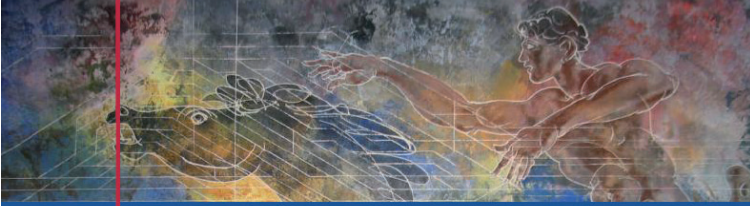




OTIF



Press Release

Bern, 31.05.2013

**Intergovernmental Organisation
for international Carriage
by Rail**

Secretary General's visit to Turkey

Turkey occupies a central place in traffic between Europe and Asia. For centuries, Turkey has been a hub for global trade. It was therefore logical that one of the first bilateral meetings between the Secretary General and a Member State should take place in Ankara.

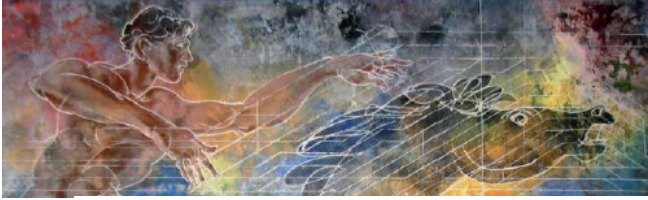
The discussions with Mr Karaman, the Director General of TCDD (Railways of the Republic of Turkey) covered the ambitious development programme for the Turkish rail network in the context of the plan for 2013 put in place by the Turkish authorities.

The aim of this plan is to double the size of the rail network and modernise it comprehensively. In addition, on the day of the meeting, legislation on the liberalisation of the railways was discussed in parliament. This legislation will separate the infrastructure manager from the operator and will therefore open the way to the appearance of private operators, particularly in the freight sector.

In this framework, OTIF is ready to work together closely with TCDD to ensure in particular that the technical regulations (APTU and ATMF) are implemented and applied effectively. In fact it is vitally important for the development of trade that the new regulations on wagons and wagon maintenance be applied in an exemplary manner. This was the purpose of the second part of the meeting, which provided the opportunity for some extremely productive exchanges between the high level representatives of TCDD and the members of the OTIF team.

TCDD is specifically interested in OTIF and its ability to deliver technical rules that are compatible with those of the European Union, not just as an operator, but also in terms of its activities in connection with the construction and maintenance of wagons. The links between OTIF and the European Railway Agency, which are going to be strengthened and formalised, also appear to be a source of future development.





The photographs that accompany this text cannot do justice to the warm welcome the OTIF delegation, comprising Mr Davenne (Secretary General) and Mr Leermakers (technical expert), received from their Turkish counterparts.

Presentation by Mr Leermakers, technical expert

There are three points underpinning the basis of OTIF's technical regulations.

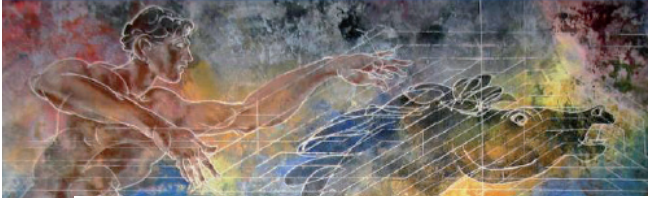
- 1.** Firstly, rail vehicles are mutually approved by the States parties, put into service and maintained in accordance with the Uniform Rules and the procedures set out in APTU and ATMF.
- 2.** These rules were drafted at government level and have the character of international law.
- 3.** Strict separation between the entity that applies the rules and the entity that checks whether they have been correctly applied is necessary and is required by ATMF.

OTIF's objective is to promote, improve and facilitate international traffic by rail. The EU's aim is to achieve the interoperability of the systems and to open the common market to promote competition between railway undertakings. The objective here is the uninterrupted movement of trains. APTU and ATMF cannot be considered equal to the European regulations, but they are compatible with them.

OTIF's technical regulations are contained in Appendices F and G (APTU and ATMF). The development of uniform technical prescriptions (annexes to COTIF 1999) is carried out by:



- WG TECH, which meets three times a year and prepares the provisional UTP;
- the Committee of Technical Experts, which meets once a year to validate the provisional UTP by voting;
- the Secretariat of OTIF, which notifies and publishes the UTP;
- the States parties, which are responsible for the correct implementation of the UTP.



The principle of the mutual acceptance of wagons is founded on an international basis in which three points must be observed.

Firstly, for a new wagon to be approved in the EU zone, it must meet the EU requirements, or the OTIF requirements if the latter are fully equivalent. Secondly, an independent assessment body in which the other States can have confidence has to validate the technical approval of the vehicle. Lastly, the new wagons have to be approved by all the States parties. This is why it is very important that the rules are complied with correctly, as this means the States parties can have confidence in the work the assessment bodies carry out in other States.

In summary, approval of the vehicle is shared between the competent authority, the manufacturer, the underwriter and the assessment body.

With regard to placing the vehicle into operation, this is the responsibility of the competent authority, the railway company, the keeper, the entity in charge of maintenance and the manager of the railway infrastructure on which the vehicle travels.

Lastly, Mr Leermakers gave a brief overview of the structure of the regulations concerning the transport of dangerous goods. He reminded those present that the version of RID in force can be downloaded from OTIF's website (www.otif.org).



For further information, please contact:

François Davenne

Secretary General

Tel. +41 (0)31 323 10 12

francois.davenne@otif.org

Bas Leermakers

Head of technical section

Tel. +41 (0)31 323 10 25

bas.leermakers@otif.org

OTIF in brief

The Intergovernmental Organisation for International Carriage by Rail (OTIF) currently has 48 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](#)