

Madam Chair,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

The time has come, my last General Assembly!

At such moments you ask yourself: what have you been doing at CIT since 1 January 2012?

That's when the annual reports of the CIT came to my mind. I said to myself, read through these annual reports and write down what has happened in these almost eleven years. What have we achieved?

In 2012, the CIT had 120 full members, in 2022 130 full members: we have grown!

In 2012, the General Secretariat had 890 full-time positions divided between 11 people. In 2022: 710 full time positions divided between 8 people. We have become more efficient!

The 2012 budget was CHF 2,405,000. Today you decided for the year 2023: CHF 2,234,500. We have saved money for the members!

At 31 December 2021, the reserve fund stood at CHF 935,052, compared to CHF 361,242 at 31 December 2012. We are a financially healthy association!

Since 2012, we have sent out 262 circular letters, published 50 issues of CIT-News, and organised 6 successful editions of the Bernese Days.

We have made 31 products available to our members and held 280 CIT meetings; so we have also worked hard!

Those were the numbers, but what about the content?

Again, the annual reports are a good source. Hereafter follows a brief chronicle of the work in the last 10 years. I've certainly forgotten a lot, but I want to give you the feeling of re-living the last few years.

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2012

In 2012, the PRR was a major issue, with some adjustments needed to the AIV. For the allocation of delays, we secured access to the TIS Train Information System for our members. It was also the year of the new CIT security background for paper tickets: the famous CIT 2012. For the first time, tickets were legally protected.

In freight transport, we submitted a proposal to OTIF for an amendment to the CIM for the digitalisation of the consignment note. The “Claims Handling Agreement” checklist was revised.

October 2012 saw the inaugural shipment of freight by rail from China to Western Europe. This has increased the practical importance of the CIM-SMGS consignment note.

In the area of infrastructure, the focus was on promoting the General Terms and Conditions for the Use of Infrastructure (E-GTC-I), which came into force in 2011.

Finally, we concluded an MoU to regulate CER-CIT cooperation. This was the basis for a very fruitful collaboration over many years.

2013

In 2013, we and the Executive Committee drew up the first CIT strategy. The work of CIT focused on 6 key areas: legal competence centre, practical support for members, promotion of railway traffic in Europe and Asia, cooperation with partners, training of members’ staff and improved communication, and strengthening CIT as a platform for members for cooperation in international traffic.

In passenger transport, work on the revision of the PRR kicked off, a topic that would accompany us for several years.

The new collaboration with ERA on TAP-TSI began, representing an important acknowledgement of CIT’s work at the European Commission.

We also set up the Multimodality Committee and issued the General Terms and Conditions for Rail-Sea Transport.

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In the field of freight transport, the discussion on transport models began, which has now occupied us for several years. One topic much in the news this year was the fight against corruption, which led to the adjustment of some CIT products such as the General Terms and Conditions for Cooperation.

Work on updating the GTC-I started to adapt it to new EU regulations.

Finally, we brought the revised CUV wagon note GTW-CIT manual into force.

2014

The year 2014 was characterised by intensive discussions with OTIF on the revision of Art 6a CIM (the legal basis for electronic consignment notes).

Work on Unified Railway Law at the UNECE in Geneva picked up speed, with the political declaration of 26 February 2013. Incidentally, given the prevailing euphoria for Eurasian traffic at the time, the new convention was scheduled to be in place by the end of 2015. You know where we are now with this project.

The guide to the different liability regimes COTIF/CIV-PRR-SMPS was published on the CIT website, featuring an interactive map of the various liability regimes.

A strategy for avoiding conflicts over passenger rights was developed (since the railways lost almost all court decisions on the PRR and negative prejudices have been created, we have tried, in a joint effort of the members, to avoid court cases as far as possible).

We also worked on the EU Commission's PRR interpretative guidelines.

The GTC-EurAsia were put into effect. The first discussions began on the GTC-Services and a standard contract for the use of railway infrastructure.

I would also like to highlight the "CUI, Quo Vadis" workshop with the development of proposals for adapting the CUI, which was the starting point for the revision work at OTIF.

2015

In 2015, the pilots for postal traffic from China to Western Europe and the development of the corresponding guidelines began, in cooperation with the Universal Postal Union.

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This year also saw the well-known CIV-SMPS seminar in Monte Carlo, during which work was carried out to improve the framework conditions for East-West passenger transport (remember at that time there were trains from Moscow to Paris).

Another highlight this year: CIT successfully supported ÖBB before the US Supreme Court. Thanks to this work we avoided the possibility of any other CIT member being sued in a US court, with horrendous claims for damages, in the event of accidents involving US citizens.

The "new ticketing manual" MIRT was born - still a point of reference for everyone who deals with ticketing, including electronic ticketing - and finally the manual for cooperation agreements MCOOP was put into effect.

Another major topic was the compliance of CIT products with competition law. Finally, the model contract GTC-Rail Sea Traffic took effect.

2016

In 2016, the focus in passenger transport was the revision of the PRR.

The Working Group on Seals migrated to CIT from CER.

The new EU Customs Code came into force. For CIT, this meant making adjustments to the CIT products, including the electronic CIM-SMGS consignment note.

In terms of infrastructure, work focused on the CUI revision. In the area of multimodality, the CIM-SMGS-CMR "Comparative Table" was finalised.

2017

The highlights in 2017 were the first data protection workshop, the founding of the Data Protection Working Group and the publication of the guidelines. This is because the new European data protection regulation (GDPR) came into force, opening up an important new field of work for CIT. In the area of freight transport, the focus was on digitalising the manuals.

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In particular, the legal and functional requirements for the electronic consignment note were defined in the corresponding manual. These requirements are the basis for the ongoing work to digitalise transport documents at EU level also.

Finally, the CUI revision within the framework of OTIF was an important focal point in CIT's work.

2018

In 2018, the CIT passenger and freight transport products were digitalised, and adjustments in the MIRT and the AIV took effect.

Alongside the ongoing revision of the PRR at European level, the application of the PRR in the event of a strike became an important topic.

CIT was officially recognised as an expert in the development of the Regulation on electronic Freight Transport Information and the DTLF project: another important acknowledgment of CIT's expertise on the part of the European Commission.

The CUI revision was accepted by the OTIF GA, even if it was not the best solution from CIT's point of view.

As part of the EU Year of Multimodality, CIT worked on the Rail-Sea Pilot as well as the Rail - Inland Waterways Guidelines and the Road-Rail Checklist as important areas of work.

2019:

In 2019 the CIT strategy was revised in connection with the election of the new CIT Chair, Maria Sack (DB). The "CIT Strategy 2025" was presented to the General Assembly. With the adoption of a CIT pitch by the Executive Committee, an important step was taken in the area of communication.

A new manual on data protection issues was published. As a result of the new strategy, an increasing number of training seminars on CIT products were held with members.

The specifications for the electronic CIM-SMGS consignment note were jointly published with OSJD.

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The new European standard contract for the use of railway infrastructure negotiated with RNE was made available to members. Finally, the standard contract for air-rail traffic was placed at disposal of members.

2020:

2020 was the first year of the pandemic. We learned to work with Teams, Webex, Zoom and all the other digital working tools.

The first lock-down took place immediately after the Bernese Days in February 2020. Incidentally, this year's Bernese Days were the first purely physical event after the pandemic. But I deny any causality between the events.

Despite the pandemic, we were able to put the new, much more modern CIT website online.

In 2020 the PRR revision came into force, which also involved extensive adjustments to the CIT products in passenger transport. Digitalisation was the main topic in freight transport. In the area of infrastructure, access charges and force majeure were important work items.

2021

In the second year of the pandemic, we worked extensively on CIT governance, with an adjustment to the statutes with a view to my succession, which you decided last year. In connection with the pandemic, we introduced the tool for reimbursement of unspent membership fees.

In the passenger transport area, work focused on improving the AJC - a topic that has been prominently highlighted in the political agenda of the EU Commission and in the media in the last weeks.

We also successfully completed the transition to the CIT-2012 security background. With one exception, all European members are now using the standard.

In the freight transport sector, the new digital "Formal Report 20a" was approved.

Important work was also done on the bill of lading for Eurasian transport, and the CIT products were adapted to the Incoterms 2020.

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In the area of infrastructure, the focus was on the implementation of the Standard Contract for the Use of railway infrastructure (E-SCU-I). Finally, the first issue of the new CIT-News was published.

You already heard today what we achieved in 2022.

All this work was only possible thanks to the successful cooperation between the General Secretariat and our members in around 280 CIT meetings together with around 500 delegates.

The ten years I spent as CIT SG were a very enjoyable time, sometimes challenging but also very satisfying!

I always felt supported by the CIT Chairs, and my special thanks go to Jean-Luc Dufournaud and Maria Sack, but also all the past and present members of the Executive Committee.

But I would like also to thank all the CIT members which are supporting the work of CIT!

I would particularly like to emphasise the good cooperation with the other international organisations. Since we all have practically the same members, it was important to me from the start to avoid duplicating work, to coordinate work and to work in a complementary manner.

I think it worked very well. That is why I would like to sincerely thank CER, UIC, RNE, FTE, IVT, but also the international organisations OTIF, OSJD, and UNECE.

Last but not least: I would especially like to thank my team at CIT! You have done a great job over the years. You were also fully committed during the Covid period. You can be proud of what you have achieved!

Dear Erik, Nina, Jan, Dariia, Guillaume, Loïc, Jacqueline, Nicolas: from the bottom of my heart, thank you very much for your great work and for the support I have enjoyed from you all these years!

I wish my successor Gilles and all of you all the best and every success!