



## PRESS RELEASE 39/2019

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### **Successful statutory meetings at UIC, the worldwide railway organisation**

***Focus on 2020-2022 strategic roadmap, digital, corridors, sustainability, standardisation, cooperation with third parties***

(Paris, 13 December 2019) Members of UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, come from all over the world to meet twice a year. From 9 to 11 December, members from all UIC regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, Middle East and North America) met at UIC headquarters in Paris to take stock of achievements in 2019 and to discuss the overall future strategy for the association and each of its regions.

The Executive Board and 95th General Assembly were chaired by UIC Chairman Mr Gianluigi Castelli, Chairman of Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane (FS), in the presence of Mr Ali İhsan Uygun, Director General of Turkish State Railways (TCDD) and Vice-Chairman of UIC and Mr François Davenne, UIC Director General. The chairs of each of the UIC regions also attended the meetings and presented their results for 2019 and strategic activities for 2020. Against the backdrop of the Memorandum of Understanding signed recently with the International Union of Public Transport (UITP), Mr Mohamed Mezghani, Secretary General of UITP, gave an inspiring keynote speech on strategies for decongesting city centres using the combined forces of railway and public transport.

#### **Report from UIC Chairman**

Mr Gianluigi Castelli said: *"Our shared values and common views on the future of transport have led to concrete results. Last year's signature of the well-known UIC-UITP MoU has laid the foundations of a variety of initiatives in areas of shared interest – such as security, environment, digital, intermodal and accessible stations, regional and suburban transport services, skills development, workforce planning, and training. Indeed, UIC cherishes the importance of partnership and promotes cooperation with the largest variety of stakeholders in accordance with the UIC values of unity, solidarity and universality"*.

Mr Castelli summarised the key outcomes from 2019, to be taken as a basis for the future, highlighting the first FRMCS conference organised this year, amongst others. The Future Railway Mobile Communication System (FRMCS), a successor to GSM-R, is a key enabler for rail transport digitalisation. Mr Castelli also highlighted the success of the Asia-Pacific Railway Innovations Forum held in May in Manila, the International Level Crossing Awareness Day (ILCAD) held in June in the Netherlands, the UIC Digital Days held in October in Paris, the UIC nextstation conference held in November in Tehran, and UIC's participation in COP25 in Madrid at the beginning of December.

In terms of key activities, Mr Castelli underlined the importance of the digital transformation. He said: *"It is therefore UIC's mission and responsibility to fully unleash the potential of a "digital railway". A digital, global railway that will be the priority and the strategic axis of our organisation, thus meeting current and future challenges of mobility development. This implies creating a virtuous circle among every possible stakeholder on a worldwide level. UIC is already committed in promoting research and innovation, enhancing our inclusiveness, encouraging dissemination and technological spillovers, and selecting the best practices among all of our associates"*.

#### **Presentation of the 2020-2022 strategic roadmap**

Mr François Davenne presented the 2020-2022 strategic roadmap, a detailed programme of work structured around five key priorities:

- Promotion of rail transport globally
- Further development of UIC as a technical platform to address members' needs
- Creation of innovation through projects
- Promotion of sustainable carbon-free transport
- Efficient, transparent management for the benefit of UIC members

Mr Davenne said: *"We need to increase transparency to make UIC the back office that provides solutions to the railway operating community. UIC should become an easy-to-use toolbox. We will also increase accountability. Our mission is to deliver tools for turning railways into the smart backbone of mobility. For this purpose, the quality of the International Railway Solutions (IRSs) we deliver to our members is a key issue."*

The strategic roadmap will also be used as a communications tool to share the UIC vision and areas of cooperation with the association's stakeholders.

Mr Davenne also presented UIC as a potential career accelerator for experts employed by its members and underlined the vital importance of welcoming new experts from around the world to UIC for mutual enrichment and to ensure that the railways continue to perform well.

The General Assembly also served as an opportunity to present progress made in numerous areas. The second phase of the DIGIM project was presented in the context of **digital technologies**. The project is dedicated to the design and testing of blockchain as a service, with a pilot on a Eurasian freight corridor.

**In the context of corridors**, it was said that UIC is the right platform to represent the interests of the sector, and that the need to boost sustainable railway-based corridors is fundamental, given that rail is the most appropriate mode of transport for mobility of people and transport of large volumes of freight in a sustainable, safe, secure and time-efficient manner over very long trans-continental distances.

**Regarding sustainability**, UIC is promoting a highly ambitious low carbon rail transport challenge and rail climate responsibility pledge. This pledge is a renewal of the UIC Declaration on Sustainable Mobility, with a commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050 and reducing all members' energy consumption and CO2 emissions. UIC strongly urges all of its members to sign the 2019 Pledge for the Railway Climate in order to reinforce the railways' commitment and truly make a difference.

**Regarding standardisation**, the UIC members took stock of the progress of work to modernise UIC's standardisation assets. All UIC leaflets are to be migrated to IRSs (International Railway Solutions) by the end of 2022.

**With regard to cooperation with third parties**, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with the European Tourism Association (ETOA), recognising rail transport as a strategic partner for tourism to achieve sustainability goals. A second MoU will be signed with the IATA (International Air Transport Association) in early 2020 in order to develop intermodality between transport modes.

### **Appointments**

Ms Edwige Cendres, Chief Accountant at SNCF, was appointed as Chair of the UIC Budget and Audit Commission.

Mr Vladimir Andreev of JSC RZD was appointed as Chair of the International Rail Research Board (IRRB). Mr Andreev will be supported by Prof. Mark Robinson (University of Newcastle), Mr Zhou Li (CARS), Mr Atila Keskin (TCDD), Mr Andrew Meier (ACRI) and Dr Andrzej Zurkowski (IK) as Vice-Chairs.

### **Finance**

The General Assembly approved the 2020 budget.

### **Membership**

Seven new members were welcomed by UIC at the General Assembly:

Asia-Pacific:

- RAC (Indonesian rail authority) as affiliate member
- Public Transport Authority of Western Australia as affiliate member
- Philippines Department of Transport as affiliate member

Europe:

- Jernhusen (owner, manager and developer of Sweden's rail real estate) as affiliate member
- ZPCG (passenger operator, Montenegro) as associate member

Middle East:

- Saudi Arabia Railways (SAR) as active member

The next UIC General Assembly will be held in Beijing on 29 June 2020, just before the UIC World Congress on High-Speed Rail.

## CONTACTS

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