

23 January 2002

BUSINESS NEEDS OPEN RAILWAY MARKET NOW

“We are pleased with today’s proposals by the Commission to liberalise the European railway market. This is an important step in the context of the Lisbon process,” says Philippe de Buck, Secretary General of UNICE. Liberalisation of rail freight transport is crucial to improving the cost and quality of railway services. With anticipated growth in freight transport demand of 38% over the next ten years, Europe will absolutely need rail and all other modes of transport. Railway liberalisation is essential for optimising the transport system.

“Equally important, swift progress should be made in improving connections between the different national networks and in giving more priority to slots allocated to freight trains”, de Buck explains. “These proposals are a positive step towards completing the internal railway market.”

UNICE has joint forces with other industry associations and companies and is a founding member of the European Rail Freight Customers Platform, which supports these objectives.

Note to the editor:

UNICE is the official voice of more than 16 million small, medium and large companies active in Europe, employing over 106 million people. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE’s members are 34 central industrial and employers federations from 27 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

European Rail Freight Customers Platform - List of founding members:

- European Shippers’ Council
- UNICE
- CEFIC
- EPCA
- Rail Freight Group
- Dutch Rail Freight Customers’ Platform
- CLECAT
- Forum Kolejowe - Railway Business Forum Poland
- Dutch Fruit & Vegetables Trade Organisation
- Freight Forward Europe
- USINOR
- DSM
- Shell Chemicals
- Mars / Masterfoods
- ARS Altmann AG
- Geest North Sea Line BV
- Danzas Eurocargo

For further information, please contact: **Susanne Klunkert:** **+32(0)2 237 65 62**
GSM: **+32(0)477 277 963**
Website : www.unice.org