

**Opening Ceremony  
of the European Bulls Rail Freight Alliance  
on 13 January 2005 in Rotterdam**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a particular pleasure not only to attend the ceremony celebrating the foundation of the European Bulls Rail Freight Alliance, but also to be able to congratulate you on this great event.

After all, it is a special occasion when five private-sector railroad companies join forces to develop competitive joint offers for the European combined road-rail transportation market. It is a common objective of all participating service providers to grow railroad transportation into an attractive alternative mainly to carriage by trucks for a wide range of cargo shippers.

We in the Duisport Group support this objective proactively. In recent years, we have established the Port of Duisburg as an extremely efficient hinterland hub of the sea ports and made our location a leading European logistics center. It is our role to reduce the high loads in the sea ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp and to provide these ports with the leeway they need to focus on their core business of handling container ocean cargo. We take care of intermediate storage and distribution to destinations on the European continent.

The Port of Duisburg has all the facilities required for such a division of labor between sea ports and hinterland hubs which splits container loading and unloading operations from container storage.

The waterway, rail and road infrastructure in Duisburg is outstanding. The Port is located in the center of Europe's largest industrial region with 30 million consumers and 300,000 companies within a perimeter of no more than 150 km. Cargo handling and storage capacities are excellent.

Four intermodal container terminals feature a combined annual cargo transfer capacity of 1 million TEU to be increased to 1.3 million TEU by the end of 2010.

Warehousing areas for the storage and distribution of high-grade cargo have more than quadrupled over the last few years and will grow from 400,000 square meters to 600,000 square meters by the end of 2006.

Together with the transportation and logistics service providers in the Port, the duisport Group has in recent years continuously widened the logistics services it offers. duisport agency, the Port's marketing company, has for instance promoted highly customized cross-border transportation networks together with its partners in the transportation sector. In these projects, duisport rail, the railroad company of the duisport Group, provides local and regional train services.

The Port of Duisburg has already become the most important cargo distribution center in the hinterland of the North Sea ports. Our container throughput rose by 30 per cent in 2004 and has now beaten the 600,000 TEU mark.

This encouraging development is certainly largely explained by our long-range strategy of developing European networks. In this process, we support the policy of shifting cargo transportation from trucks to barges and trains.

Improved links between Duisport and the sea ports are a crucial element of this strategy and Rotterdam, Europe's largest sea port, is, of course, a key priority in our plans.

We have for example set up container barge shuttle lines which connect Duisburg and the sea ports on every working day and four operators run container shuttle trains between Duisburg and Rotterdam on every working day.

Apart from the lines to Rotterdam and the other ports on the Western Seaboard, we have, together with various operators, developed transportation chains from the North Sea ports via Duisport to final consumers in the European hinterland. The principle of all these chains is to prefer waterway and rail links.

With direct road-rail lines to some 70 stations in Germany and other European countries, Duisport has already grown into a major intermodal hub. About one fifth of these lines were created over the last two years.

Planning has centered both on improving sea port connections and on developing important European north-south and east-west corridors. Numerous new train services were set up for example to Italy, Austria, Hungary and Poland.

As part of this strategy, the duisport Group has agreed on cooperation with a number of railroad service providers in order to strengthen its position as the key hub in trans-European intermodal transportation.

Together with rail4chem, we are developing Duisburg into the center of the national and international operations of this private-sector railroad company. The Duisport Group provides the necessary railroad infrastructure as well as marshalling and local transportation services.

Quite recently, we discussed the European freight train potential with a number of Port customers including rail4chem on the occasion of a meeting in Spain.

At the Barcelona meeting, debates focussed on a road-to-rail shift for cargo movements between Catalonia and the Rhine/Ruhr region. At present, Duisburg is only connected to the Spanish sea ports of Barcelona and Tarragona by a regular shuttle train which operates through Cologne. There is plenty of room for improvement.

The prospects of the European railroad cargo transportation market are excellent.

To benefit from these opportunities in full, the cross-border rail transportation market in Europe must, however, be opened for competition across the continent. In Germany, we have made the experience that competition improves the quality and the efficiency of freight train services substantially.

Plenty of reasons therefore warrant an expansion of international train services across Europe to satisfy the needs of customers in many sectors of industry.

Cooperation and strategic alliances between railroad market players such as train operators, forwarders and ports help to tap these potentials. However, it is important never to lose from sight that the truck is the real competitor and that we all pursue the common objective of a substantial medium-term increase in the share of freight trains in the European cargo transportation market.

Against this background, the creation of the European Bulls Rail Freight Alliance is, in my opinion, an important and even crucial step in the right direction on which I would like to congratulate all participating railroad companies.

Thank you very much for your attention.