

Information Note
Forum on the Future of Rail in Africa :
«focused on investment financing in the railway sector»
Dakar, from 19 to 21 October 2023

1. Introduction

Rail transport first appeared in Africa at the end of the 19th century, and the 50 years following its introduction saw a period of rapid expansion. The aim was to transport raw materials (ores, timber, tropical products) from the interior to the ports, bound for European metropolises. This influenced the general design of the networks, with most lines running from the seaports to the hinterland. The positive effects led to the development of the regions crossed and master plans for the urbanization of the main towns from the station.

Today, railroads in Africa face competition from road transport, and are confronted with a number of challenges linked to governance, outdated installations and rolling stock, financing and the mobilization of resources for modernization.

The development of the African transport system implies the development of specifications for African networks, the technical governance of large rail areas and the mobilization of financing with acceptable terms and conditions. Rail will obviously be the backbone of this mobility chain, and is an important asset for African integration as expressed in the ZLECAF and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

It is in this context that UIC and CFS are organizing this Forum, from October 19 to 21, 2023, to promote the effective revival and financing of railroads in Africa.

The specific aims of this meeting are: (i) to encourage country-led rail development in Africa; (ii) to bring together and mobilize rail sector stakeholders, political decision-makers, representatives of rail companies and industries, technical bodies, rail experts, economists and key players in financing; (iii) to identify major national and international investment projects; (iv) to identify financing mechanisms; (v) to strengthen public-private partnerships; and (vi) to develop cooperation between states through strategic support for regional and sub-regional projects.

2. Venue

The Forum will be held at the Centre International de Conférence Abdou DIOUF de Dakar in Diamniadio (CICAD). This new town is located 36 km from Dakar. Shuttle buses will take participants from their hotels to the TER station and then to the Conference Center.

For participants staying in Dakar, a TER train will be available on Forum days at Dakar Railway Station. Further information will be available on the conference website at a later date:

[International Forum: Financing rail projects in Africa | UIC - International union of railways | Events](#)

3. Visa formalities/procedures

West African and European Union States are exempt from visas and fees. Passports must be valid for at least six months after the date of travel.

Other visitors require an entry visa. It is preferable to start visa procedures with Senegalese embassies and high commissions as early as possible, as some airlines may require this before allowing you to board. You can also obtain a visa on arrival at Blaise DIAGNE International Airport. The standard fee for ordinary visas is US\$50.

Delegates from African railways will receive a letter for the airlines allowing them to board without a visa. However, those transiting through other countries are advised to check the regulations in force in these transit countries before departure, to avoid any inconvenience during transit.

4. Travel arrangements

Electrical outlets in Senegal generally supply electricity between 220 and 240 volts AC.

The time zone in Dakar is 00 GMT.

The average temperature in Dakar in October is 28°C. This coincides with the end of the rainy season, and humidity is relatively high. Temperatures can peak at around 33°C. Light cotton clothing is therefore recommended.

The language spoken in Dakar is Wolof.

5. Arrival at the airport

A welcome committee will be set up at Blaise DIAGNE airport.

6. Foreign exchange and banking services

The currency used in Senegal is the CFA Franc. The exchange rate, as of September 2023, is 1 euro = 656 CFA F and 1 US dollar = 611 CFA F. A currency exchange service is available at the airport and in hotels.

Numerous ATMs are available in the city's hotels, shopping malls and boutiques, and accept almost all internationally recognized credit and debit cards affiliated with SCT, Visa and Master Card.

7. Hotels/Residence options

Hotels	Stars	Adresse
Pullman Dakar Teranga*	5 étoiles	10 Rue Colbert, Place de L' independance, , Dakar Pullman Dakar Teranga - Hôtel à Dakar - AccorHotels - ALL
King FAHD Palace Hôtel	5 stars	Route des Almadies BP 8181 Dakar Tel : +221 33869 69 39 www.kingfahdpalacehotels.com
Radisson Blu Hotel, Dakar Sea Plaza	5 stars	Route de la Corniche Ouest Fann Residence BP 16868 Dakar Sénégal Tel : +221 33 8693333 www.radissonblu.com/en/hotel-dakar
Hôtel Terrou-BI	5 stars	Boulevard Martin Luther KING Tel : +221 338399039 www.terroubi.sn
Hotel Radisson Diamniadio	5 stars	Prolongement Autoroute A Péage A Cote Diamniadio Airport Hotel in Dakar Senegal Radisson Hotel Dakar Diamniadio (radissonhotels.com)
Rysara Hotel Dakar	4 stars	8, Avenue des Jambars Accueil - Rysara
Le Ndiambour* - Hôtel et Résidence	4 stars	121, Rue Carnot Dakar Tel : +221 33889 42 89 Le Ndiambour Hotel et Résidence - Votre Business hotel à Dakar
Hotel fleur de Lys*	4 stars	Rue 64 Rue Felix faure, Dakar 12345
Hôtel IBIS Dakar	3 stars	Avenue Abdoulaye Fadiga Dakar, www.accorhotel.com
NOVOTEL Dakar*	5 stars	Avenue Abdoulaye FADIGA
Hotel Lagon 2	3 stars	Route de la petite Corniche Est

- *A dedicated bus will provide a link between the hotels marked with an Asterix to the Dakar Railway Station

8. Telecommunications services

Internet services in conference areas are provided free of charge, as they are in hotels

9. Emergency services

An emergency service will be set up at the venue for the duration of the Forum.

10. Working languages

The working languages of the conference are English and French. Interpretation services will be available.

11. Contacts

For further information and details, please contact:

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