91st General Assembly of UIC, the worldwide organisation of railways, was held on 7 December 2017 in Paris

Particular focus on Standardisation, Digital, Security, International Corridors

(Paris, 8 December 2017) The Executive Board and 91st General Assembly of UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, held on 7 December in Paris, were chaired by UIC Chairman Mr Renato MAZZONCINI, CEO and Director General of Ferrovie dello Stato Italiane (FSi), together with Mr Isa APAYDIN, President of the Board and Director General of TCDD, UIC Vice-Chairman and in the presence of Mr Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX, UIC Director General. Several international organisations also attended the UIC General Assembly, such as OTIF, CIT, OSJD, USIC.

These statutory meetings were coupled with a series of regional assemblies (Africa, Europe, Middle East) as well as thematic conferences of interest for UIC Members (UIC Digital conference, workshop on Private-Public-Partnerships).

Opening of the UIC General Assembly

A Keynote speech was first given in the shape of a video message by Teresa CARLSON, Vice President for Amazon Web Services' worldwide public-sector business about the power of digital and how it can transform business, and more precisely on how AWS can help railways to innovate. Max Peterson, VP AWS Europe, Middle East, Africa underlined on the other hand transformation drivers, highlighting on their “customer obsession” and the need of long-term thinking.

He presented RailPod which allows automated inspections, real time data analysis, preventive maintenance and voyages-sncf.com (today re-branded oui.sncf) which explores the potential use of the service “ALEXA”.

Finally, he mentioned the motto of Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon: “put the customer first, invent and be patient”.

Renato MAZZONCINI, UIC Chairman, underlined that the word “customer” is very important for railways.
Report by UIC Chairman Renato MAZZONCINI

UIC Chairman Mr Renato MAZZONCINI in his report reviewed the activities of the railway organisation since the last General Assembly in July in Istanbul and reminded the meeting of the orientations and main challenges for the months to come.

He stressed that; “UIC is the depository of an enormous heritage of scientific and technological know-how. This association is, and should stay, the stable pillar and the single voice gathering the international rail community around its strong values. Let’s make this possible by being constructive and united within the association”. He added:

“The positioning of UIC and its digital platform enable this year a number of global activities on key topics around services security and productivity. The various workshops organised in Paris, Beijing, or other places (Rome) have demonstrated the interests of the digital ecosystem in our industry. The objective here is clearly to open our business and obtain reactivity, creativity, and resources from different start-ups or incubators. The partnership offer made by Splunk or the presence of the Deputy President of Amazon in our Assembly today is an excellent testimony of this potential. Being invited to the CES of Las Vegas to represent rail’s added value in the mobility mix is a recognition of the work done to be sincerely congratulated.

The programme of conferences in 2017 has been significant, not only in quantity but also in quality. The promotion made by UIC on rail business and rail values through this important programme of conferences is of high value for our industry and for our community.

The development of the regional dimension is due to the work of the UIC team as well as the personal input of the UIC regional chairmen. I want to highlight their role and thank them for their dedication.”

Progress on Standardisation

This year only, the process made it possible to publish up to 28 International Railway Solutions (IRS) in completed version as global and regional adaptations and to prepare a programme that needs to be boosted up to 40 new IRS in the pipeline.

Progress on Digitalisation

One of the new main pillars of UIC activities deals with Digitisation and its challenges. Digital technology can be disruptive in all areas of the railways, interfacing with other modes.

On 6 December, UIC hosted the 3rd World Digital Conference, which gave UIC Members the opportunity to exchange views on cloud usage and artificial intelligence for asset management. Three winners of the 2nd edition of the Digital Awards received awards on this occasion.

Renato MAZZONCINI said: “I would like to recall that the core work of the Digital Platform is to “share, open & connect” the rail sector to the digital eco-system. We organised the UIC Digital Days in Rome earlier this year, in the framework of the Digital platform. It was the opportunity to deal with Asset Digitalisation and Cybersecurity, a high-level priority for us, in order to take in account opportunities and threats linked to this revolution”.
The 2nd edition of UIC Digital Awards met the same success as last year with more than 30 applications. The categories for this second edition are services, security and productivity. The three winners were presented their prizes during the UIC Digital Conference on 6 December. The applications received show the very clear interactions and synergies to be implemented between the rail sector and the digital eco-system. Innovation is there and the sector needs it.

**Promotion of International Corridors**

Freight corridors are the backbone of freight development, not only in Europe but also at intercontinental level. UIC is actively supporting this through two key initiatives:

- The ECCO (efficient cross corridor organisation) project which aims to foster interoperability and harmonisation across all nine European Rail Freight Corridors. This project is a key contributor to the “Sector Statement” which is the barometer of the European Commission to see how the implementation of these corridors is coming along;

- “The Eurasian stakeholder group” which assesses the potential and development of Eurasian freight corridors including the initiative One Belt One Road concept developed by Chinese government and addresses, with all key actors, a series of interoperability gaps identified by the recent study carried out in partnership with Roland Berger consultancy firm.

This work will provide a wealth of input for the upcoming Global Rail Freight Conference due to take place in Genoa from 27 – 29 June 2018.

He also drew attention to some keys events that will be organised by UIC in the early 2018:

- **1st Global System Conference on Signalling & Telecoms**, hosted by FS will be held in Milan from 26 – 28 March 2018;
- **10th World Congress on High Speed Rail**, hosted by TCCD will take place in Ankara from 8 – 11 May 2018;
- **ILCAD (International Level Crossings Awareness Day)**, will take place in Zagreb on 7 June 2018;
- **UIC Global Rail Freight Conference**, hosted by FS will be held in Genoa from 27 – 29 June 2018.

UIC Vice Chairman Mr Isa APAYDIN, said: “We are now at the end of 2017 and many successful activities and conferences have been held this year. Experiences have been exchanged, working groups have carried out successful studies efficiently on behalf of rail community. In this framework, I would like to thank to the President, Mr MAZZONCINI, UIC Director General, Mr LOUBINOUX and all our colleagues working within UIC for all their support. I would also like to wish success in their studies in 2018 which I believe they will increasingly continue.

I hope that 2018 will be a more feasible, greener, more innovative year in which a greater market share will be obtained for transport, in which technology is used at maximum level and the responsibilities regarding the environment are more fulfilled by our members. Briefly, I hope it will be a more fruitful and efficient year for us and more peaceful year for our world.”
Last not but least, I would like to remind you that UIC 10th High Speed Congress which we believe is one of the most important events of UIC, will take place from 8 – 11 May 2018 in Ankara and I would like to invite you all to this Congress.

Report from UIC Director General Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX

UIC Director General Mr Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX gave an overview on the main activities performed by UIC Headquarters and working bodies during the last period.

He reminded the meeting that a number of developments have been achieved in 2017. He said: “This year has been particularly busy with events, both in the work programme and with projects, working groups, statutory meetings, global conferences and the advance preparation of our 2018 programme, as part of the tri-annual plans presented by the different directors.”

He added: “I should like to stress the considerable work carried out by a group involving UIC staff and the collective organisation of assistants to go beyond a subjective perception of quality, to improve the understanding of various processes, and to jointly implement some very practical initiatives.

This resulted in several surveys, the most recent of which was sent out during the summer of 2017 to 1 600 people and had a particularly high response rate, with 400 to 500 people responding. This survey highlighted some measure of satisfaction regarding a favourably large number of points. It was initially sent out to the General Assembly and to all members for their consideration.

However, the point that I would like to emphasise is that, as I announced in Istanbul, the decision was made to launch a certification process, which is based on an initiative involving the participation of the whole of UIC, with official approval by means of the recently acquired signature of the AFNOR representative and sets out a plan of actions to be taken in 2018 in order to maintain the quality indicators and continue the initiative across the different meetings.

“In the institutional field, I would like to mention the extremely positive response to the letter sent out in the first quarter to over a hundred transport ministers and partners from associative and financial institutions around the world. A number of these have shown an interest and replied, appointing a contact person to keep them informed of our activities. According to the statutory rules, this means that they must be present at our General Assemblies as observers for any subjects that may be relevant to them (subjects brought to the Executive Board). I find it appropriate that observers from the banks (EIB, ADB, WB, etc.) are now able to work more closely with us”.

“With regard to the promotion of sustainable development by the railway sector, my appointment to the board of SLoCaT and our participation at COP23 with UNFCCC shall allow us to better promote the railway as part of the Paris Process on Mobility and Climate (PPMC) and UN work. We are trying to evolve our strategy from mitigation – i.e. reducing and measuring CO2 emissions, in line with the declaration signed by UIC members a couple of years ago – to adaptation – i.e.” helping our members develop and build resilient structures that go beyond the simple measurement of CO2 emissions.
Through the various partnerships agreed with different associations, we are supporting important values and have developed a number of cultural, charitable and sporting initiatives.

The “Livre des Gares”, a wonderful new art book, is available to UIC members and the international public; CineRail, the International Festival Trains on Film, hosted by Portuguese Railways CP this year in Lisbon on 27 and 28 November, showed 65 films from 23 different countries. Collaboration and relationship with FISAIC; the chess tournament of 20 November, and a charitable initiative which enables us to better promote our values of unity, universality and solidarity through the Médecins du Monde. I am delighted that this year anonymous donations have made a modest, yet symbolically very powerful, financial contribution”.

Special mention should be made of our successful and dynamic partnerships, which today number over a hundred, including 60 active partnerships. Equally, major conferences deserve a special mention, including Next Station, Cyber Security, Asset Management, the Tour in Silicon Valley, and workshops in Beijing, Montreal and Paris (up to 50 events in 2017).

Our global dimension is continuing to grow with the signing of an agreement between Iran Railways RAI and Turkish State Railways TCDD to contribute to database security.

This brings us to the end of 2017, with technical developments on the one hand and cultural events on the other”.

To finish, Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX read few words from Alain FLAUSCH, Secretary General of the International Organisation for Public Transport UITP, about UIC:

“As historical international associations, UIC & UITP know each other well and have always had due respect for each other’s activities. Today, where integrated and smooth less transportation is of such critical importance for our cities and our societies, it was an evident duty for both of our Associations to reinforce their cooperation. In particular regarding commuter rail and modal interfaces which are a major cornerstone for the development of sustainable mobility. The essential role of public transport in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions has also been an excellent opportunity to jointly enhance the sharing of voice of our two institutions during the climate change negotiations and the implementation of the UN SDG’s. I thank Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX for our cooperation and wish means to come to reinforce it further”.

AFNOR certification

During the UIC General Assembly, a certification was issued by the French national organisation for standardisation AFNOR to UIC by Fabrice TIREL, AFNOR’s Director for Innovation & Development. Mr TIREL said that this certification is a powerful tool of progress, but it is also a challenge to maintain this approach of continuous improvement.

Mr MAZZONCINI said regarding this certification:

Today, UIC has been certified with “Quality of Service” by AFNOR, the French standardisation body and partner of ISO. This certification establishes 11 commitments, all summarised in the four strategic axes of the UIC: representing the sector, promoting its know-how, serving the Members, being efficient and transparent towards them. These commitments now have to be
living, this quality system must be acquired both by the UIC staff and by us, the Members. Certification audits will be renewed every year in the years to come in order to confirm this appropriation.

The next two years are essential for the success of this approach. We have been informed about its “win-win” philosophy, but now this is becoming reality and we have the chance of being part of a transformation of the UIC. I personally think that we should seize this opportunity and get involved to strengthen this historical association. Our association will celebrate its 100 years in 2022. How would we like it to be for the next 100 years? What is the legacy we are leaving to the sector? We are all responsible for this”.

Reports from the Regional Chairmen

Reports from all the UIC Regions were delivered by Vyacheslav PAVLOSKIY, on behalf of Mr Oleg BELOZEROV, President of JSC Russian Railways RZD, for the Asia-Pacific. Mr Mohammed Rabie KHLIE, Director General of Moroccan Railways ONCF gave the 2017 Review for Africa. Francisco Cardoso dos REIS, UIC Rail System Forum Chairman, UIC Europe President, Head of IP International Affairs presented the major concerns for Europe. Isa APAYDIN, UIC Vice Chairman, President of the Board and Director General of TCDD (Turkish State Railways) presented the main highlights of the Middle-East. Yves DESJARDINS-SICILIANO, President and CEO of VIA Rail Canada, presented the main achievements and projects of the North American region whereas Guillermo FIAD, President of Ferrocarriles Argentinos (Argentine Railway) delivered a presentation concerning Latin America.

Memorandum of Understanding with OTIF

A Memorandum of Understanding with the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) was signed during the UIC General Assembly, which, as the oldest international organisations acting for railway harmonisation, have developed over several decades and wish to formalise and further enhance their excellent cooperation in view of future challenges. UIC and The Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF), given their respective complementary missions, have decided to conclude a MoU to cooperate on non-confidential issues of mutual interest as they recognise that joint initiatives are indispensable in order to facilitate the international movement of goods and services and to ensure the effective harmonisation in the rail sector.

Appointments

UIC Director General Mr Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX announced the appointment of Laurent SCHMITT, SNCF, as new Head of the Standardisation Platform and thanked all the work done in this field by Stefano GUIDI, FSi.

Marc GUIGON was also officially appointed as New Director of UIC Passenger Department.
Finance

The General Assembly took note of the expected results 2017 and approved the 2018 budget.

Membership

The UIC General Assembly welcomed as new UIC Members:

Asia-Pacific region:

- MyHSR Corp. (Malaysian railway authority) as affiliate member

European region:

- IZS (Serbian Infrastructure Manager) as active member
- CH-Direct (Swiss Association of Public Transport) as affiliate member
- MESEA (French maintenance company) as affiliate member

Middle-East region:

- TCDD Tasimacilik AS (Turkish passenger & freight operator) as active member

To watch the video on UIC Digital progress: https://youtu.be/2Dsj7Ek5DFo
To watch the video on UIC values: https://youtu.be/FhaTCWuEVTk

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