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Press release no. 230

From 4 to 6 April 2006:

7th UIC World ERTMS Conference in Budapest
Central theme will be *"ERTMS – Towards a Masterplan for Deployment"*

(Paris, 9 March 2006) Over 500 participants representing European Union bodies and governments, financial institutions, railway operators and infrastructure managers (the ERTMS implementers), the rail supply industry and a number of consultants and research institutes are expected to attend the *7th UIC World ERTMS Conference* in Budapest from 4 to 6 April 2006.

The main theme of the UIC ERTMS Conference 2006 is *"ERTMS – Towards a Masterplan for Deployment"*. The conference is being held by UIC together with Hungarian State railways (MAV), assisted by UNIFE, the GSM-R Group (radio industry) , UNISIG (rail signalling industry), the ERTMS Users Group and with the support of CER and EIM.

The ERTMS roll-out throughout out Europe, including the implementation of ETCS (interoperable train control system) and GSM-R (railways radio communication system), is now a reality. On the basis of the internationally approved specifications (TSIs), a number of railways have already started to draw up and implement a complete ERTMS deployment programme on the ground. The 300 million Euros of direct investment by the European Union in ERTMS over the last 10 years, together with the sizeable investment by the railway sector itself (approx. 2 to 3 billion Euros), has taken ERTMS from the experimental phase for revenue services.

The migration process from existing (national) systems to ERTMS (ETCS and GSM-R) could yet take a number of years to achieve. However, the only realistic strategy consists in applying officially approved ERTMS specifications. ERTMS is due to be implemented in practically all European countries, as well as in India, China and Korea, becoming a genuine world railway standard.

Proof of progress

Railways and railway suppliers, together with their associations UIC, CER, EIM and UNIFE, have participated in the work on the ERTMS migration under the auspices of the co-ordinator appointed by the European Commission, *Karel Vinck*. *Mr. Vinck* and other industry leaders will address the ERTMS Conference in Budapest.

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The venue in Budapest has been chosen because ETCS has been successfully deployed by MAV for revenue services on the cross-border corridor Vienna-Budapest. Budapest is also linked with several important corridors connecting central and eastern European countries.
On the day before the conference opens (4 of April), MAV will organise a technical visit to demonstrate the trackside and on-board ETCS applications on the Vienna-Budapest line.

High-level representatives of the European Commission, MAV, UIC and representatives of the associations UNIFE, CER, EIM, Railway Signalling and GSM-R Groups will attend the opening of the conference and exhibition. All the main industries involved in ETCS and GSM-R will be represented at the Exhibition.

The conference will focus on the following issues:
- *ERTMS – Masterplan for Deployment,*
- *Present status of ERTMS development,*
- *Achievements and lessons learnt by early implementers,*
- *ERTMS Applications for European passenger and freight corridors,*
- *ERTMS – Future developments,*
- *ERTMS Applications outside Europe,*
- *Round-table discussions on the key challenges facing successful deployment (funding etc).*

Other meetings in Budapest: ERTMS MoU Steering Group and ERTMS High-Level Group with Chief Executives

Alongside the Conference, an *ERTMS Memorandum of Understanding Steering Group meeting* will be held on the afternoon of 4 April (this MoU meeting is to be chaired by *Karel Vinck,* EU Co-ordinator for ERTMS). A *High Level Group meeting* with Chief Executives from all major European railways will be held on 5 April.

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