



**Press Release
30.07.2010**

From the Red Sea to the Black Sea

Jordan becomes an Associate Member of OTIF from 1 August

By acceding to OTIF as an Associate Member and by taking part in the Organisation's work on technical interoperability and facilitation in rail transport, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is making early preparations to achieve optimum use of the railway network, which it is planned to start building in summer 2011 and which should be completed by 2014. This network will cover 950 km.

As a transit country, Jordan is therefore taking account not just of the major amounts of trade from the Port of Aqaba on the Red Sea towards Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Cooperation Council¹ countries (GCC), Iraq² and Syria², but is also closing the gap between the Red Sea westwards to Europe, via Turkey, and eastwards to China. The Jordanian Railway Network will effectively create an efficient new corridor between Europe, Middle Eastern and GCC countries. This project was approved as a priority by the Union for the Mediterranean Initiative and as a major component of the Euro-Med Transport Network.



¹ Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates

² OTIF member

The infrastructure programme, with investments totalling 2.6 billion Euros, is part of the Arab Mashreq International Railway Network project adopted in 2003.

The Secretary General of OTIF in Berne, Stefan Schimming, and the Minister of Transport of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Alaa Batayneh, today emphasised that “this early association will lay another fundamental building block for the uninterrupted international transport of passengers and freight by rail. This is a clear commitment to the future performance of carriage by rail geared to transcontinental requirements based on the contractual conditions for international passenger and freight traffic described in the Uniform Rules, which are prepared by OTIF.”

The body of regulations developed by OTIF also includes provisions for the carriage of dangerous goods, contracts for the use of wagons, the contract on the use of railway infrastructure, the validation of technical standards and the adoption of uniform technical prescriptions for railway material and the procedures for the technical approval of railway vehicles for use in international transport. As the 46th Member State of OTIF, Jordan will in future also be able to contribute to these areas of work.