



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Keepers' Summit 2023 : Adapt the offer to respond to customers' demands. The rail freight community is ready to aim high.**

UIP – the International Union of Wagon Keepers in cooperation with its French member association AFWP welcomed 120 rail freight stakeholders from around Europe to its annual flagship conference - the 'Keepers' Summit' - on 15 June 2023 in Nice, France.

The discussions focused on how to leverage rail freight's strong green credentials to mitigate climate change and in the same time appeal to customers and attract young talent. The panelists and the audience were unanimous: rail freight has an important role to play in our society's future but it also needs to transform itself.

In the quest for transformation former UIP President Dr. Heiko Fischer invited the audience to look at the past to better prepare the future. As a leading force behind the creation of the GCU – the General Contract of Use – Mr Fischer pointed out the important role of private wagon keepers in developing solutions for rail freight. As a man of conviction and vision, he always set great store by the need to innovate and transform rail freight to respond to the future challenges and expectations of customers and society. The audience recognised with a standing ovation the commitment and achievements of Dr. Fischer who steered the works of UIP as President for 11 years.

Mr Joris D'Inca – Global Head of Logistics at international management consulting firm Oliver Wyman – confirmed in his key note speech the necessity for rail freight to adapt to evolving customers' requirements:

*“Customers expect complete transparency throughout the transport chain. They place the most value on the availability of real-time information & end-to-end corridor management. Only by adapting to these requirements will rail freight be able to win share from trucking and play a larger role in helping combat climate change.”*

The expert panel moderated by Ms Emilie Soulez and composed of Mr Charles Puech d'Alissac (VIA / Naviland), Mr Paul Mazataud (SNCF Réseau) and Mr Stéphane Gavard (Stream) provided a deep dive into the elements at the heart of the necessary transformation to respond to the new expectations. Mr Mazataud confirmed the needs and intentions of SNCF Réseau to provide more visibility on maintenance works but also the plans of RNE to increase flexibility by adapting the timetabling process. Mr Puech D'Alissac highlighted the elements and advantages of combined

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transport and the business model behind the activities of Naviland and VIIA. He pointed out the progress made in digitalising the interface with customers and encourages all stakeholders to double the efforts on digitalising as well the interfaces between the rail freight actors. Mr Gavard provided some insights about wagon innovation both in terms of concept and industrial building but elaborated as well on Stroom's project to develop skills and knowledge within the industry.

Finally, Mr David Zindo, CEO of Stroom Group and newly elected UIP President concluded with a promise: to support the transformation with clear priorities while ensuring freight wagon keepers and associations can build on the successes of the past to increase rail freight's attractiveness and competitiveness. He underlined the importance of the work of UIP and the national associations who act as consolidated voices and a link to the local and European political institutions.

*“Our societies need to understand the unique selling proposition of rail freight as crucial means to decarbonize the transport sector. We, as a system, need to improve our offer in order to respond to customers' requirements but also to attract and train young talents.” David Zindo*

## Background

### David Zindo

David Zindo takes on the role of UIP President for the next 3 years. He aims to seize the opportunity to increase UIP's impact by focusing on clear priorities, reinforcing its team and seeking out alliances and working groups with other associations from the sector. He wants to fully unlock UIP's potential in educating and providing guidance with regard to the complex EU regulatory framework and sees the wagon keepers' role become increasingly more active in the shippers' supply chain.

Since 2015, David Zindo (49) has been the President of Stroom (formerly Ermewa Group), one of the leaders in freight railcar leasing in Europe and tank containers around the world. With a fleet of more than 125,000 elements for customers in the industrial, logistics and transportation sectors, the 1,300 employees of the Stroom Group contribute to the deployment of safe, reliable supply chains with a controlled environmental impact.

**Please find more information and an interview with David Zindo [here](#)**

### UIP

Founded in 1950, the [UIP – International Union of Wagon Keepers](#), with its seat in Brussels, is the umbrella association of national associations from 14 European countries, thus representing more than 250 freight wagon keepers and Entities in Charge of Maintenance (ECMs). The fourteen member countries are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.



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As the voice for more than 234'000 rail freight wagons, the UIP represents half of the whole European wagon fleet and one of the most important resources for rail freight transportation in Europe. Research, lobbying and constant exchange with all stakeholders and organisations interested in rail freight transportation play an important part for the association in gearing all efforts towards a step change in efficiency gains in rail freight services. By means of participation in many working groups and committees at European and international level, the UIP brings the perspective and interests of wagon keepers to the table and works in cooperation with all interested parties to secure the future of rail freight transport in the long term.

UIP is recognised by the European Commission as a Representative Body in the railway sector.

