



Welcome address given by Jean-Pierre LOUBINOUX
To the President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff
Opening of the 81st UIC General Assembly
Paris, 12 December 2012

The spoken word alone prevails

Mrs. President,

Indeed I think that it is an exceptional and symbolic coincidence that on the 12 December 2012 we planned to celebrate the 90-year anniversary of our international organisation and that at the same time you were in Paris and decided to honour us with your visit.

As Chairman Satoshi Seino just outlined, UIC is the worldwide association of railways with the mission to produce international rules and standards used every day by nearly all railways across the globe. UIC works on several hundred technical projects with the overall objective to optimise the performances of railways, both railway operators and rail infrastructure managers, and continuously increase the advantages of this mode of transport, for the benefit of the market and more generally for society. As part of its mission UIC has organised around 200 conferences on specific railway issues in the past year, which have brought together 50,000 participants from 25 countries. The most significant in 2012 were dedicated to strategic issues of railway development such as High Speed Rail in Philadelphia, the representation of the rail sector at the Rio+20 sustainability talks, with strong involvement of UIC Brazilian members, and global rail freight development in Morocco.

UIC is contributing with all its members to the development of Innovation and Research, to international training of new generations of railway staff and managers, to the transmission of knowledge to current and future generations

Our overall goal aims to continuously increase the added value of rail transportation in economic and social terms, and promote its development via a large number of projects across the world for high-speed rail, intercity and suburban passenger traffic and rail freight. UIC's international action also includes close cooperation with all leading international institutions in the political, economic, financial or technical field.

We all are aware that Brazil, under President Lula and now under your Presidency, decided to develop railways to offer an effective answer to the growing needs for mobility of people and goods. Ambitious plans include intra-city transport systems for Rio and Sao Paulo as well as the TAVE High-Speed projects to link both mega-poles with high-performance passenger trains.

Your presence today, Mrs. President, in this worldwide railway community, is a strong symbol of your vision for Brazil and a strong invitation for UIC to support its members' efforts, in all parts of the world, to cope with mobility challenges, for the benefit of economy and society.

Again, on behalf of all Heads of railways present in Paris, we warmly thank you and your government for your presence today, which exceptionally honours our world organisation.