

Press Release  
September, 28th 2020

*Global Tunnelling Industry – Underground Planning and Construction*

## INTERNATIONAL TUNNELLING AND UNDERGROUND SPACE ASSOCIATION HOLDS A VIRTUAL 46<sup>th</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Over the last few months, Covid19 pandemic has brutally impacted global economy. The tunnelling industry gathered last week in a virtual conference to hold the 46th General Assembly of ITA, the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association. In times of uncertainty, it was the occasion for the worldwide NGO to give an overlook on the main activities of the Association, achievements of Working Groups and committees and on future events. As planned, ITA presented the updated strategy for the new 3-year term.

### UPCOMING EVENTS :

#### ➤ Virtual ITA Awards 2020

The event was to be hosted in Melbourne, Australia. ITA decided that ITA Tunnelling Awards 2020 had to be moved to a virtual conference which will be held on 3-4 December, at the occasion of the #World Tunnel Day.

At this stage, the 6th edition of the event registered 55 candidacies through 22 countries.

The 7<sup>th</sup> edition in 2021 is planned in India.

#### ➤ Postponing of WTC 2021

ITA and the organizing committee of WTC 2021 have decided to postpone the upcoming World Tunnel Congress to be hosted by Denmark in Copenhagen.

Soren Degn Eskesen, Chair of the WTC 2021 organizing committee said : *« Travel restrictions due to the global pandemic situation is a risk we must take into account and measure, it can have big impacts. We decided early postponing of WTC 2021 to avoid a later disappointment if physical event could not be held. »*

Denmark will now be the venue for the WTC2022 event to be held in April of that year. This was agreed by Mexico which was to have hosted the event in Cancun in 2022.

#### • Presentation of Strategy for 2020-2023

Climate change, pandemic, demographical growth and its management reveal the urgent need for public authorities and urban planning key players to elaborate a new strategy to

tackle these challenges. Through its 2020-2023 strategy, ITA intends to solve major issues of the underground industry: pressing water, sanitation, transportation, energy and food rarefaction.

Five goals were announced:

1. Encourage Member Nations to actively develop and share technology, promote underground space and be active as a Member Nation in ITA
2. Optimize the contribution of Working Groups and Committees through facilitating interaction with Member Nations & Sponsors, encouraging synergies and deploying modern communication practices
3. Encourage further knowledge sharing through education and training
4. Enhance tunnelling and underground space awareness
5. Improve communication with Member Nations, industry and the general public.

## ITA PUBLICATIONS

4 Working Groups / Committees reports will be published this year:

- Working Group "Contractual Practices": *"ITA Contractual Framework Checklist for Subsurface Construction Contracts (2nd Edition / 2020)"*
- Working Group "Health and Safety in Works": *Underground Asset Health and Safety Management Planning Guide*
- Working Group "Immersed and Floating Tunnels": *Owners Guide- new annexes*
- Working Group "Sprayed concrete Use"/ ITAtech Committee: *Permanent sprayed concrete linings*

*About the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association:*

*The International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association (ITA) is a non -profit and non-governmental international organization, which aims at promoting the use of underground space as a solution to sustainable development. Founded in 1974 and operating out of Geneva, Switzerland, ITA currently has 78 Member Nations, 300 affiliated members, 18 Prime Sponsors and 60 supporters.*

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