblies) have been maintained under the programme and will be planned for the years to come. The Standardisation unit has been very successful in the development and publication of 44 IRSs this year – a figure that exceeds the initial target set.

In terms of technical competencies, it should be noted that the overall portfolio of ongoing opt-in and external projects will be more than 15 million euros this year, with the objective of keeping indispensable technical expertise within UIC. As far as strategic developments are concerned, 12 memoranda of understanding were signed or updated in order to enhance UIC’s positioning worldwide and with other partners. Mr Loubinoux also highlighted the publication of the eco footprint study and the eco-scoring process initiative. Finally, he indicated that 16 new membership applications were received this year and that the schedule for 2019 included a 94th General Assembly in Budapest at the end of June and in Paris in December.

**Appointments**

UIC Director General Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux announced the following appointments within UIC working bodies and UIC HQ:

- The UIC Safety Platform, which met on 15 November, elected Mr Rolf Härdi, CTO of Deutsche Bahn as its Chairman for a two-year mandate.
- Mr Jaroslaw Golebiewski, representative of the Management Board for Finance at PKP, replaces Mr Daniel Rymarz and will complete the mandate.

**Regional reports**

Mr Vyacheslav Pavlovsky, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Russian Railways RZD, on behalf of Mr Belozeriv, Chairman, summarised the UIC Asia-Pacific Region 2018 activity programme based on growth, quality and agility and presented new activities, such as joint training programmes, development of passenger rail transport and railway tourism.

Mr Mohamed Rabie Khlie, Director General of Moroccan Railways ONCF and Chairman of the UIC Africa Region, presented the 2018 African context, achievements (14 actions including four seminars, two training sessions, one awareness-raising activity and seven rail promotion activities), as well as the 2019 action plan (including the UIC African Digital Summit, to be held in Cape Town at the end of February 2019).

Mr Guilermo Quintela of EDLP, Chairman of the UIC Latin America region, presented the current railway situation in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile, as well as the expected interaction with funding institutions, relationships with universities and the 2019 programme of work.
Mr Francisco dos Reis, member of the Board, Infraestruturas de Portugal IP and Chairman of the UIC European region, presented the 2030 freight forwarders’ strategy and challenges for the UIC European region: regional vision, technical priorities, the need to develop closer interaction and coordination with other stakeholders, closer interaction with other UIC regions, managing quality and processes and how to increase the commitment of CEOs and members.

Mr Isa Apaydin, Chairman of the Board and Director General of Turkish State Railways (TCDD), and Vice-Chairman of UIC, presented the current situation in Afghanistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Jordan and recent activities in the UIC Middle East region.

Mr Yves Desjardins-Siciliano, CEO Of VIA Rail Canada, Chairman of the UIC North American region, presented the actions taken by the region in 2018, including the publication of a strategic vision and a digital session organised in June at the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in the context of the UIC Regional Assembly for North America held on 12 June in Washington. Mexico joined the region this year under the new membership of ARTF (Regulatory Agency for Rail).

Finance
The 2018 accounts show stability at UIC, with a slight positive surplus. Mr Thierry Béra, Finance Director, recalled the three-year business plan and announced an increased budget for standardisation activities in 2019. The UIC General Assembly noted the expected results for 2018 and approved the 2019 budget.

Memoranda of understanding
A review of memoranda of understanding signed or updated this year was performed during the General Assembly. Organisations concerned by these agreements with third parties include: CETMO (the Centre for Transportation Studies for the Western Mediterranean), NEPAD, APTA (revised MoU), FERRMED, IEA (agreement), ADB, UNFCCC, CEN-CENELEC. The revised MoU with APTA (American Public Transportation Association) was signed during the General Assembly by Mr Jean-Pierre Louboinoux and Mr Paul Skoutelas, President and CEO of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).

Standardisation
Mr Simon Fletcher, Chief Standardisation Officer, together with Mr Laurent Schmitt, Chairman of the UIC Standardisation Platform, presented the results achieved in 2018, the number of IRSs published, the migration strategy as well as an action plan for 2019. The schedule for migration of UIC leaflets is advancing well and the publication target set at the beginning of the year is expected to be met. They also announced that the UIC CODE – the catalogue of all existing leaflets and emerging IRSs - is currently under review.
The UIC General Assembly approved the ongoing developments in the field of standardisation, the revised version of the UIC CODE and the guidance document for the development of International Railway Solutions (IRS).

**Quality**

UIC members were informed that the AFNOR (French association of normalisation) audit will take place from 7 to 10 December with the aim of confirming UIC’s certification. UIC Chairman Gianluigi Vittorio Castelli said “This certification is an important milestone for the association, for all the UIC members and the association itself”.

**Research**

Mr Boris Lapidus, Chairman of IRRB (International Rail Research Board), presented the organisation’s annual report with an update on the work of the working groups as well as the work programme for 2019. A special ceremony also took place during the UIC General Assembly to award the six category winners of the 4th edition of the UIC Research and Innovation Awards. The winners are listed in a separate UIC press release.

**Digital**

An overall briefing on the fourth UIC Digital Conference, successfully held on 6 December 2018 at UIC, was provided during the Assembly. During this conference, prizes were awarded for the third edition of the UIC Digital Awards. The winners are listed in a separate press release.

A review of 2018 was also provided (UIC participation in CES in Las Vegas, PoCs with the UIC Rail System Department, PoC on Blockchain on the occasion of the UIC Global Rail Freight Conference, UIC digital tour in China, publication of the sixth edition of the UIC Digital Progress paper) and the roadmap for 2019 was presented. Key events and developments in 2019 will include UIC participation in CES at the invitation of the CES Chair, the first UIC African Rail Digital Summit in Cape Town on 25 and 26 February 2019, the first UIC Global Digital Conference in Brussels on 3-5 June in partnership with Infrabel, the UIC Digital Days in September and the fifth UIC Digital Conference and Digital Awards in December 2019. A progress report was also provided on the UIC DIGIM (Digital Impact on Business) project, a global project in which six UIC members are taking part.

**Global activities for 2019**

Global activities for 2019 were presented to the members. They include the footprint study, eco-scoring (covering non-financial ratings, carbon credit, green bonds, external costs and other ways to access green funding) and security activities. For 2019, in addition to its ongoing activities, the UIC Security division will continue and develop the activities initiated in 2018: the new SIA (sabotage/intrusion attacks) working group, the network of quick responders and the UIC rail security hub. The SHERPA EU-funded project (Shared and CoHerent European Railway
Protection Approach) coordinated by the UIC Security division started in November 2018 and will be run over two years. DB AG, SNCF, SNCB, FS and PKP SA are taking part in the project as members of the consortium.

Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux thanked the UIC Security division for its work on the recent launch of the UIC rail security hub and the network of quick responders and lauded its cooperation with UIC members, taking into account their needs and expectations and disseminating security-related information, which will be improved over the coming years.

In the field of talent and expertise development, a new structure at RailUni Net was presented to the members. RailUni Net will become TrainRail (International Rail Education & Training Board). In the current context of rail companies' growing interest in enlarging their human capital and the increased need to cooperate in a globalised, ever-growing interconnected and digitalised world (with impact on new skills), UIC has implemented several initiatives within the framework of the talent and expertise development platform.

The latest discussions have demonstrated the need to take a comprehensive approach in order to attract and retain the best talents in the rail industry. To follow up on the decision validated at the 92nd UIC General Assembly, a proposal was put forward to create a more powerful cooperative tool that will synergistically combine the efforts of all stakeholders with an interest in rail education and training through an international board called TrainRail.

**Membership**

Six new UIC members were welcomed at the General Assembly:

**Africa:**
- EDR (Ethio-Djibouti Railway, integrated company) as affiliate member

**Asia-Pacific:**
- PNR (Philippines National Railways) as associate member
- SRT (Thai integrated company) as associate member
- Sydney trains (integrated company) as associate member

**Europe:**
- ENTUR (Norwegian Sales and Distribution Company) as affiliate member
- Eurorail Cargo (new Serbian freight and logistics operator) as affiliate member

The next UIC Executive Board and 94th General Assembly will be held on 25 June 2019 in Budapest at the kind invitation of Hungarian Railways (MAV).
CONTACTS

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