



# OTIF

**Press Release**  
**Berne, 20.10.2011**

## **Intergovernmental Organisation for international Carriage by Rail**

### **COTIF – a legal framework for the rail network on the Arabian Peninsula**

The Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Transport and Railway Conference took place in Doha (Qatar) from 17 to 19 October 2012 (see [www.gccrail.com](http://www.gccrail.com)).

The Secretary General of OTIF, Stefan Schimming, took part in the Conference.



With the exception of Yemen, all the States on the Arabian Peninsula belong to this regional economic integration organisation (see map).

The rapid development of the rail network planned on the Arabian Peninsula (around 2,200 km) is attributed a key role, together with efforts to set up an integrated internal market. To achieve this, more than 120 billion US\$ will be invested over the longer term.

The aim is to strengthen the economic role of the Arabian Peninsula by means of international connections from the Gulf State ports to both Asia and Europe by rail, using the existing rail links through Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Iran, which are already operated under the COTIF regime (see OTIF press release of 30.07.2010 [www.otif.org/presse.html](http://www.otif.org/presse.html)).

On 18.10.2011, the Secretary General of OTIF explained the background and context to the value of the legal certainty the Convention would provide in international rail transport for passengers and freight and for the carriage of dangerous goods by rail.

COTIF could readily be applied to such traffic if the States concerned acceded to the Organisation. An “off the peg”, tried and tested regulatory framework.

In a panel discussion, the Secretary General replied to some very specific questions from government representatives from the GCC States and the Secretariat of the Organisation concerning the conditions of accession and the obligations of Contracting States.



## OTIF in brief

The Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) currently has 47 Member States (Europe, Near/Middle East and North Africa).

At present, international carriage by rail on railway infrastructure of around 250,000 km and the complementary carriage of freight and passengers on several thousand kilometres of shipping routes, inland waterways and (in domestic carriage) roads are concerned by the uniform law created by OTIF. The headquarters of the Organisation are in Berne, Switzerland.

For further information

see [www.otif.org](http://www.otif.org) - General Information

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