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UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, co-organises with Czech Rail Infrastructure Manager SŽDC the 15th World Security Congress in Praha, Czech Republic

Theme: “Safety and Security of Stations”

(Praha, 21 November 2019) The 15th UIC World Security Congress jointly organised by UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, and SŽDC, the Czech Rail Infrastructure Manager, opened today in Praha in the presence of the Minister of Transport for the Czech Republic, the Director General of SŽDC, the Director of UIC Fundamental Values and the Chairman of the UIC Security Platform from VIA Rail Canada.

Around 150 participants from 26 countries all over the world will have the opportunity to discuss the safety and security of stations. The participants represent police, transport authorities, safety and security agencies from the Czech Republic, international organisations (including UITP, the public transport organisation, and WCO, the World Customs Organization), universities and the UIC Security Platform, chaired by Mr Marc Beaulieu, VIA Rail Canada, and by Mr Piotr Kurcz, PKP S.A. in Poland, vice-chair of the UIC Security Platform.

This year, the Congress is being organised for the first time in the Czech Republic and focuses on the “**Safety and Security of Stations**”, with various presentations on the topics below:

- Different models of security organisation in stations
- Integrated protection: multimodality and public spaces
- Design of stations and feeling of security
- Innovative solutions to enhance the security and safety of stations

The opening session of the congress was moderated by Ms Anna Kodysova, Head of SŽDC International Department. First, Mr Vladimír Kremlík, the Minister of Transport for the Czech Republic, welcomed the participants and said that he was “*very honoured that this UIC 15th World Security Congress is being held under the auspices of the Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic.*”

“The importance of this worldwide Congress is obvious especially today when issues of ensuring security at railway stations are priorities not only for the police but also for our organisation,” said Mr Jiří Svoboda, Director General of SŽDC, adding: “That is why I am extremely pleased that SŽDC has the honour this year to act as host for participants of this worldwide conference.”

Mr Jerzy Wisniewski then gave an opening speech on behalf of Mr François Davenne, Director General of UIC, emphasising UIC’s role in bringing together its members, true to the UIC motto “Share, Open and Connect”. He said:

“This event follows the UIC NextStation 2019 conference held last week in Tehran, with the theme of “Railway Stations Boosting the City”. Stations play an increasingly important role in the city, they are centres of urban life, with the biggest stations often having significant numbers of people passing through. The session dedicated to safety and security demonstrated the need for a comprehensive station management approach in order to provide customers with a safe and secure environment, even in crowded situations.

This two-day conference in Praha will focus on the strategies that need to be developed and the synergies required between involved rail actors and their partners to ensure that rail customers and staff are safe and secure in stations. It will also provide an opportunity to take stock of UIC security activities, including the SHERPA EU project, the PROACTIVE EU project and the results of the working groups of the UIC Security Platform. Finally, the working programme of the UIC Security Platform for 2020 will be presented.”

To conclude the opening session, Mr Marc Beaulieu, chairman of the UIC Security Platform, underlined the importance of co-operating in order to gain new perspectives and improve railway safety and security. He said: *“The UIC Security Platform allows us to share, learn and acquire very important feedback from UIC experts, as well as all members. I encourage you all to take advantage of all that UIC has to offer for improved security including this congress, UIC Security Week, the UIC security hub and the incredible networking that makes us better informed and able to make our train operations and stations safer and more secure for our employees, our customers and the general public. I would like to thank everybody that has worked so hard to prepare this congress and I look forward to participating in this very important event!”*

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