



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Sector Statement Group welcomes Berlin Declaration to support international rail freight and presents its progress report**

(Brussels, 21 September 2020) The Sector Statement Group (SSG) welcomes today's publication of the Ministerial "Rail Freight Corridors: The Future of Rail Freight in Europe" Declaration (Berlin Declaration). The Berlin Declaration showcases the necessary clear commitment of the EU Member States to support international rail freight and rightly recognises the environmental advantage of rail freight in view of the European Green Deal. We notably welcome the clear commitment of the Member States to agree on a migration strategy for Digital Automatic Coupling and the recognition of the importance of further digitalisation of infrastructure networks, capacity management and allocation.

Today, the SSG also wishes to present their "SSG Follow-up" to outline the developments, improvements and challenges of each identified priority action, accompanying the Berlin Declaration. The integrated efforts of the sector set in motion a process of tangible improvement for European rail freight transport. There has been good progress in the SSG Priorities during the past years, but there is still room for improvement and closer cooperation, also with Member States and the EU institutions. International rail freight transport is the future of the European Green Deal and the rail sector is committed in enhancing the competitiveness of international rail freight transport business, and improving the quality, reliability and efficiency of transporting goods across Europe, in light of the 2021 European Year of Rail.

The Follow-up report of the Sector Statement Group is available [here](#).

#### **About the Sector Statement Group**

The Sector Statement Group consists of the rail sector associations and their members (representing the interests of the shippers, freight forwarders, rail freight operators (RUs), intermodal operators, intermodal terminals, infrastructure managers (IMs), allocation bodies, rail freight corridors (RFCs), rail equipment suppliers and Rail Freight Corridors. In 2016, the railway sector adopted a sector statement with commitment to "boost international rail freight".

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*UIC is the worldwide organisation for the promotion of rail transport at a global level and collaborative development of the railway system. It brings together some 200 members on all 5 continents, among them rail operators, infrastructure managers, railway service providers, etc. UIC maintains close cooperation links with all actors in the rail transport domain right around the world, including manufacturers, railway associations, public authorities and stakeholders in other domains and sectors whose experiences may be beneficial to rail development. The UIC's main tasks include understanding the business needs of the rail community, developing programmes of innovation to identify solutions to those needs and preparing and publishing a series of documents known as IRS that facilitate the implementation of the innovative solutions.*