INTERNATIONAL UNION
OF RAILWAYS

UIC AFRICA REGION WEBINAR

RAIL FREIGHT: WHAT IS THE SITUATION AND WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

9 APRIL 2026

MODERATOR
Joost Overdijkink
UIC Freight Senior Advisor

Agenda

1	Welcome message: ▪ Mounir Mhaji, Commercial Director of Freight and Logistics, ONCF & UIC Africa Region Chairmanship ▪ François Davenne, UIC Director General & Coordinator of Africa Region by Interim

2	Keynote:
	• Bertrand Minary, UIC Director of Freight and Passenger Departments, Coordinator of Middle East and Latin America Regions
	
	• Hakan Günel, Freight Senior Advisor
	  • UIC Freight corridors approach to establish an integrated cross-border network
	  • Case study Middle East Region

3	• ONCF: Logistics & Dry ports • URC: URC linking the sea to Uganda and Beyond • Joost Overdijkink, UIC Freight Senior Advisor • Key conditions for growing rail freight
4	Q&A
5	Closing Remarks

WELCOME MESSAGE
Mounir Mhaji
Commercial Director of Freight and Logistics
ONCF &
UIC Africa Region Chairmanship

WELCOME MESSAGE
François Davenne
UIC Director General
Coordinator of Africa Region
by Interim

KEYNOTE SPEECH

Bertrand Minary
UIC Director of Freight and Passenger Departments
Coordinator of Middle East and Latin America Regions

KEYNOTE SPEECH
Hakan Günel
Freight Senior Advisor

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYS

UIC Freight corridors approach to establish an integrated cross-board network

Case study Middle East Region

Hakan Gunel

Senior Freight Advisor

09 April 2026

Rail Freight Basics

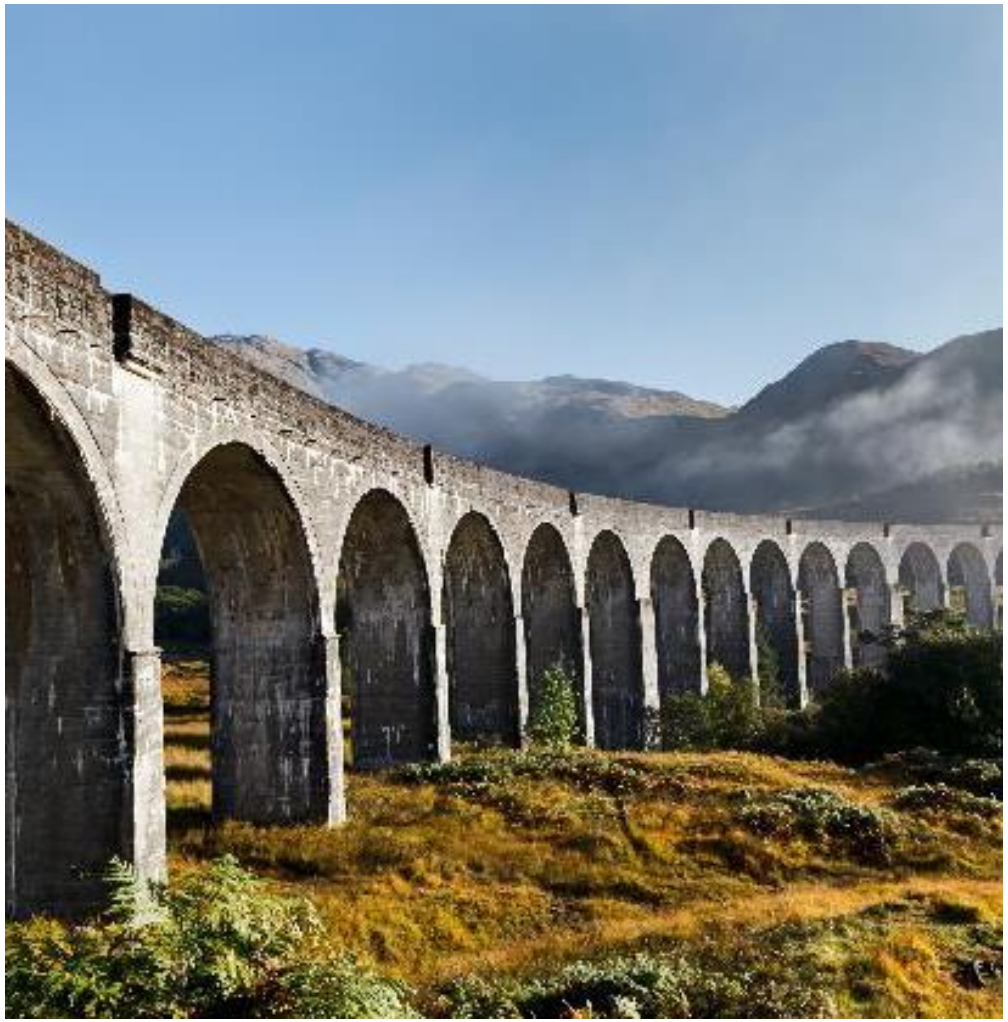
How Rail Freight Works

Rail Transport is good because:

- it can carry large volumes
- it is good for long distances
- it is more energy efficient
- It is more sustainable

👉 But rail needs coordination

Why Corridors Matter



Corridors Are Essential

Corridors help to:

- connect ports and inland areas
- move goods over long distances
- support trade between countries
- support economic growth

👉 A corridor is not only a railway line

👉 It is a complete system

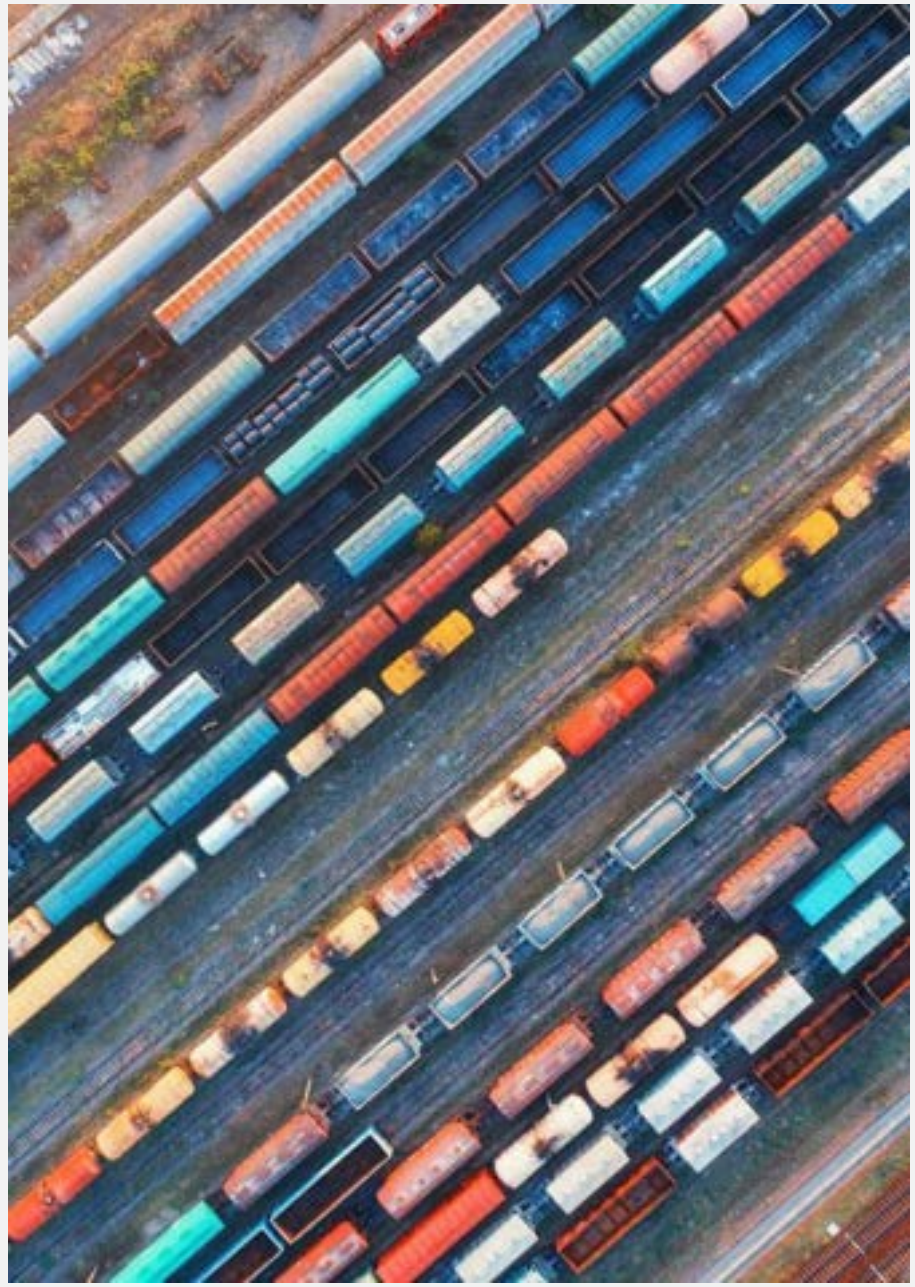
Railway Operation Needs Rules

Railways Work with Rules

Rail transport depends on:

- regulations
- standards
- safety rules
- operating procedures
- documents and data exchange, etc.

👉 Rules make rail transport safe and organized



Why Rules Must Match

Different Rules Create Problems

When countries use different rules:

- trains stop at borders
- checks are repeated
- documents are checked again

👉 This causes delays

What We Saw in the Middle East Region

System Challenges Behind the Delays

The problem is not only operational — it is also structural.

Key challenges:

- different national rules and standards
- limited coordination between institutions
- low level of digitalization
- use of paper-based documents
- lack of shared data systems

Main Message

Borders Decide Performance

👉 Fast train + slow border = slow system

👉 Good border = strong corridor

What is the learning for Africa

The Middle East experience shows one clear lesson:

Current railway lines are not enough.

To make rail freight well between countries, the full system must work together.

For Africa, this means that success depends on more than infrastructure.

It also depends on:

- border procedures
- rules and standards
- coordination between institutions
- training of staff
- use of digital tools

Key Needs for Africa

Main Needs for African Rail Freight Corridors

1. Faster and simpler border processes
- Many rail delays happen at borders, not on the railway line.
- Border checks should be simpler, faster, and better organized.

2. Better coordination between institutions
- Railway companies, customs, border police, port authorities, and ministries must work together.

3. More harmonized rules
- Different national rules make cross-border traffic slow and difficult.
- Countries need more common rules and common working methods.

4. More training
- Staff need practical knowledge for cross-border rail freight, customs, digital tools, and cooperation.

5. More digitalization
- Paper-based systems slow down trade.
- Digital systems can reduce waiting time and improve transparency.

A Practical Message for Africa

A Practical Approach for Africa

For an effective rail freight corridor should be built on three levels:

Infrastructure

- railway lines
- terminals
- dry ports
- port connections

Operational system

- border procedures
- inspections
- customs processes
- traffic coordination

Human capacity

- trained staff
- common understanding
- regular cooperation
- regional learning

How UIC Can Support Africa

How UIC Can Support Africa in a Practical Way

UIC is ready to support Africa through:

Harmonization
- support for common rules
- support for common procedures
- sharing international good practices

Training
- UIC Rail Academy
- regional learning activities
- workshops and practical capacity building

Studies and regional support
- studies based on local needs
- corridor-focused analysis
- solutions adapted to regional conditions

Cooperation
- bringing countries and institutions together
- creating dialogue between actors
- supporting a shared corridor vision

ONCF
Moroccan National Railways Office

Logistics & Dry ports

16ème webinaire UIC Afrique des « jeudis du Rail Africain – JRA »

Thème : « Le fret ferroviaire : quelle situation pour quel avenir ? »

Partage d'expérience : ONCF – Activités logistiques & ports secs

Pôle Fret & Logistique

SOMMAIRE

LE RAIL AU CŒUR DE L'ÉMERGENCE LOGISTIQUE

La vision nationale du transport au Maroc à l'horizon 2030-2035 repose sur une stratégie intégrée qui combine modernisation des infrastructures, transition énergétique et développement logistique, afin de positionner le pays comme hub régional Afrique-Europe.

VISION DE L'ONCF

Être leader d'une mobilité durable, inclusive et viable au cœur de la transformation territoriale du Maroc en mouvement.

OBJECTIF FRET & LOGISTIQUE À L'HORIZON 2030

- **Performance Globale :** Une évolution soutenue de +25 % du trafic global de marchandises
- **Accélération de la Diversification :** Une croissance majeure de +60 % pour le trafic fret hors phosphates, marquant notre percée dans les secteurs de l'automobile, des conteneurs et des produits stratégiques.

LEVIERS DE TRANSFORMATION

- **Intermodalité & Connectivité :** Maillage des ports et des plateformes logistiques multimodales
- **Excellence opérationnelle :** Optimisation de l'outil de production et décarbonation de la chaine logistique

LE RAIL AU CŒUR DE L'ÉMERGENCE LOGISTIQUE

ENJEUX & OPPORTUNITÉS

Demande croissante du marché : Évolution des attentes clients et solutions globales pour répondre aux besoins.

Impératifs environnementaux : Le changement climatique impose des solutions durables et décarbonées pour le transport.

Orientations nationales : Le Nouveau Modèle de Développement (NMD) positionne le transport ferroviaire comme une solution clé pour la mobilité durable et le transport de masse.

Industrialisation : L'installation de grandes industries internationales (batteries, automobiles, etc.) au Maroc favorise une demande en logistique intégrée et performante

ENVIRONEMENT

Réglementation : Ferroviaire réglementé avec contrôle rigoureux

Concurrence : Développement des infrastructures routières et la connectivité par feeder entre les ports marocains

Changements structurels : Délocalisations des industries nécessitant un nouveau schéma logistique

COUVERTURE DES PRINCIPAUX MAILLONS DE LA SUPPLY CHAIN

L'ONCF couvre l'ensemble de la chaine logistique avec des offres de solutions logistiques Door to Door

DOMAINES D'ACTIVITÉ

01 TRANSPORT FERROVIAIRE


02 EXPLOITATION PORTS SECS


03 GESTION D'ENTREPÔTS


04 DISTRIBUTION (LAST MILE)


NOS SECTEURS D'ACTIVITÉ : UNE EXPERTISE MULTI-FILIÈRES

L'ONCF opère sur l'ensemble des chaînes de valeur, offrant des solutions de transport de masse et de logistique intégrée adaptées.

3 FORCES DE NOTRE OFFRE SECTORIELLE

- **Massification :** Capacité à traiter des volumes industriels avec une fiabilité maximale.
- **Spécificité :** Un parc de wagons spécialisés pour chaque type de marchandise.
- **Intégration :** Une offre qui va au-delà du simple transport (stockage, dernier kilomètre, …)

« Une expertise métier éprouvée pour accompagner chaque secteur industriel dans ses défis de croissance. »

2 295 km
Réseau ferroviaire
dont 1 721 km électrifié

87 000 T
par jour
Réparties sur le territoire

1 000 à 3 800 T
par train
Acheminées

90
Trains par jour
Qui circulent

23 MT
Volume annuel
phosphates & fret

3
Ports secs
Exploités

30 000 m²
D'entropôts
Exploités

5
Ports connectés
Au réseau ferré

EXEMPLES CORRIDORS FRET ONCF

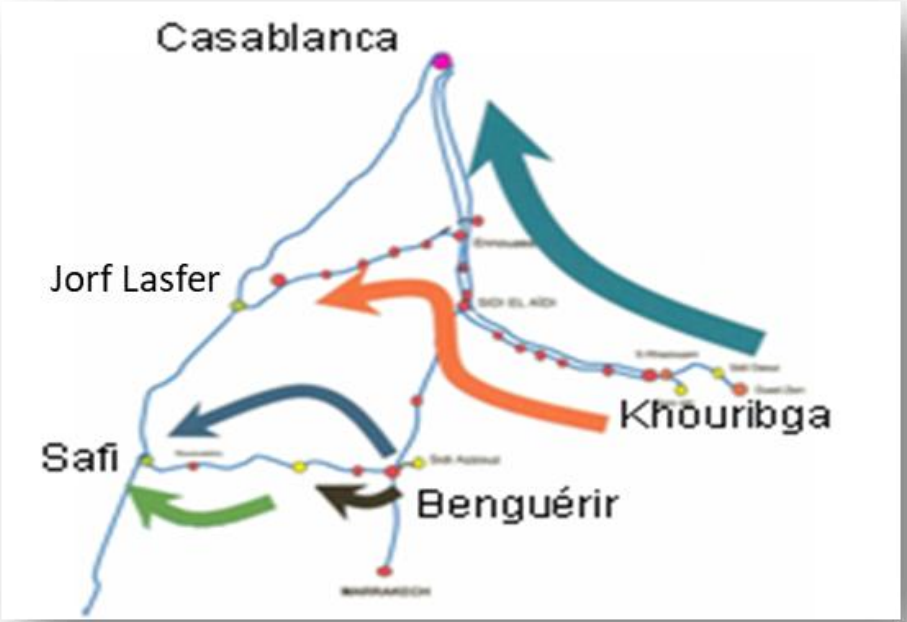
CORRIDOR PHOSPHATES
Khouribga → Casablanca - Jorf Lasfar | Safi

CORRIDOR NORD
Tanger Med → Casablanca | Conteneurs, Automobile & Hydrocarbures

CORRIDOR PHOSPHATES :

ARCHITECTURE TERRITORIALE STRATÉGIQUE

150 à 250 KM	30	60 000 T
Distance voyage du produit	Trains par jour	par jour



Le transport des phosphates est structuré autour de deux axes majeurs reliant les sites d'extraction aux complexes industriels et ports d'exportation :

Axe Nord :
Origine : Site de Bni Idir
Destinations : Port de Casablanca et le hub industriel de Jorf Lasfar
Axe Sud :
Liaisons : Site de Sidi Azzouz vers Youssoufia et Safi ;
Youssoufia → Safi.

CORRIDOR PHOSPHATES :

PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE ET EFFICIENCE OPÉRATIONNELLE

60	4 800	750	1h30
Wagons par train	Tonnes par train	Mètre par train	chargement et déchargement par train

PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE

L'ONCF a déployé des moyens de pointe pour garantir une fiabilité maximale :

Infrastructure 100% Électrifiée :
Une alimentation électrique propre jusqu'aux embranchements des sites miniers et industriels.

Matériel Roulant Performant
- Utilisation de **wagons légers en aluminium**
- **Capacité de charge :** 64 tonnes par wagon

EFFICIENCE OPÉRATIONNELLE

Le modèle opérationnel est conçu pour un flux tendu et une rotation rapide du matériel :

Rapidité de Traitement : Un temps record de **1h30** seulement pour le chargement et le déchargement d'un train complet.

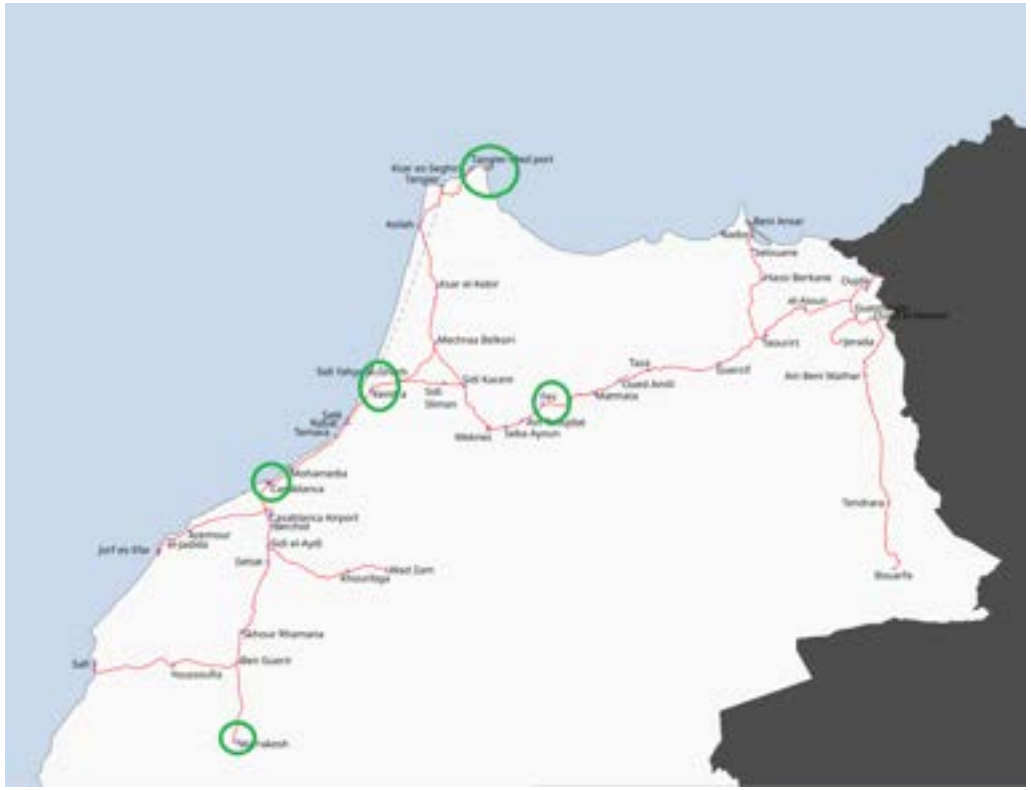
Cycle de Rotation : Réduction des temps d'immobilisation en gare et aux terminaux.

Impact : Une fluidité totale qui assure l'approvisionnement ininterrompu des unités chimiques et des terminaux minéraliers.

CORRIDOR NORD :

LEVIER DE L'ÉMERGENCE INDUSTRIELLE DU ROYAUME

Le Corridor Nord n'est pas qu'une simple ligne de transport, c'est un pont logistique intégré qui connecte le premier port de la Méditerranée aux poumons économiques du pays (Casablanca, Fès, Kénitra, …). L'ONCF y assure la fluidité nécessaire pour transformer le flux maritime notamment les conteneurs, les voitures et les hydrocarbures en valeur industrielle territoriale et en avantage compétitif.



MASSIFICATION
=
PERFORMANCE

MODÈLE DE TRANSPORT
DURABLE ET COMPÉTITIF

LEVIER MAJEUR DE
DECARBONATION

LOGISTIQUE
INDUSTRIELLE FIABLE
ET FLUIDE

CORRIDOR NORD :

CONTENEURS - LE RAIL, CONNECTEUR STRATÉGIQUE ENTRE TANGER MED ET L'HINTERLAND

90 EVP
Par train

6
Train par jour en import/export

450 KM
Distance parcourue

Le terminal ferroviaire de Tanger Med n'est plus une simple infrastructure de transport, mais le prolongement dynamique du port vers l'hinterland. Cette connectivité directe permet une évacuation massive et fluide des flux, évitant toute saturation des terminaux à conteneurs.

Connectivité globale

Intégration du rail dans les chaines de valeurs logistiques

Fiabilité opérationnelle

Mise en place de trains garantissant une ponctualité rigoureuse, indispensable aux flux "Just-in-Time" de l'import/export.

Logistique bas carbone

le report modal sur le corridor nord permet une réduction massive des émissions de CO2, aligné avec les exigences de décarbonation internationale

Train sous douane

transport de conteneurs scellés, formalités douanières déportées au plus près des centres de consommation avec un corridor sécurisé de bout en bout.

CORRIDOR NORD :

TANGER MED AU CŒUR DU RÉSEAU DES PLATEFORMES LOGISTIQUES : MAILLAGE ACTUEL ET AMBITIONS FUTURES

- L'ONCF a développé des "Ports Secs" stratégiques à **Casa Mita, Fès Bensouda et Marrakech Sidi Ghanem** pour décongestionner les façades maritimes et rapprocher la marchandise des centres de consommation.
- Pour accompagner l'augmentation de 60 % du trafic fret, l'ONCF déploie de nouvelles plateformes logistiques.

CORRIDOR NORD :

AUTOMOBILE : LE RAIL, ACCÉLÉRATEUR DE L'EXPORT "MADE IN MOROCCO"

Le rail n'est plus un simple prestataire, mais une extension directe des lignes de production. Le partenariat avec les industriels de l'automobile illustre parfaitement ce modèle de "Factory-to-Port" ultra-performant.

22
Trains par jour

2 500
Voitures par jour

Cas de STELLANTIS : Montée en cadence du trafic

EXCELLENCE OPÉRATIONNELLE :

LA MAÎTRISE DU TRANSPORT DE MATIÈRES DANGEREUSES

Pour l'ONCF, la sécurité n'est pas une option, c'est un prérequis non négociable. Le transport de matières dangereuses (hydrocarbures, soufre, produits chimiques) est encadré par une structure d'expertise dédiée.

- **Expertise Certifiée :** Présence d'un **Conseiller à la Sécurité TMD certifié**, garant de la conformité réglementaire et de la gestion des risques.
- **Référentiels et procédures ONCF :** Application des dispositions claires pour la maitrise du transport de matières dangereuses dans les normes strictes de sécurité.
- **Formation des intervenants** dans le domaine du transport de matières dangereuses.

EXCELLENCE OPÉRATIONNELLE :

AGILITÉ ET OPTIMISATION DE L'OUTIL DE PRODUCTION

Massification des trains en utilisant la charge maximale des wagons et des trains (train lourd et long)

Modernisation des opérations de "dernier kilomètre" et de manœuvre en introduisant des engins rail-route.

Conduite écoresponsable en s’appuyant sur la marche économique et la formation des conducteurs

Flexibilité et capacité d’adaptation à la demande des clients au quotidien (cadence, régularité …)

DURABILITÉ : LE RAIL, LEVIER DE LA LOGISTIQUE BAS CARBONE

BILAN CARBONE & TRANSITION VERTE

Une Performance Énergétique :
90 % des trains électriques de l'ONCF circulent grâce aux énergies propres.

Le Report Modal :

- Efficacité de Masse : 1 train de fret standard remplace environ 50 camions sur l'autoroute.
- Émissions évitées : Le rail émet jusqu'à 9 fois moins de CO2 que le transport routier pour une tonne-kilomètre équivalente.
- Décongestion : Réduction de la pollution atmosphérique et sonore sur les axes routiers majeurs (Tanger-Casablanca-Marrakech).

Un Atout de Compétitivité pour l'Export

- Anticipation du MACF (Taxe Carbone Européenne) : En utilisant le fret ferroviaire vert, les exportateurs marocains (Automobile, Phosphates, Textile) réduisent le bilan carbone de leurs produits.

MERCI DE VOTRE ATTENTION.

URC – Uganda Railways Corporation

URC linking the sea to Uganda and Beyond

UGANDA RAILWAYS CORPORATION

URC LINKING THE SEA TO UGANDA AND BEYOND

CONTENTS

Who we are

The Sea Link

URC Role in the supply Chain

Regional integration and Beyond

Opportunities

WHO WE ARE

Uganda Railways Corporation is a corporate body reporting to the Ministry of Works and Transport with the mandate to carry out railway, marine and road services both in and outside Uganda for the carriage of Goods and Passengers.

URC integrates rail, lake transport, and road logistics to provide efficient cargo movement from seaports to Uganda and the wider region.

- **Vision**
- To be the preferred freight and passenger transporter in Eastern Africa
- **Mission**
- To establish and manage reliable railways and marine services for social –economic transformation
- **Business Segments**
- Freight operations, Marine services, Nalukolongo Railway Workshop, Passenger service, Warehouse and Terminals, Real Estate.

THE SEA LINK

How Cargo Reaches Uganda

Main entry ports
- Port of Mombasa (Northern Corridor)
- Port of Dar es Salaam (Central Corridor)

Rail connectivity
- Kenya Railways Corporation linkage from Mombasa
- Tanzania Railways Corporation linkage from Dar

Inland movement into Uganda via Malaba, Tororo, and other entry points

Multimodal transport (rail + lake via Lake Victoria ferries)

URC ROLE IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN

- URC is a key logistics enabler providing
  - Efficient transport of bulk and containerized cargo (cement, petroleum, grain, steel)
  - Inland logistics infrastructure including ICDs and freight terminals
  - First- and last-mile connectivity solutions
  - Integrated rail–marine–road logistics services
- This positions URC as a strategic partner in regional and international supply chains.

Regional integration and Beyond

- **Regional Integration & Market Access**
- URC plays a central role in advancing trade within the East African Community
- It facilitates access to key inland markets:
  - South Sudan
  - Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo
  - Rwanda
- This positions Uganda as a strategic logistics gateway for East and Central Africa.

PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN

Uganda Railways Corporation has undertaken a series of initiatives to rebuild and modernize its rail infrastructure and services. These efforts aim to prepare Uganda's rail network for integration with the improved Lake Victoria transport system and other partner developments

- **Kampala–Mukono Line Rehabilitation:** URC completed rehabilitation of the **26 km Kampala–Mukono commuter railway** using locally manufactured concrete sleepers, a first in Uganda. Commissioned in December 2024, this $20 million project has modernized the line to support faster and heavier trains, with an improved speedup to 120 km/h. The use of concrete sleepers (instead of steel) improves track stability and deters vandalism, ensuring a more durable infrastructure.
- **Emergency Repairs on Mukono–Malaba Main Line:** Recognizing the urgent need to restore Uganda's main international rail artery, the **230 km Mukono–Malaba line** (part of the Northern Corridor meter-gauge railway to Kenya) underwent emergency rehabilitation. By 2023, works on the Tororo–Mukono section (a major portion of this line) were completed and handed over to the government, significantly improving URC's capacity to move cargo on the route. These repairs addressed critical track defects, improving reliability for freight trains from Kampala toward the Kenyan border.

Continuation

- **Tororo–Gulu Railway Rehabilitation:** The **375 km Tororo–Gulu line** is being rehabilitated after years of closure. The project involves replacing track materials, repairing bridges, improving drainage, and restoring operations on this line which traverses Mbale, Soroti, Lira and terminates at the new Gulu Logistics Hub. Once operational, the Tororo–Gulu railway will facilitate freight movement between northern Uganda and the Lake Victoria corridor, with an estimated **200,000 tons of cargo annually**
- **Gulu Logistics Hub (Inland Container Depot):** The Gulu ICD strengthens intermodal connectivity in northern Uganda, enabling more efficient transfer of containerized goods to/from the Lake Albert region, South Sudan, and DRC once rail service resumes.
- **Revival of Marine Services – MV Pamba:** On Lake Victoria, URC has focused on reviving Uganda's rail ferries. **MV Pamba and Mv Kaawa** both rail wagon ferries with capacity of 880 tons.

Continuation

- **The East African Rail Rehabilitation Project**

The Project is aimed at adding to the transport infrastructure stock in the EAC region and in particular Uganda as well as supporting production in Agro-processing, mining, timber, petroleum, and manufacturing industries. Once completed, it will also enhance trade competitiveness, by shifting traffic from road to rail transport which will greatly contribute to indirect economic benefits in Uganda and Kenya through savings in energy (as fuel consumption per-ton-km by rail transport is much less than road transport); travel time savings for both passenger and freight traffic; savings in GHG emissions. This project, valued at UA 301.36 million, is funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and implemented by the Uganda Railways Corporation (URC).

Project Components

- The Project comprises of (08) components, namely
- Railway track rehabilitation between Kampala and Malaba (border with Kenya), and between Kampala and Port-Bell and between Kampala and Nalukolongo;
- Replenishment of rollingstock and marine vessels on Lake Victoria operated by the URC;
- Trade facilitation and support to institutional reforms
- Rail sector skills development
- Climate change and resilience building
- Gender mainstreaming and social infrastructure
- Compensation and Resettlement
- Support to Project management

Lake Victoria Multimodal Logistics Project (LVMML)

- **Project Objective:**
  To develop a fully functional and cost-effective multimodal transport corridor linking Uganda to the Dar es Salaam–Mwanza Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), thereby restoring Uganda's competitiveness on the Central Corridor and reducing dependency on the Northern Corridor.

Opportunities

- Rehabilitation and modernization of railway lines
- Expansion of intermodal logistics systems
- Increased utilization of lake transport
- Digitalization (cargo tracking, e-booking platforms)
- Growth in regional transit cargo volumes
- Green logistics through rail and marine transport

Conclusion

- Uganda Railways Corporation is a vital link between global trade and inland Eastern Africa, connecting Uganda and the region to key seaports such as Port of Mombasa and Port of Dar es Salaam.
- Through its integrated use of rail, lake transport on Lake Victoria, and road networks, URC is helping to move cargo more efficiently, reduce costs, and improve access to international markets. This is positioning Uganda as a growing regional logistics hub serving Eastern Africa.
- To fully realize this potential, there is need for;

Continued investment in infrastructure and equipment

Strong partnerships with regional and international stakeholders

Supportive policies that improve cross-border trade and logistics

In summary, strengthening URC means strengthening trade in the region,making Uganda a key gateway linking inland Africa to the global economy.

THANK YOU

Joost Overdijkink

UIC Senior Advisor Freight and
Transport of Dangerous Goods

Key conditions for growing rail freight

Stability for rail freight

- Long-term political vision

..on national ambitions for modal share, rail network, shared by all actors, and why..

- Stabel legal framework

.. long-term internationally shared targets; basis for investment

- Stabel investment in key infrastructure

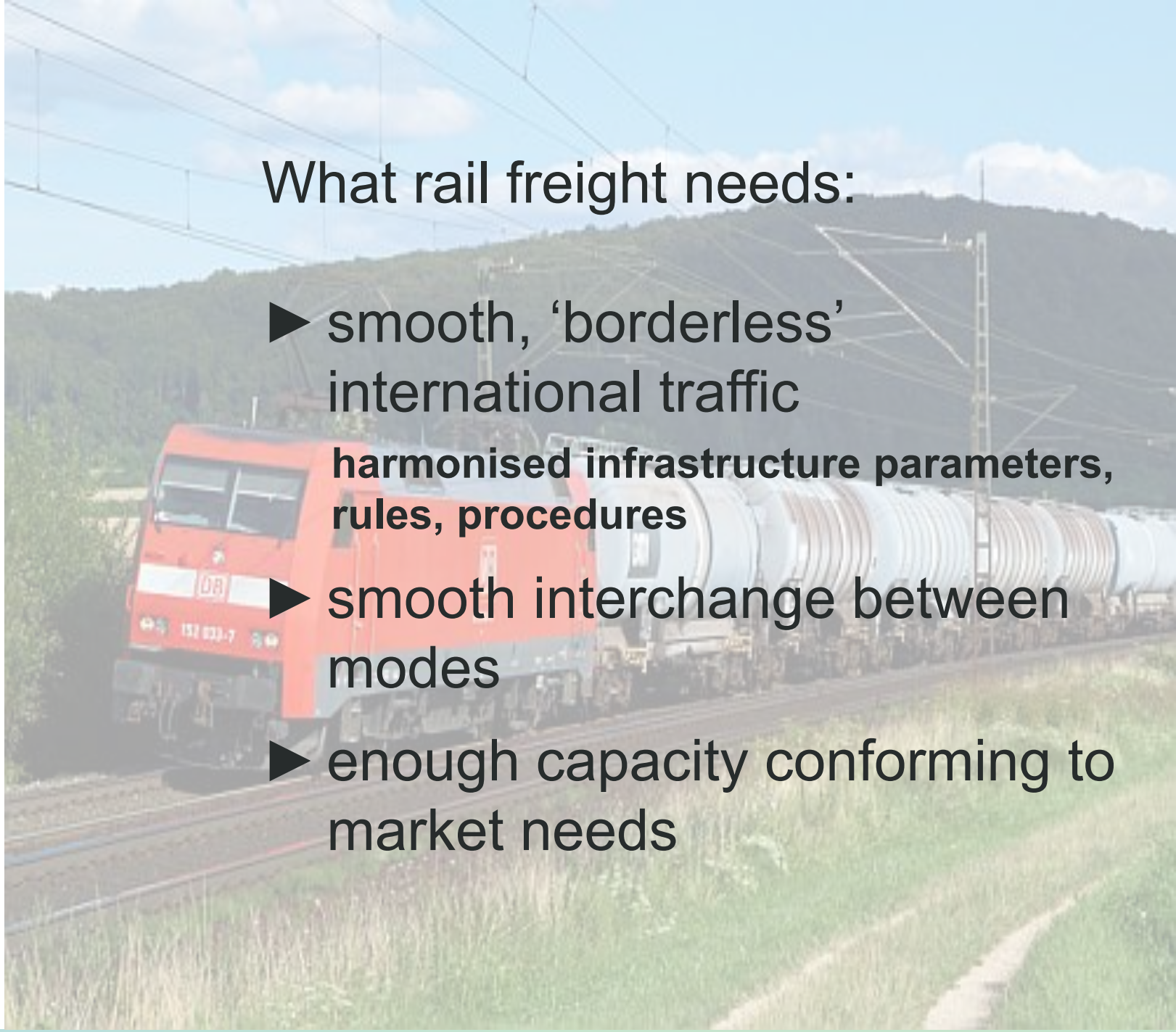
..for predictable future infrastructure availability Infrastructure can be national strategic asset

- Level playing field between modes

..no point in investing in rail if the other mode (road) is set-up to always win

Shippers need:

- Reliability
- Predictability
- Flexibility
- Affordability



What rail freight needs:

- smooth, ‘borderless’ international traffic
  harmonised infrastructure parameters, rules, procedures
- smooth interchange between modes
- enough capacity conforming to market needs

Awareness and promotion

Potential shippers need to know about:

- Rail freight cheaper than road above 300-500 km
- Faster than road
- Safer than road
- Rail services on offer

Fields of actions for players

Fields of action for players on international freight railways / corridors

Awareness and promotion

- Promote and advertise existing services
- Identify and address concerns to instil trust in the system and to trigger demand

Cooperation and coordination

- Involve all stakeholders into rail freight corridor development process
- Intensify cooperation between countries and national carriers and formalise the results (for example adoption by several states of existing international transport law e.g. RID/ADR for dangerous goods
- Create platform to bundle and coordinate corridor management programs

Digitization and harmonization

- Harmonised digitization
- Spread usage of CIM/SMGS (intermodal) consignment note
- Foster digitization of customs processes
- Adapt transit guidelines and foster cross-national customs alignment

Operationalisation

- Improve service level
- Establish integrator role with contact to end client and marketable product
- Improve transparency on fares & tariffs, transport status, service schedule, etc.

Investment and public support

- Continuous investments in rail infrastructure, border crossings, terminals, with primary focus on bottlenecks
- Enter dialogue and secure direct or indirect subsidies (in form of reduced tariffs) from governments

Source: Roland Berger

Q&A

Closing Remarks

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OF RAILWAYS

Thank you
for your attention

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