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**UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, welcomes the EU “Fit for 55” plan: Delivering the EU's 2030 climate targets on the path toward climate neutrality**

(Paris, 21 July 2021) UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, welcomes the adoption on 14 July 2021 of the EU “Fit for 55” plan and is calling for an accelerated move to price in the externalities of all transport modes, encouraging the modal shift necessary to mitigate climate change and targeted in the EU Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

The plan is part of a package of proposals to make the EU's climate, energy, land use, transport and taxation policies fit for reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. The objective is to deliver the transformational change needed across the EU's economy, society and industry.

The core aim of the plan is to make the 2020s a transformative decade for climate action. If agreed and implemented, the “Fit for 55” proposals will broaden Europe's ambitions for decarbonisation with a view to achieving climate neutrality by 2050. Without the package, under current EU climate legislation, Europe will achieve only a 60% reduction.

Rail has already been playing its part and is the only transport mode to have reduced emissions. In 2010, as part of the UIC/CER Environmental Strategy for 2030 and Beyond, leading members of UIC committed to reducing emissions by 30% by 2030, and annual data submitted shows that this target has already been reached (28% location-based; 38% market-based). This has been achieved through a combination of energy efficiency measures and a continuous increase in electrified routes. Rail is continuing to innovate to become even more efficient and phase out diesel from the fleet. It is on track for the 55% target for 2030 and net zero before 2050 and is mobilising efforts to win a greater share of freight and passenger transport.

Stricter carbon taxation requirements as part of the ETS (Emissions Trading System) will more effectively take account of the external costs to the planet of all transport modes, removing exemptions that favoured modes with higher emissions in the past. Customers of modes such as road and aviation currently do not pay for the full amount of carbon emitted. A level playing field will support modal shift to the most sustainable forms of transport. More of the revenue generated by ETS must be put to use in supporting transformative projects in rail and sustainable mobility.

UIC will monitor the implementation of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation and will support the development of solutions to make railways:

- less energy consuming,

- more economically efficient by participating in Shift2Rail projects on predictive maintenance methods for RUs and IMs in order to reduce life cycle costs and increase resource availability (catenaries, rolling stock, etc.),
- less dependent on diesel technologies,
- more efficient in terms of combined transport based on the UIC coding system for wagons, lines and loading units, taking all available technologies into account,
- more efficient with longer and heavier trains thanks to simulation solutions such as TrainDy,
- more efficient on border crossings by working on braking and consist rules for international freight trains,
- more attractive for customers in the passenger rail sector.

Mr François Davenne, UIC Director General, said: *“UIC, in its role as a global association of railway companies, has fully mobilised to provide concrete and effective solutions to make a massive modal shift towards rail desirable. The Fit for 55 package and ETS revision will support this shift with a move towards levelling the tax burden for all transport modes. We all know that climate change is ongoing. Our actions will mitigate its effects, but we will have to live with uncertainty, confronted with non-linear phenomena that will have consequences for transport infrastructure and life as we know it. In this difficult period, we must shift to low-emission transport modes. Railways are part of the solution – while representing around 10% of the market, they contribute less than 3% of global emissions. Furthermore, society is benefitting from the improved efficiency and inclusiveness offered by the railways, as well as reduced road fatalities, injuries and local air pollution”.*

He added: *“The priority for our sector is to choose to finance transformational projects for railways at regional and global level. Transformational projects are those that will have a major impact on efficiency in the short term, such as digitalisation, seamless interconnection with other modes and capacity increases on existing infrastructure. These projects will serve as a driver of modal shift to rail and public transport in order to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Green Deal in Europe”.*

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