

## OTIF's General Assembly: the main items on the agenda

On 25 and 26 September 2018, the Member States of OTIF will meet in Berne for the General Assembly. In addition to the 50 Member States and the European Union, the Secretariat of OTIF has invited all the international rail sector associations and organisations to attend as observers.

The Assembly will give its view on the proposals the Revision Committee examined in February 2018 concerning amendments to the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail (COTIF). If all the amendments are adopted, this will enable the provisions of COTIF to be adapted more quickly to innovations in the rail sector. Contracts of international carriage of goods (CIM UR) will accompany the moves towards digitalisation in rail transport. It will be ensured that OTIF's technical rules (ATMF UR) are compatible with European Union directive 2008/57/EC on interoperability. By creating a new appendix on the safe operation of trains (EST), OTIF will develop interoperability beyond the EU, the crossing of borders by complete trains and the optimisation of authorisation procedures.

The General Assembly will also give its view on setting up a working group of legal experts, whose task will be to examine cross-cutting legal issues in connection with international transport and to become a forum for the harmonisation of railway law.

The General Assembly will then vote on amending its rules of procedure, particularly with a view to clarifying the provisions on how regional organisations exercise their right to vote. Since the agreement signed between the European Union and OTIF, and in view of potential future agreements, for example with the Gulf Cooperation Council, the General Assembly's rules of procedure must be clear in terms of how regional organisations exercise the right to vote.

At the end of the first day, Tuesday 25 September, delegates and a number of guests are invited to attend a cocktail buffet to celebrate 125 years of unified railway law and more particularly, the anniversary of the first provisions for goods in international rail transport (CIM UR and RID).

