

Speech Jean-Pierre Loubinoux

2nd Conference on Railway Standardisation

It is a real pleasure for me to greet and welcome at UIC all participants and speakers to the second UIC World Conference on Railway Standardisation. This conference represents an opportunity for all of us to have an open discussion and a comparison on the state of the art and on the needs of the railway sector referable to standardisation directly from the voice of the involved stakeholders.

The railway system is characterised by high level performances, complexity and investments, both human and financial.

A remarkable specificity is also given by the figures at stake that not always describe a sharp orientation towards large scale solutions - and consequently productions - or interoperable implementations: as an example let us think of the relatively small series production of rolling stock.

This situation is not common to other modern service domains like aviation or telecommunications and it surely represents a point to which need to pay attention.

Railway standardisation is, without any doubt, a main catalyst of experiences, know-how and solutions, functional to the continuous improvement of the produced services.

The changed context with the emergency of new actors in the domain of railway standardisation and the strong push to markets and services globalisation of the last years ask all of us to ponder over the reciprocal interfacing of the different kind and families of standards, to mutually recognise and respect our roles and to make the most of our competences.

A fact is that the railway service is the result of many contributions where the Railway Undertakings and the Infrastructure Managers are the system integrators responsible for the final mission, namely the transportation of passengers and goods.

Manufacturers need industrial standards to provide the industrial goods to the railway operating companies in a more and more efficient, modern and cheaper way.

The governmental institutions in charge of the laws and the rules issue mandatory documents, necessary to insert the railway transportation into the social context, which shall be adopted by well defined group of people or entities.

The operational day to day situation is anyway much more complex than that, introducing many nuances particularly due to a number of factors: the governance schemes according to regional conditions, the evolution of the technology, the geography, which contribute to bring a number of additional variations. Actually the different models and allocations of the competences vary quite a lot among the different regions of the world.

It is clear that this context deserves a careful widening to which the Conference of today intends to contribute.

We, as rail operating community, together with all actors have the big responsibility to provide the tools to orientate the railway transport towards a major breakthrough and I am quite sure that today nobody can consider him- or herself being alone or isolated from this main target.

UIC is present on the stage of the international railway standardisation since 1922 and in the last period has significantly brought out the railway knowledge at worldwide level promoting the technical cooperation among the members and, consequently, facilitating a coherent worldwide development of the railways - in a full system approach - and strengthening the fundamental values like safety and interoperability.

Thanks to its global dimension, UIC is inclined to offer its structure and competencies to create cooperation and integration of best practices, outcomes and processes around a representative consensus.

One year ago the Cooperation Agreement with IEC was signed and it has demonstrated positive results.

This example suggests us that cooperation is the prerequisite for convergence, complementarity is the key to improvement and standards are the necessary support for business and investments.

I am pretty sure that today will add a number of considerations on railway standardisation that are very precious for our work of the next period.