



5th International Rail Security Congress, organised by UIC and ONCF, held in Marrakesh on 16 and 17 March

The congress brought together the main players in rail security from around the world, as well as the representatives of international institutions involved in transport security. The joint declaration adopted at the end of the conference stressed that international cohesion was needed in this field.

(Paris, 24 March 2009). Following the congresses held in Madrid (2000), Rome (2002), Marseilles (2004) and Gdansk (2007), the 5th UIC World Security Congress was held in Marrakesh on 16 and 17 March, at the invitation of Moroccan Railways (ONCF) and the UIC Security Platform, which had been restructured in June 2008. Given the Platform's worldwide scope, this important event was being held outside of Europe for the first time.

This congress, intended for people in charge of security at railway companies and representatives of institutions involved in transport security, was followed by a seminar on safety and high speed, also organised by UIC and ONCF and held in Marrakesh.

Around 70 participants from 23 countries attended the Security Congress, representing the railways of Europe (including Russia), Africa and the Maghreb, the Middle East, Asia (India, Korea, Japan), as well as the main international institutions carrying out projects in the field of security – the United Nations organisation UNECE, the European Union's FRONTEX agency, OSJD, the United States TSA, which is chairing the International Working Group on Land Transport Security created as part of the G8. UITP and EIM were also present. ITF (the International Transport Forum, formerly ECMT) and UNESCAP had wished the organisers a successful congress.

The UIC Security Congress was opened on 16 March in the presence of *Mr Mohammed Khlie*, Chief Executive of Moroccan Railways (ONCF) who was also representing the Transport Minister *Mr Karim Ghellab*, *Mr Mounir Chraïbi*, Wali (Prefect) of Marrakesh, and *Mr Omar Eljazouli*, Mayor of Marrakesh.

UIC was represented by *Mr Vipin Sharma*, Deputy Chief Executive, *Mr Tadeusz Kaczmarek*, PKP-PLK, Chairman of the UIC Security Platform, *Mr Moha Khaddour*, ONCF, Vice-Chairman of the Platform, *Mr Jacques Colliard*, Head of the Security Competence Centre and *Ms Marie-Hélène Bonneau*, Senior Adviser at the Security Competence Centre.

In his opening speech *Mr Mohammed Khlie* spoke of the major rail projects currently being carried out in Morocco – including the introduction of high speed – and underlined the strategic importance of security in providing customers with the unvarying quality they demand. He also stressed the importance of having a 'security reference', which would enable best practices and regulations in this field to be harmonised. On behalf of UIC, *Mr Vipin Sharma* underscored how important the Security Platform and Competence Centre's work was for the railway community. He emphasised the need to strengthen security on future intercontinental corridors, through which the rail sector could have a more active role in the growth of international trade.

The Chairman of the UIC Security Platform, *Mr Tadeusz Kaczmarek*, reminded participants that this UIC body created in 2006 and promoting cooperation had one main objective, “*to make railways a place of peace, safety, security and cooperation*”.

For this purpose the Platform structured its work, based on international cooperation, according to a series of subjects: ‘Human Factors’, ‘New Technologies’, ‘Strategy, Procedures and Regulations’, ‘Border Crossings’, as a follow-up to ‘SchengenRail’ work, ‘Security of International Freight Corridors’, ‘Terrorism and Major Crises’.

The Platform’s objective is to share experience and best practices between members so that each UIC member can make progress according to a coherent strategy, and promote all concrete forms of partnership and cooperation (between railways, and between railways and other institutional players).

A round table led by *Paul Véron*, UIC Director of Communications, was an opportunity to look at security policies implemented in various parts of the world to respond to specific challenges and risks (terrorism, major events, etc.). Examples were provided by Korea, Japan, India, and railways from Africa and Spain.

On 17 March the international institutions presented their projects and work in the field of transport security: Transsib corridors (OSJD), domestic transport security (UNECE), the Uranus programme (FRONTEX), the G8 IWGLTS Group (TSA – USA).

Technology and research aspects of rail security were addressed by UITP, UIC (ProtectRail and RailProtect European projects), the Austrian and Italian railways, RCA (Eureka) and RFI / FS respectively, and the manufacturing sector (Alstom Transport).

After reports on the work of the Security Platform’s various specialised groups, the status and responsibilities of rail security staff and police were discussed, as well as legal aspects (UIC, Railpol, Colpofer, RZD).

The final declaration, adopted unanimously by the participants, emphasised the need to continue work on both a global scale and within UIC regions. It stressed that international decisions needed to be taken in the field of rail security. It requested that the possibility of an internationally competent authority be examined.

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