



OTIF



Press Release
Berne, 09.03.2012

Intergovernmental Organisation for international Carriage by Rail

Meet requirements and anticipate developments

Secretary General at the CIT's "Berner Tage"

Berner Tage. This year, CIT (International Rail Transport Committee) again organised its conference on current topics in the development of international rail transport law in theory and practice.

The conference discussed the specific contributions the different actors (can) make at national, European and international level, with a mandate from the State or from an economic impetus, to achieve the most seamless international rail freight transport possible.

The focus of the contribution by the Secretary General of OTIF, Stefan Schimming, was on the change in direction of the Organisation's main activities. In view of globalisation and geostrategic and trade policy challenges, and based on the contributions the rail sector is making in order to overcome the international financial crisis, he considers this change to be inevitable.

After the phase in which forces were stabilised following the fall of the wall, it still seems overdue from the current perspective to refocus the functioning of transcontinental rail freight traffic. In so doing, the deciding factor will be the management and system-neutral promotion of the technical, systemic and administrative ability to cooperate in all areas which enable the reliable transport of goods by rail and which make its costs calculable.

In the process, a return to the central interest of transporting goods, which will generate growth in trade, the economy and prosperity, hence making a substantial contribution to the stabilisation of societies, is important. Only then comes the no less important aspect of the environmentally friendly means of transport, whose deployment on transcontinental routes should be promoted. The effect of inexpensive administrative measures in border





clearance should certainly not be underestimated. One dollar invested in the facilitation of border crossing generates 1,500 dollars of growth in trade. The Secretary General considers that cooperation, transparency and legal certainty are particularly easy to bring about.

OTIF is the only governmental organisation in which the Member States can effectively represent their interests on the basis of impartial, Suprana-

tional law and implement them precisely and efficiently at international level by means of the existing legal instruments and options for action which are already available to OTIF today.

This was appropriately demonstrated in the Secretary General's presentation of his efforts to achieve the accession of Pakistan and the Member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council on the Arabian Peninsula (GCC). ■

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 - [General Information](#)

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