

Press Release

12 March 2013

Prague hosted the Euro Asian Railway Forum with the participation of the lead representatives of the railway organisations.

Discussions about the development of railway transport such as freight transport, infrastructure, safety and integration of transport systems were the subject of the Euro Asian Railway Forum, which took place in Prague on 12 March 2013.

There were heard the presentations and questions were answered by Vladimir Jakunin, President of the Russian Railways (RZD) and the Chairman of the International Union of Railways (UIC), Philippe Citroën, General Manager of the Association of the European Rail Industry (UNIFE) and Libor Lochman, Executive Manager of the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER). The Forum was hosted by prof. Petr Moos, pro-rector of the Czech Technical University in Prague (ČVUT).

The importance of the meeting is illustrated by the geographic composition of the participants. Experts from more than 21 countries participated in the Forum. They met around a round table in a lively debate. They discussed the role of the Russian railways in the future of the Euro Asian Railway Corridor. The company president Vladimir Jakunin informed the partners about the options opened by the Trans Siberia Railway, especially the potential of RŽD as a whole – the organisation of transport corridors North-South and East-West.

"Why talk about transport corridors? Because nowadays it is not just the direction in which railways are heading. At present we must deal with transport corridors as integrated transport systems, which blend various transport types, so we could secure fast transport and delivery cargo reliably."

Vladimir Yakunin, President of RZD

Foreign participants shared their experience as well as their troubles. Both were very found to be quite similar across all the nations. One of the most pressing problems was the need for a fast development of infrastructures. It was said at the Forum, that EU is going to provide subventions for this purpose over the next 7 years, but it will be only 10% of the amount, which is needed.

"If we want to increase the quantity of passengers and railway freight transport, we need a high quality robust infrastructure. It is an essential requirement, or else we can just forget about any increase of the quantity of passengers and cargo transport. This is the message we need to tell the politicians on the European level. We need to say, that the European Commission is willing to listen to these signals and it does support more investments to railway infrastructures."

Libor Lochman, Executive Director of CER

From the most significant participants of the Euro Asian Forum let us name a few:

Sergey Kiselev, (Ambassador, Russian Federation embassy in the Czech Republic), Sergey Aristov (State secretary and Deputy Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation), Miloslav Hala (Deputy Minister of Transport of the Czech Republic, Ministry of Transport), Valeri Reshetnikov (Senior Vice-President, RZD), Anatoli Meshcheryakov (Stats Secretary – Vice-President, RZD), Alexander Saltanov (Vice-President, RZD), Salman Babaev (Vice-President, RZD), Vladimír Ľupták (General Director, ZSSK Cargo), Štefan Hlinka (General Director, ŽSR).

The Euro-Asian Railway Forum was organised on the occasion of the fourth year of the International Rail Freight Conference (IRFC 2013), which took place subsequently on 13 –15 March 2013. The forum and the Conference were organised by the company JERID, member of the OLTIS Group.

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