



## **Press release**

**Paris/Montréal, 5 December 2005**

### **Railways are the right answer to the transport sector's need to lowering GHG Emissions**

The same day as thousands of people in the streets of Montréal led a world-wide day of protest against global warming – where many were carrying signs and banners with messages against green house gasses (GHG)-emissions from road transport - the International Union of Railways (UIC) in co-operation with the Railway Association of Canada (RAC) organised the only side event at the United Nations Framework Conventions for Climate Change (UNFCCC)s 11<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP) on transport.

The transport sector alone is responsible for 30 % of the global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of which 84% is directly caused by the road sector, private cars and road transport. Only 1 % is generated by rail transport and this CO<sub>2</sub> advantage can dramatically help countries to achieve the reduction targets of the Kyoto Protocol.

In the recently published publication “Key GHG Data” (the first UNFCCC publication covering all GHG data officially submitted by developed and developing countries under the Climate Change Convention) transport is pointed out as the sector with the highest growth of GHG-emissions, even when GHG-emissions from fuel sold for international aviation and shipping are not included. These figures speak for themselves – transport needs more attention in the climate change combat!

In the “The railway emissions story”-session representatives from different Canadian rail companies presented the emissions advantage of the railways and the positive performance of Canadian rail companies in relation to mitigating GHG-emissions and ways these reductions are being achieved. The Canadian railway industry presentations were introduced by the RAC's Vice-president of Operations and Regulatory Affairs, Mike Lowenger. Panelists included Ash Olesen, Director of Environmental Affairs, Canadian Pacific Railway; Erika Akkerman, Environmental Systems Engineer, CN; Mike Greenberg, Vice-President, Environment, Procurement and Real Estate, VIA Rail Canada and Tim Secord, Canadian Legislative Director, United Transportation Union. They detailed the considerable progress of the railway industry in controlling GHG emissions and the very positive outlook for the future. For example, rail CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in terms of work-unit efficiency have actually been cut by about 22 per cent since 1990.

Margrethe Sagevik, UIC, representing the railway and public transport campaign towards the participants of the UNFCCC-meetings, “Keep Kyoto on Track”\*, draw a global perspective of the transport sector pointing out that despite technological advances, transport is not developing in sustainable ways. Railways are crucial to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to creating sustainable transport systems. Bringing about a modal shift from road to rail is the key to achieving the targets of the Kyoto Protocol and beyond - and at the same time a

sustainable global transport policy for the future. This implies brave politicians who dare to invest in rail infrastructure in both developing and developed countries.

This session took place on Saturday 3 December and was broadcasted by the UNFCCC web cast, and is available at:

<http://unfccc.streamlogics.com/unfccc/agenda.asp>

\*The "Keep Kyoto on Track"-campaign is a joint initiative between the International Union of Railways (UIC), the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) and the Union of European Railway Industries (UNIFE), and was made to support the UNFCCC-meetings in putting focus on transport.

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