

**OTIF**



**ORGANISATION INTERGOUVERNEMENTALE POUR  
LES TRANSPORTS INTERNATIONAUX FERROVIAIRES**

**ZWISCHENSTAATLICHE ORGANISATION FÜR DEN  
INTERNATIONALEN EISENBAHNVERKEHR**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION FOR INTER-  
NATIONAL CARRIAGE BY RAIL**

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**Press Release  
01.07.2010**

## **Montenegro: The Closing of the Balkan Gap**

The accession to OTIF  
will also prepare the railway sector for EU membership

Montenegro's accession to OTIF has today become final. Thus closing the gap of the COTIF legal system on the Balkan Peninsula, particularly as its neighbouring states Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania are already OTIF Member States. "It is with great pleasure that I see that our Organisation - which is promoting the development and performance of the railway sector on a transcontinental level - has succeeded in providing an international law basis which is also taking into account the economic development potential and transport needs of important trade flows. OTIF is more and more drawing the consequences of the now evident failings of European railway history, thus trying to coordinate the different railway systems as early, efficient and barrier-free as possible", says Stefan Schimming, Secretary General of OTIF, on 1 July 2010 in Berne.

"Another important aspect of this accession relies in the fact that - on a technical level - the legal framework of the Convention concerning International Carriage by Rail will considerably facilitate Montenegro's accession to the European Union in the field of railway traffic." Montenegro has already submitted a request for accession to the EU on 15 December 2008.

Montenegro has become the 45<sup>th</sup> Member State of OTIF ([www.otif.org](http://www.otif.org)).