



## First conference of international railway transport law in China

On 26 and 27 October, the Secretary General of OTIF and the head of the legal department, together with representatives of OSJD, the European Commission, UNECE, UNESCAP and CIT, were invited to contribute their expertise to the law faculty of the University of Jiaotong in Beijing, which organised the first conference of international railway transport law in China. The Secretariat would particularly like to thank Professor Chia-Jui Cheng, who took the initiative to bring together the various stakeholders in the development of uniform rail transport law so as to start considerations on the convergence of the legal framework.

As a result of the perfect organisation of this event, which was thanks to the Vice President of the University, Mr Guan Zhongliang, and the Dean, Mr Shi Xianliang, there were some very productive discussions between participants on the legal aspects and on the need to promote interoperability and safety. The Secretariat of OTIF was therefore able to obtain a better understanding and appreciation of China's work and avenues of research to achieve more effective international interconnections by rail in the context of the "new silk road" project. This conference should provide the foundation stone for more in-depth dialogue between the various organisations active in the area of international railway regulations.

The Secretary General of OTIF and Miss Sian Prout, who was representing the European Commission, particularly emphasised the importance of initiating a dynamic of cooperation, especially with OSJD. Our two organisations share strong common values, as recalled by Mr Slavomir Car, the representative of OSJD. In addition, our regulations can quite easily be harmonised, as is currently the case with the common CIM/SMGS consignment note or the carriage of dangerous goods. For OTIF, developing the convergence of intelligent interfaces is the quickest and most secure way to provide international rail transport with the common software it aspires to. The latter is a key condition for the "new silk road" initiative to be fully successful.