



Press release n°276

UIC HIGH SPEED 2008 :

The leading world event dedicated to high speed rail to take place on 17-19 March 2008 in Amsterdam

The 6th world congress on high speed rail under the patronage of Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission

The main theme: "Fast track to sustainable mobility"

(Paris, 3rd October 2007). "High speed rail represents an optimal solution to meet challenges of increasing mobility demand and greater attention of citizens to sustainability issues." stresses Luc Aliadière, UIC Chief Executive. "High speed rail offers performance, safety, service, high energy efficiency and environmental friendliness. In relation with economic models adopted, it is able to ensure high profitability for operating companies as it is demonstrated through a number of success stories."

This explains the main theme "**Fast track to sustainable mobility**" chosen for **UIC HIGH SPEED 2008**, the successor of five successful 'Eurailspeed' world congresses, that is expected to attract on 17-19 March to Amsterdam more than 1.500 decisions makers and actors involved in the planning and development of future-oriented transport systems.

This major event is organised -under the patronage of Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission- by UIC together with Dutch railways (NS), NS Hispeed, the company for high speed traffic in the Netherlands, the Dutch rail infrastructure manager (ProRail) and with the active support of all leading railway associations (CER, EIM, UNIFE). **UIC HIGH SPEED 2008** is widely recognised as the most prominent and large-scale international event on high speed rail and will bring together high level speakers and participants driving the development of rail transport system: political decision makers at national and local level, representatives of international institutions and key economical, financial and environmental organisations, banks, leading industries, research centres and universities, as well as the international press.

Within the main theme the following six topics will be addressed during the congress:

1. *High speed rail and society*: with the purpose to appraise to which extent high speed rail can cope with changes in environment and/ or in the transport policy.

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2. *High speed rail in practice*: that will give the congress participants a broad view of the latest built high speed lines worldwide. It tackles the issue of how to handle a project in a country which has not already developed the high speed technology.
3. *From single lines to a high speed network*: high speed technology started to develop within a series of countries building isolated lines. Nowadays countries cooperate to develop a high speed network with international links.
4. *Strategic issues in high speed rail*: Speed is the cornerstone of the system and has to be investigated in all its components. Another strong point of the high speed system in competition is its ability to arrive in the city centre, another way for saving time. Of course the relationship between speed, cost and reliability is also crucial for competition and will be clearly addressed.
5. *Meeting Customer Expectations*: with the purpose to identify the trends and specificities of the customer's expectations that will influence the design of high speed services
6. *Innovations in Fixed and Mobile Equipment*: that will highlight all major breakthroughs in the high speed rail technology

Group of students involved

The next generation of world citizens has a strong interest in the development of high speed rail. The combination of speed and sustainability will be an indispensable asset for the future. The challenge will be introducing the future perspective. Are we, in 2008, contributing adequately to this high speed rail concept of life in the future? For that reason *a group of students* will be invited to the congress that will contribute to the programme by challenging all participants and helping to keep the focus on the future. This is the first time that students will be actively involved.

In addition to the world congress, the **UIC HIGHSPEED 2008 Trade Exhibition** will provide an extensive exhibition space for all key players involved in the high speed sector: railway manufacturers, railway undertakings, infrastructure companies and civil work contractors, institutions, service companies, etc.

Technical visits will be organised on 19 March 2008 in the afternoon. Congress participants will be able to experience the Dutch High Speed Line (HSL Zuid), the Dutch landscape and several types of mobility, such as bikes and boats. The visits will give an overview of different themes such as: construction and design, maintenance, harmonisation of the track in the Dutch landscape and the comparison of traffic control centre between the rail and air sector.

All parties involved in the organisation are convinced that **UIC HIGHSPEED 2008** will meet all expectations and mark a new step forward for the development of customer-friendly and sustainable railway systems across the world.

For more information on the Congress and Trade Exhibition please visit the UIC HIGHSPEED website:

<http://www.uic-highspeed2008.com/>

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