

Mr. Dacian Ciolos

Prime Minister of the Republic of Romania
Palatul Victoria, Piața Victoriei nr. 1, Sector 1,
011791 București, ROMANIA

Mr. Petru Sorin Bușe

Minister of Transport of the Republic of Romania
Bdv. Dinicu Golescu nr. 38, Sector 1,
010873 București, ROMANIA

Brussels, 20 July 2016

Honourable Prime Minister,
Honourable Minister,

Hereby, on behalf of the International Association of Public Transport (UITP) and the Community of European Railway and Infrastructure Companies (CER), we would like to congratulate the Romanian Government and the Transport Ministry for taking significant steps towards improving the Romanian Transport Master Plan (RTMP), in particular with regards to the measures foreseen for the country's rail sector.

We are very pleased to note that the current version of this crucial document has abandoned the previously planned reduction of up to 40% of the country's rail infrastructure. We are also pleased to see that the RTMP incorporated many of the ideas advocated by UITP and other stakeholders regarding the medium- and long-term planning for the rail sector in Romania.

The topic of the RTMP has been under close monitoring by both national and international transport stakeholders, including a number of stakeholders from the EU institutions. This is based on the general belief of a pressing necessity for a sound and balanced transport systems both in Central-Eastern Europe as well as in South-Eastern Europe alike. This is especially true for Romania, since the country is a crucial link between these two regions.

The EU very much needs a modern, cost-effective and sustainable transport system in Romania too, to meet not only transport, but also business, employment, sustainable development and climate needs of its citizens, cities and regions.

The new version of the Master Plan outlines a positive approach and support for railways – indeed a sector that is vital for the economy at large. It is also our belief that this supportive approach needs to be continued through sound financial planning and a balanced allocation of resources among transport modes. This can ensure that the country's rail system can become a strong solution for safe, affordable and clean transport for all Romanians, living both in the main cities and in the peripheries. Such an approach would also help Romania and the EU to meet the necessary climate and development targets agreed at both European and international (COP21) levels.

Undoubtedly, there is a significant interest for investments in the Romanian rail sector from private and public actors alike. We observe this positive trend of railway investments throughout the whole EU, especially in the Connecting Europe Facility funding. The current Metrorex and TEN-T investments by the Romanian Government certainly could consider these attractive financing options. Moreover, these funding sources can also be applied in the regional and suburban rail lines and services, which make up the bulk of passenger ridership throughout Europe, as proven by the most recent studies. These services can truly bring high benefits to transport operators while providing stable employment and easing congestion – a recognized problem for Bucharest and other major Romanian cities.

We would therefore like to suggest under your kind consideration that the RTMP should also ensure the necessary and timely financing for the country's rail sector. We are convinced that this move will guarantee the most effective implementation of the recent positive adjustments in the Master Plan.

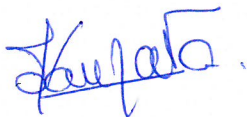
Hereby, UITP and CER would also like to offer you their full support and expertise in bringing public transport and regional railways in Romania back on a good track again. Our international organization and experts, but also our members from across Europe would be pleased to assist you with finding the best solutions.

We would also be pleased to propose a bilateral meeting with you in Bucharest in order to discuss this matter in more details and offer you our full support and assistance.

Looking forward to your kind reply, we remain

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the UITP Secretary General



Thomas Avanzata
Director EU Department



Libor Lochman
CER Executive Director