



UNION INTERNATIONALE DES CHEMINS DE FER
INTERNATIONALER EISENBAHNVERBAND
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYS

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International conference on perspectives for a sustainable transport system

Improving rail competitiveness, serving the market and the environment

Two hundred high-level representatives from European politics, business and industry, railway undertakings and infrastructure companies attended a conference on railways and the environment on 19 November 2004 in Berlin. The discussions focused on strengthening the railways in the European transport system in order to meet the challenges of establishing a sustainable transport system in Europe, especially with a view to the recent enlargement of the European Union.

Addressing European policy makers, **Margareta Wolf**, Parliamentary State Secretary of the German Ministry for the Environment, said “external costs have to be internalised for all transport modes. I welcome encouraging signals from the European Commission that go in this direction.” Ms Wolf went on to say: “Everyone has to play his role in order to solve the ‘attractiveness problem’. The railways can only gain from setting environmental standards”.

Miroslav Ouzký, Vice-President of the European Parliament and Member of the Environment Committee, spoke of the important role the railways play in the new Member States of the European Union, including his native Czech Republic. “The market share in passenger and freight in Central and Eastern Europe is twice as high as in the EU-15.” He added: “The investment question is crucial for the expansion of rail.”

Stefan Garber, Executive Vice-President Technology and Purchasing at Deutsche Bahn AG, presented DB’s “Sustainable Management System” as a solution to strengthen the position of the railways in the transport market. “We have to intelligently combine the advantages of the rail mode with all the requirements of the environment and society. Deutsche Bahn will therefore introduce a sustainable management system.”

“The railways are committed to improving their services in all sectors but we need prices that reflect the costs in the transport market. Everyone talks about wanting to achieve modal shift, the ‘polluter pays principle’ – but nothing happens. If the costs and price structures do not change and we do not create a level-playing field we will never achieve change and progress. I am very pleased that the new Transport Commissioner Barrot has expressed that he considers the Eurovignette issue to be a key question” said **Johannes Ludewig**, Executive Director of the

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Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER). The process is currently stalled and CER expects this issue to be put back on top of the political agenda.

Jean-Arnold Vinois, Head of Unit in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Transport and Energy, stressed that "rail has a great future if it is able to adopt a European dimension to serve its customers with high quality."

Thomas Barrett, Director at the European Investment Bank, advised the railways to concentrate on developing their strengths: "Both society and EU and national institutions will increasingly acknowledge the advantages rail has to offer when railways demonstrate that they are making a real difference to improvement in public transport and freight."

Philippe Roumeguère, Chief Executive of the International Union of Railways (UIC) argued that "the commitment to set up a sustainable transport system cannot be limited to Europe. With a view to growing transport demand in countries like China and India, it is clear that there is a global need for ambitious action plans and decisions – especially considering our responsibility towards the environment".

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