



Press release

14 June 2023

World Tunnel Congress 2023: the major tunnelling event concludes in Athens with three announcements.

The World Tunnel Congress 2023 was successfully concluded in the city of Athens, Greece. The culmination of a week full of meetings, discussions and work on underground activities.

Placed under the angle of the expanding underground, 2147 people celebrated and contributed to the advancement of tunnelling, to innovate, to project solutions for the public space and the citizens around the world.

An extremely busy week for WTC exhibitors and visitors began with the traditional opening ceremony in the presence of the Mayor of Athens, Kostas Bakoyannis, who spoke about the importance of the underground network in the host city.

We were able to notice the excellent 13th traditional Muir Wood lecture which was delivered by Marc Panet presenting "The convergence – Confinement method".

The ITA-AITES General Assembly was the occasion to welcome Pakistan as the 79th Member Nation. During this meeting, the president Arnold Dix recalled the major stake represented by the tunnelling works and the expertise of the association to transmit the immense knowledge of the member experts.

The General Assembly ended with the announcement of the **nomination of Ioannis Fikiris as 4th vice-president of executive committee of the ITA-AITES and the official announcement of the city that will host the WTC in 2026: Montréal.**

In addition to this announcement, ITA-AITES is pleased to announce **the return of the Tunnelling Awards in Mumbai, India for November 2023.** The event, organized by ITA-AITES and Tunnelling Association of India will however remain hybrid with digital access for participants. This will be one day conference during Tunnelling Asia Conference.

Regarding the association's events, ITA-AITES will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year at the WTC in Shenzhen, China, a double milestone.

The ITA plenary sessions focused on climate change and how underground activities can contribute to solutions in this context. The working groups delivered their reports which are available on the ITA-AITES website. This session ended by a conclusion from ITA President Arnold Dix on the initiation of the sustainability initiative.

Within the program of the WTC, there were several highlights comprising:

The **Client Forum**. For the first time, the WTC organised a special moment dedicated to the end-users of tunneling works, giving them the possibility to exchange with the actors of tunnelling about their needs. This forum will return next year at the WTC China edition.

The remarkable first ever “Women in Tunnelling” Forum. We not only heard from women leaders in the tunnels about their careers and achievements, but also about the challenges they faced during their career in a predominantly male sector.

And last, as WTC was a hybrid event, the attendees will still be able to connect to the digital platform until 30 June 2023 and thus access the proceedings.

Please find more information on the website: <https://wtc2023.gr/>

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About the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association:

The [International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association](#) (ITA-AITES) is a non-profit and non-governmental international organization that aims to promote underground space's use as a solution to sustainable development. Founded in 1974 and operating out of Geneva, Switzerland, ITA currently associates with 78 Member Nations, 300 affiliated members, 14 Prime Sponsors and 60 supporters.

About the Greek Tunnelling Society:

The [Greek Tunnelling Society](#) (GTS), founded in 1995, is the established and official representative of Greece in the International Tunnelling Association and Underground Space Association (ITA-AITES). GTS is a non-profit body and aims to promote the key advantages of tunnels and underground structures from technical, environmental, social and economic point of view. The steering board of the GTS consists of 7 members, while the body of the GTS has more than 200 members. For more information on GTS, visit the [official website](#).

Press Contact

ITA Contact

Maxime Forgues

m.forgues@giesbert-mandin.fr / + 33 6 66 65 04 91

Professional Congress Organiser Contact

Promotion Team

Harry Tzanavaris

promo@wtc2023.gr / +30 210 6833600