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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Zug, Switzerland, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

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## **Democratic Republic of Congo accedes to the Luxembourg Rail Protocol Moving SADC Forward**

**The Rail Working Group (RWG) today welcomes the formal accession of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the Luxembourg Rail Protocol to the Cape Town Convention, a significant milestone for rail finance across Southern and Central Africa.**

The Luxembourg Rail Protocol, adopted in 2007 under the auspices of UNIDROIT and in force since 8 March 2024, establishes an internationally recognised legal framework for security interests in railway rolling stock, making it easier and cheaper for the private sector to finance locomotives, wagons and other rail equipment. The DRC joins Gabon - one of the Protocol's founding contracting states - and South Africa, which ratified in May 2025, as African parties to the treaty. Mozambique has signed, and a growing number of African states including Namibia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Kenya and Ethiopia are actively considering adoption.

The DRC's accession carries particular strategic weight given the country's extensive rail network and its central role in the Lobito Corridor, the 1,739-kilometre railway linking the mineral-rich Copperbelt to Angola's Port of Lobito, one of the continent's most strategically important logistics routes.

**Her Excellency Madame Judith Suminwa Tuluka**, Prime Minister and Chief of Government of Democratic Republic of Congo said: "We are delighted that DRC has acceded to the Luxembourg Rail Protocol and is now the second SADC contracting state. As our neighbours also move forward with accession, we look forward to

The Rail Working Group is a not-for-profit association constituted under Swiss law representing a broad cross section of the global railway community.

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seamless, cost effective, private finance for rolling stock moving around the SADC network”.

RWG chairman, **Howard Rosen**, added: “this is an exciting step forward both for the SADC region and Africa generally reinforcing the Protocol's role as a practical tool for unlocking rail investment across the continent. It will also create new business opportunities for Southern African manufacturers, operators and financiers, especially in the light of the recent commitment by the South African export credit agency (ECIC) to reduce its risk premiums when the Luxembourg Rail Protocol applies.”

**Jamie Holley**, CEO of leading African freight logistics operator and rolling stock lessor, [Traxtion](#) said: “The large investments into uplifting the condition of the railways serving the DRC from the ports of Lobito and Dar es Salaam make the DRC an important railway country. The DRC’s accession to the Luxembourg Protocol will lift the business case for the investment at scale into trains to operate on this upgraded railway infrastructure. Together this has the ability transform the region’s logistics landscape.”



Presentation of the Instrument of Accession to UNIDROIT, Rome 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026

L to R: M.Teddy Kamembo Milambo, Director – Head of the Legal and Litigation Department, Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs Democratic Republic of Congo; M. Gérard Tumba Kaniki, Deputy Chief of Staff to the Prime Minister Democratic Republic of Congo; Professor Anna Veneziano, Dep. Secretary General UNIDROIT



## NOTES FOR EDITORS

[The Luxembourg Rail Protocol](#) to the [Cape Town Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment](#) is a new global treaty under the auspices of UNIDROIT, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law. The Protocol will make it much easier and cheaper for the private sector to finance all types of railway rolling stock. It sets up a new system for recognition, priorities and enforcement of creditor and lessor rights, which will be registered in an [international registry](#) based in Luxembourg, accessible to everyone over the internet 24/7 and introduces, for the first time a new global unique permanent identification system (URVIS) for rolling stock. The United Nations has adopted global [Model Rules on the Permanent Identification of Railway Rolling Stock](#) setting out minimum standards for the permanent marking of railway rolling stock with URVIS numbers. The upgrading of the Model Rules to include digital platforms will create [significant additional benefits](#) for the industry. The Protocol entered into force in contracting states on **8<sup>th</sup> March 2024**.

The European Union (in respect of its competences). Gabon, Luxembourg, Paraguay, South Africa, Spain, and Sweden have ratified the Protocol, and the Democratic Republic of Congo now becomes the seventh contracting state. France, Germany, Switzerland, Mozambique, Italy, and the UK have already signed the Protocol but have not yet acceded to the Protocol. Many other states, including Saudi Arabia, Kenya, Malta, Eswatini, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Mauritius, are actively looking at ratification of the Protocol. The Protocol is endorsed by many international rail organisations (including the African Rail Industry Association, OTIF, CIT, UIC, UIP, ERFA, ALLRAIL, UITP, CER and Eurofima) and actively supported by the African Union, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

The Export Credit Insurance Corporation of South Africa (ECIC) has stated that it will apply a discount of up to 20% to its risk premium when it underwrites rolling stock financings subject to ECIC minimum local South African content rules, compliance with the Protocol and other underwriting conditions. More on this [here](#).

[The Rail Working Group](#) is a Swiss-based not-for-profit association focused on the adoption and implementation of the Luxembourg Rail Protocol. It has about 80 direct members and hundreds of additional rail stakeholders represented indirectly by various industry organisations that belong to, and support the objectives of, the RWG.

For more on the Luxembourg Rail Protocol and the Rail Working Group visit [www.railworkinggroup.org](http://www.railworkinggroup.org).

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