UIC’s IRRB (International Rail Research Board) and IK (Polish Rail Research Institute) jointly organise the Global Debate on Mobility Challenges for Future Society from 15 – 16 November 2018 in Warsaw

(Warsaw, 16 November 2018) The Global Debate on Mobility Challenges for Future Society, jointly organised by the International Rail Research Board of the Worldwide railway organisation UIC and IK (Polish Rail Research Institute), is being held from 15 – 16 November at the InterContinental Hotel in Warsaw.

The aim of the Debate is to hold a discussion on the transport system of the future – as far ahead as 2050 – and the role of rail as the backbone of a well-connected intermodal system. This first edition, attended by around 95 participants from across Europe, consists of a series of keynote speeches and parallel session debates on the first day, with the conclusions of the parallel debates and a follow-up on the second day.

Participants were welcomed on 15 November by Mr Jerzy Wisniewski, Director of the UIC Fundamental Values Department, who also moderated the day’s sessions. A series of introductory speeches were then given by Dr Andrzej Zurkowski, IRRB Vice-Chairman and Director of IK (Polish Rail Research Institute); Poland’s Deputy Infrastructure Minister Mr Mikolaj Wild; Mr Aleksey Ozerov from VNIIZHT, JSC Railway Research Institute on behalf of Professor Boris Lapidus, IRRB Chairman (RZD); and a video message by Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux, UIC Director General: https://youtu.be/0DgEUJA1LAc

Dr Andrzej Zurkowski welcomed the participants and said: “The results of the debate will contribute to the preparation of the updated version of the Global Vision on Railway Development (GVRD). My task is to be editor of this work as the content of this document is supposed to be the result of an international discussion between experts. This document will be developed based on the conclusions of today’s debate and presented for validation at the UIC General Assembly in 2019.”

Mr Mikolaj Wild said that it is a special moment for the development of transport in Poland, that we need to meet transport demands and that it is the will of the Polish government for rail to become an attractive mode of transport.
Mr Aleksey Ozerov on behalf of Mr Boris Lapidus outlined the key factors influencing transport evolution. He said that railways should not compete with each other but be an alternative to other modes of transport.

In his video message, Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux said: “Transport has to go from mobility to accessibility and is becoming an optimised way to access a succession of space and time slots in different modes. In this century, rail must be the backbone of a new and integrated mobility chain.”

Five keynote speeches were then delivered on the following areas:
New mobility system concepts
Towards an integrated transport system
IT – new opportunities and threats
Competitiveness of transport stakeholders
Sustainability and resilience of the transport system

The afternoon revolved around five parallel thematic sessions covering topics such as integrated transport systems, new technology in the rail industry, digital capabilities, as well as sustainability challenges for rail transport. Speakers representing UIC included Mr Marc Antoni, Director of the Rail System Department, Mrs Carole Escolan-Zeno, Head of the Sustainable Development Unit, and Mrs Marie-Hélène Bonneau, Senior Security Advisor.

This morning, 16 November, was dedicated to feedback on the parallel debates from the previous day, followed by an interactive discussion on the challenges of future mobility.
In the conclusions, Mr Dennis Schut, UIC Research Manager, and Mr Jerzy Wisniewski, Director of the UIC Fundamental Values Department, highlighted the importance of deciding on what type of research we now have to do and in what direction we need to go. The main considerations include taking into account railway staff in our research, learning from other modes of transport and the evolution of new technology. Above all, we need to remember that transport is future-oriented and we therefore need to plan for the future, not just for now.

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