

Information Note
3RD AFRICAN RAIL DIGITAL CONGRESS:
« DIGITAL: A CHALLENGE TO BOOST THE RAILWAY VALUE CHAIN »
Yaoundé, from 28 to 30 May 2024

1. Introduction

Digital technology can improve the key success factors of rail operations: safety, reliability, profitability and customer experience.

Why did you decide to hold this Congress in Africa?

- Because UIC is convinced that there is a real opportunity to develop rail in Africa, in line with the African Union's Agenda 2063,

- Because rail must become (or return to being) the backbone of land-based mobility, for both passengers and goods. This is an obvious necessity if we are to adapt to climate change.

Digitisation has the potential to offer African economies an important means of making considerable progress, in both the industrial and service sectors. Indeed, new technologies provide innovative solutions for the development of railways.

After the 1st African Congress on Digital Rail in Cape Town on the theme, "**Africa: the future digital continent**" in 2019, UIC has organised the 2nd African Congress on Digital Rail with the theme, "**Accelerating digital transformation in Africa: what challenges for rail?**", in Tunis in 2022.

Following on from this, the 3rd African Congress on Digital Railways will aim to show how the digitisation of the rail industry is bringing and can bring value to the economies of the continent's countries. The African socio-economic context and the strong performance of certain digital applications such as Mobile Payments are just some of the advantages for the rail sector.

This congress will:

1. Help define the future of digital rail for the continent;
2. Bring together railway stakeholders, politicians, industry representatives, railway experts, economists, universities and digital ecosystems;
3. Identify major projects to be launched;
4. Offer solutions for the realisation of the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063 activities as they relate to the rail sector;
5. Encourage the design and development of a truly African digital rail strategy;
6. Highlight the level of maturity of digital rail in Africa.

For more information regarding the Congress, please click on the link below:

<https://uic.org/events/3rd-african-rail-digital-congress-digital-a-challenge-to-boost-the-railway-value-chain>

Places are limited, so please register early.

2. Forum Venue

The congress will be held at the Hilton Hotel, boulevard du 20 Mai, Yaoundé Cameroun. Shuttles will be provided to transport participants from their hotels of residence to the Hilton, where the Forum will take place.

The hotel is located in the heart of Yaoundé's central business district. It is less than two kilometers from the Yaoundé National Museum and the city's main passenger railway station. Other attractions are just a short cab ride away.

3. Programme

- **26 May 2024:** Arrival for technical visit in Douala
- **27 May 2024 morning:** technical visit in Douala (reserved for UIC members, 20 seats available only)
- **27 May 2024 afternoon:** Train from Douala to Yaounde
- **27 May 2024 07.30 pm:** Registration and welcome cocktail at the Hilton Hotel in Yaounde
- **28 May 2024:** Official opening, exhibition inauguration, plenary session and dinner
- **29 May 2024:** Parallel sessions, workshops/roundtables, gala dinner, wrap-up and closing of the Congress
- **30 May 2024 morning:** Touristic visits
- **30 May 2024 afternoon:** end of Congress

4. Formalities/Procedures for obtaining a Cameroon entry visa

The new process for issuing short-stay visas is divided into 4 stages:

1. Online pre-registration by the applicant, by opening an account on the evisacam.cm or evisacam.com platform, filling in the online form and confirming its validation by notifying the applicant by e-mail or SMS. For holders of diplomatic and service passports, the application and required documents must be submitted:
 - In person at the Diplomatic Representation or Consular Office for applicants residing in their home town;
 - By e-mail to the official address of the Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post for applicants residing outside the city where the Diplomatic Representation or Consular Post is located.
2. **Payment of fees online**, via various methods (credit card and mobile payment). The claimant receives notification of proof of payment by e-mail or SMS;
3. **Processing of the application**. This is carried out by the Diplomatic Mission or Consular Post that is legally competent or geographically close by. For applicants in areas far from the Post Office or where there is no coverage, an online visa authorisation with a QR Code closes this phase. For

those residing in the city where the relevant Post Office is located, an e-mail or SMS notification is sent to make an appointment to attend the biometric enrolment formalities. Either procedure takes place within 72 hours of pre-registration. This time is reduced to 24 hours for express procedures;

4. **Visa printing.** This takes place either at the entry border post for holders of the online visa authorisation, or at the relevant diplomatic or consular post for applicants who have completed their biometric enrolment at the post. The visa sticker is then affixed to the applicant's passport.

Visa applicants must pay an administrative processing fee of:

- 153€ for standard short-stay visa (0 to 6 months)
- 229€ for express short-stay visa (0 to 6 months)

Documents required for a short-stay visa or authorisation to issue a short-stay visa online:

- Passport or other travel document valid for at least six (06) months;
- A return plane ticket or circular transport ticket;
- International vaccination certificates;
- Proof of the purpose of the visit, as well as sufficient means of subsistence;
- A certificate of accommodation issued by the person who will be hosting the visitor, endorsed by the local mayor, or a firm hotel reservation for the planned duration of the stay;
- A mission order, if applicable;
- A certificate of the applicant's place of residence;
- Proof of the applicant's profession.

Requests for invitations to the congress should be sent as soon as possible to:

Ms. Ariane DJOKO, Protocol Manager, ariane.djoko@camrail.net

5. Travel arrangements

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

The time zone in Yaoundé is +01 GMT.

The average temperature in Yaounde in May is 26°C. Temperatures can peak at around 30°C. May is a wet month, with an average of 317 mm of rainfall spread over 22 days. This means that there are occasional showers during this period. Light cotton clothing is therefore recommended.

Do not forget to check the weather forecast a few days before your trip for up-to-date information.

Cameroon has two languages, French and English. The most commonly spoken language in Yaounde is French.

6. Arrival to the airport

A reception committee and facilities will be set up at Yaoundé Nsimalen International Airport.

Participants invited to Douala for the technical visit will be able to arrive at Douala International Airport and depart via Yaoundé Nsimalen International Airport.

7. Exchange and bank services

The currency used in Cameroon is the CFA Franc. The February 2024 exchange rate is 1 euro = 655.957 CFA francs and 1 US dollar = 509.43 CFA francs. An exchange service is available at the airport and in hotels.

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

MOBILE payment services are also available with Orange and MTN operators.

8. Hotels/Residential options

Vue Hôtel	Vue chambre	Hotels	Adresse	Contacts	Distance du HILTON
		HILTON ****	Boulevard du 20 mai, Yaoundé	Tél : +237 2 22 23 36 46 www.hilton.com reservations.yaounde @hilton.com	0
		MERINA ****	Avenue Ahmadou AHIDJO Yaounde - Cameroun	Tél : +237 699 89 02 20 / 222 22 21 31 www.hotel-merina.com reservations@hotel-merina.com	400m
		BOUN'S ****	Rue De Narvick- Carrefour S.H.O Yaoundé - Cameroun	Tél : +237 6 91 00 06 00 www.bounshotels.com contact@bounshotels.com	650m
		FALAISE ***	Ave Merechal Foch Yaoundé - Cameroun	Tél : +237 2 22 22 06 16 reservations@lafalaisehotels.com www.lafalaisehotels.com	700m
		DJEUGA PALACE ****	Avenue Narvick Yaoundé - Cameroun	Tél : +237 222 22 64 57 / 242 72 23 73 www.djeuga.com reservation@djeuga.com	850m
		UNITED INTERNATIONAL ****	Hippodrome Yaoundé - Cameroun	Tél : +237 222 22 47 45 / 680 96 80 96 www.unitedhotelinternational.co m reservations@unitedhotelinternat ional.com	1200m

9. Telecommunication services

Internet services in conference areas and hotels are provided free of charge.

10. Emergency service

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

11. Working languages

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

12. Contacts

For further information and details, please contact:

UIC

Maria Lafont
UIC Senior Advisor for the African Region
lafont@uic.org

Christine Hassoun
UIC Senior Advisor. Project Dissemination
hassoun@uic.org

CAMRAIL/AGL

Yannick TCHANOU
IT Coordinator
yannick.tchanou@camrail.net

EVINA Elie-bersot Patrick
Safety Management Coordinator
elie-bersot.evina@camrail.net