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## **1st International Oil, Rail & Port Conference organised by UIC and ITE-EUF in cooperation with Iranian Railways successfully held in Tehran**

***Focus placed on perspectives for promising partnerships and synergies between shipping lines, ports and railways in the Middle-Eastern Region***

(Paris, 23 May 2016) The 1st *International Oil, Rail and Port Conference*, organised by **UIC** - the worldwide railway association, **ITE Group** – the organiser of 240 events across the globe together with the Railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran (**RAI**), was successfully held from 15 – 16 May 2016 in Tehran in conjunction with the RAILEXPO 2016 Rail Exhibition.

This first ever international event organised by the rail sector in Iran on the topic of enhancing partnerships between rail, ports, shipping lines and other actors of the freight and multimodal transport chain, was attended by over 600 participants, including over 100 international delegates from 27 countries. Participants represented government authorities, international institutions, foreign embassies, railways and other stakeholders of the logistics and transport chain interested in developing business in the region. The lifting of international sanctions on Iran is helping to open up broad perspectives for new cooperation and business in the region and added to the debate.

The inauguration ceremony of the 1st Oil, Rail & Ports Conference and RAILEXPO 2016 Exhibition was moderated by **Mr Laurent Noël**, Director Transport & Logistics portfolio at ITE Group. Several high-level representatives addressed the conference participants, in particular **Dr Mohsen Pour Seyed Aghaei**, Vice Minister for Roads and Urban Development, President of Iranian Railways RAI, **Mr Mohammadreza Nematzadeh**, Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade of Iran, **Dr Abbas Akhoundi**, Minister of Roads and Urban Development, **Mr Oleg Belozarov**, President of JSC Russian Railways (RZD), UIC Chairman, **Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux**, Director General of UIC, **Mr Francois Davenne**, Secretary General of the Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail OTIF.

UIC Chairman and Russian Railways President **Mr Oleg Belozarov** expressed warm greetings to all participants and underlined the excellent cooperation between Iranian Railways RAI and UIC, as well as OSJD and CIS countries.

During the Welcome ceremony, Mr Belozarov also signed on behalf of Russian Railways (RZD) a cooperation agreement with the President of RAI **Dr Mohsen Pour Seyed Aghaie**.

In his welcome address, UIC Director General Mr Jean-Pierre Loubinoux underlined:

*“UIC, the worldwide railway organisation, is particularly committed to supporting the development of an effective railway and multimodal transport system in the Middle-East. Currently the Middle-East is one of the most dynamic and promising regions for Railways. Let us just mention the large number of railway projects for introduction on high speed rail and new freight services, new cross-border connections, the creation of long distance corridors for freight, as for example along the new Rail Silk Roads. The UIC Strategic Vision for the Middle-East clearly highlights all the potential for the development of a successful rail transport system, offering optimal interfaces with ports, shipping lines and intermodal terminals - including oil and gas terminals – for the optimisation of the global transport chain”.*

The two-day conference programme was structured around several main topics relating to cooperation with ports on the one hand, and with the oil and gas industry (markets, regulations & logistical efficiency) on the other.

Invited speakers addressed the following issues:

*- 'The Challenges of keeping position in a fast changing environment' (Mr Armand Toubol, Honorary Deputy Director General of SNCF, Chairman of the session, Mr Hervé de Tarade, International Intermodal Services IIS, Mr Hervé Cornede, Haropa Ports, Mr Mohammed Saeedi, Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines IRISL)*

*- 'Investment Opportunities created by the present environment of Low global Oil and Gas prices' (Mr Ed Osterwald, Competition Economist Group CEG Europe)*

*- 'Policies and Developments of Ports and Multimodal Transport' (Mr Mohammad Saeed Nezhad, Vice Minister for Roads and Urban Developments, President of Ports and Maritime Organization, Iran)*

-*'The Strategic Vision and Action Plan 2016-2020 for the Railways of the UIC Middle-East Region'* (**Mr Abbas Nazari**, Director General International Affairs, RAI, Director of UIC Middle-East Regional Office, Tehran)

-*'Developing Rail Transit with the participation of Ports of Iran'* (**Mr Hossein Ashourri**, Vice President for Operations and Movement, Iranian Railways RAI)

-*'Iran Case Study'* (**Mr Ali Sangian**, Seven Seas Shipping Agency and International Transportation Co. Ltd)

-*'The Legal and Regulatory Framework for International Rail Transport - Interoperability and Safety Standards'* (**Mr Jean-Georges Heintz**, Industrial Risk Expert, SNCF and UIC, **Mr Jochen Conrad**, Head of Dangerous Goods Section, OTIF)

-*'The Role of Oil industry in developing Ports and Railway lines'* (**Mr Amin Hossein Zamaninia**, Deputy Minister for International Affairs and Trading, Iranian Ministry of Petroleum, **Mr Ali Akbar Safaie**, Managing Director, National Iranian Tanker Company NITC)

-*'Navigating Iranian Sanctions Microseminar'* (**Mr Nigel Kushner**, W Legal Limited)

-*'The Multimodal Revolution in Oil & Gas Transport'* (**Mr Grigore Havarneanu**, UIC Security Division, **Mr Vasco Paul Kolmorgen**, CEO Bahnkonzept, Germany, **Mr Andrey Ushakov**, Honorary Railroader & Managing Director, Apatech)

## CONTACTS:

UIC: Mr Paul Véron, Director of Communications, UIC Coordinator for the Middle-East, [veron@uic.org](mailto:veron@uic.org)

ITE Group: Mr Mark Jakobsen, Head of Portfolio Marketing & VIP Buyers Programme- ITE Transportation and Logistics, [mark.jakobsen@ite-exhibitions.com](mailto:mark.jakobsen@ite-exhibitions.com)

RAI - UIC Regional Office for the Middle-East: [rameuic@gmail.com](mailto:rameuic@gmail.com)