

# Voluntary initiatives in the rail and public transport sector: contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals

**SATURDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2016, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM, SIDE-EVENT ROOM**

Organised by International Association of Public Transport (UITP) and International Union of Railways (UIC)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the need to adopt policies which enhance sustainable transport systems. It is clear that advances in sustainable transport will contribute to several, if not all, of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Some SDGs are directly connected to sustainable transport through targets relevant to the rail and public transport sector. The event will examine how actions by transport initiatives and partnerships can contribute to delivering the SDGs.

The Side Event was chaired by Ramon Cruz International Policy Program Manager at the Institute for Transport and Development Policy (ITDP) who welcomed the attendees and introduced the speakers. In doing so, he also took the opportunity to thank the host nation.

Irena Zubcevic's from the Division for Sustainable Development at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) presentation focused on the workings on the UN Secretary General's High Level Group on Sustainable Transport which had launched its Global Outlook Report shortly before the Conference. The Report outlines the critical importance of sustainable transport to delivering on the SDGs. The report's recommendations outline the key steps needed at the local and national level and well as internationally in order to make the 2030 Agenda a reality. Particular attention in the Report was given to the critical importance of partnerships in that state and non-state actors must work together if we are to scale up effort on sustainable transport. The voluntary initiatives on sustainable transport launched at the UN Secretary General's 2014 Climate Summit were seen as trailblazers in this regard and will make the significant inroads into delivering on the SDGs.

Two international partnerships were also presented to the audience, the first from Holger Dalkmann from the World Resource Institute and co-chair of the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (Slocat). The Partnership has played a key role in bringing the transport community together as part of the Global Climate Action Agenda at COP 21 and COP 22. Implementing the Paris Agreement will be a huge challenge for the transport sector as it needs to be move towards a decarbonisation pathway. Slocat has developed a Common Framework on Transport, Sustainable Development and Climate Change which spells out a common narrative for the transport sector that brings together improved access with economic, social and environmental sustainability. Mr. Dalkmann also stressed

that the transport sector needs to take action swiftly and this will be helped by the development of a Global Road Map, in partnership with the Paris Process on Mobility & Climate (PPMC), to decarbonize the transport sector that provides all stakeholders including the private sector with a medium and long term scenario on which to base policy and investments decisions. He also stressed that the transport sector will need to transform structurally (not merely incrementally) to meet ambition levels set by the Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. To kick-start such a transformation, which will take time, a series of "quick-win" actions for more immediate impacts have been identified and can be implemented.

The second major global initiative was presented by Marie-Hélène Vanderpool from the International Road Union and focused on the Global Partnership on Sustainable Transport (GPST). The GPST focuses on three main areas, promoting best practice and giving businesses the tools and information needed to make their day-to-day trading more sustainable. This includes promoting initiatives like the UN Global Compact's 10 principles. Secondly, starting the conversation and in doing so, this can encourage governments and businesses to talk about sustainability and come up with concrete solutions. Finally, working in partnership which can start to make a real difference.

The final speakers looked at two sectoral initiatives on rail and public transport both launched at the UN Climate Summit in 2014. The **UIC Low Carbon Rail challenge** was presented by Nick Craven, this rail sector initiative was originally launched in 2014 and includes targets for energy efficiency, carbon emissions and modal shift. The presentation explored how the initiative contributed both directly and indirectly to a number of the SDG (notably SDG 3 Healthy lives, SDG 7 Clean energy, SDG 8 Sustainable tourism, SDG 9 Resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialization, SDG 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries, SDG 11 Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities, SDG 12 Sustainable consumption and production, SDG 13 Climate change, SDG 15 Sustainable use of ecosystems & halt biodiversity loss & SDG 17 Partnerships). A Case study was also presented on the medical train operated by the Kazakhstan railway KTZ, where instead of transporting people to services, the medical services were transported to remote communities. The final speaker, Philip Turner from UITP presented the public transport sector's goal to **double the market share of public transport by 2025**. The presentation highlighted that there is a political understanding on the need to expand public transport as noted by the SDG target 11.2. He highlighted the importance of this as it is the only mode to be specifically targeted in the SDG framework. However, he stressed that expanding public transport is more than just increasing public transport supply, but also about increasing use and mode share. He highlighted that the UN High Level Group made clear that the current mode split in cities will mean that the SDGs will not be achieved. Rather, we need a shift to collective multi-modal sustainable transport like public transport. As such, by doubling the market share will do more than just deliver on the SDG target to expand public transport rather by doing so it will deliver on a huge range of SDGs that can realise the future we want.

Following the presentation, Mr. Cruz welcomed questions from the audience. The rail and public transport initiatives were seen as key initiatives that would make a key contribution to delivering on the SDGs. In his concluding remarks, Mr. Cruz stressed that they should be enabled and they can bring forward the necessary partnerships required to deliver on the SDGs.