

Geneva, July 29, 2020 –

## **ITA Announcement – WTC 2020**

### **Status of WTC 2020 Refunds**

Following the cancellation of the physical WTC 2020 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, ITA and the Institution of Engineers, Malaysia (IEM) issued a joint statement indicating IEM's refund commitment. ITA was not a party to any of the payments made to IEM, however ITA's Executive Council (ExCo) created a task force to review IEM's financial position and to urge IEM to offer the largest refund possible. The joint statement commits IEM to refund around 70% of funds received. Based on its task force review, ITA maintains its position that IEM should increase its level of refund. In the spirit of transparency to our constituents, ITA has invited Malaysia to present their financial accounts at the virtual General Assembly in September and explain the basis for the level of refund being offered.

IEM has now apparently sent two notices that have made the refund conditional to additional processes; one includes a sign off that refunds will be accepted in full, in effect waiving any further action on behalf of the participants/exhibitors/sponsors, and another requiring authors to create and provide to IEM a presentation video. Neither notice was sent with ITA knowledge or approval.

ITA encourages IEM to stand behind its refund commitment without condition.

ITA encourages the tunnelling industry to support IEM's virtual WTC 2020 event.

### **Moving Forward**

While the pandemic was beyond everyone's control, ITA is examining options to mitigate the risk of similar financial losses from WTC events occurring again. At the upcoming General Assembly, ITA's ExCo will propose revisions to how future WTC events are organized, including ITA taking a stronger role in planning and financial control. WTC events are the pre-eminent global tunnelling industry event to share knowledge, ideas, experiences, and services, which is the core of ITA's mission. ITA intends to exit the COVID-19 pandemic stronger than before, including financial controls that protect its WTC contributors and participants.

ITA is an association of Member Nations and welcomes feedback from its members and our industry partners regarding the above issues. We will continue to provide updates as our recovery process, lessons learned, and actions advance.