

# Proposal to host WTC 2023

## Executive Summary

The present report summarises the broad outline of the **Greek Tunnelling Society (GTS)** candidature for 2023 along with its key assets, in line with ITA requirements.

### 1. Congress theme

#### *Expanding underground*

*“Knowledge & Passion to Make a Positive Impact on the World”*

Cities and infrastructure **expansion towards underground** provide safe, sustainable, green and many times unique solution for dealing with the demanding challenges that the globe is facing such as rapid urbanization, natural hazards, climate change, sustainable energy geo-resources, people’s mobility and transportation of goods.

The conference will focus on recent trends on underground engineering at the prospect of a whole new era of smart technology where sophisticated “digital tools” change rapidly investigation, design, construction and operation methods and strategies. The conference will additionally provide an ideal opportunity to showcase recent innovations and the perspective of the technology to further efficiently upgrade underground infrastructure assets, transforming the industry and the societies it serves.

**Athens** (Greece) has got the **knowledge & Passion** and we strongly believe that we have the means and the responsibility to literally make a positive impact on the world.

### 2. Proposal location

Athens, a vibrant modern European capital situated by the Aegean Sea, is an ideal location for international conferences. The city of myths, monuments, gods and ancient glory could offer unique experiences for the distinguished delegates of the ITA family.

Being in Athens, you’re midway between Europe, Asia, and Africa; constituting an easily accessible destination city from all over the world. More than **60 Airlines** operate scheduled services out of Athens to **166 destinations** and **54 countries**.

The proposed Venue concerns the **Megaron Athens International Conference Center (MAICC)** which is classified as one of the finest conference venues in Europe. MAICC is located in the city center, just next to a Metro station of the line towards Athens International Airport (AIA). It offers a stunning environment, exceptional aesthetics and cutting-edge technology. Megaron has ample choice of hall size and style for plenary and parallel sessions. All halls are almost one next to the other requiring less than a couple of minutes to walk between each other. It also has dedicated exhibition space and multileveled sweeping foyer areas for various uses. MAICC can host up to 6000 delegates simultaneously. Wi-Fi will be available for delegates and sponsors throughout the conference centre and exhibition area, whereas a number of public workstations with Internet access will be located at a specific area.

#### ➤ Space provided at the congress venue:

- Two main auditoriums Ch. Lambrakis Hall and Trianti Hall with seating for 1960 and 1500 people respectively.
- Three (3) halls for technical sessions, in addition to the main auditoriums, with capacities for 200, 380 and 450 people.
- Indoor Exhibition Area, on a single level, exceeding 5000m<sup>2</sup>, sufficient for ~ 200 3x3m<sup>2</sup> booths.
- Additional spaces (i.e. The Atrium) are available for further expansion of the exhibition area, on the same level with the aforementioned exhibition space, if deemed necessary.
- Foyer areas for poster presentations
- Foyer areas of highly aesthetics and unique outdoors and gardens for coffee breaks and lunches.
- A hall for the General Assembly (Banqueting hall) with a floor area of 645 m<sup>2</sup>
- More than (15) rooms for WG and Committee meetings.
- Offices for ITA President, ITA Director, Secretariat etc
- A modern press room which can host 40 attendees (theater style)

The dedicated space meets ITA expectations for the host venue for WTC 2023. The exhibition, auditorium, session and meeting rooms are all interconnected within a single purpose-designed, modern conference venue.

#### ➤ Accommodation:

As Athens is a highly visited city, there is a great variety of hotels and hostels centrally located, with a range of costs to accommodate any visitor. A large number of hotels of various categories are located in proximity to the congress venue. **Hilton Athens Hotel**, is located close to the congress venue (11 min. walking distance - 750 meters), will be the **headquarter hotel**.

- 5\* accommodation starts from £160 per night, 4\* accommodation starts from £100 per night etc
- Hundreds of hostels and Airbnb apartments are available to feat any budget.
- PCO partner offers a unique booking facility to obtain the best possible rates

### 3. Draft program

The dates of 12<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> May are proposed for WTC2019

TIME	FRIDAY 12 MAY 2020	SATURDAY 13 MAY 2020	SUNDAY 14 MAY 2020	MONDAY 15 MAY 2020	TUESDAY 16 MAY 2020	WEDNESDAY 17 MAY 2020
07:30-08:00	ITA-CET Training Course Registration					
08:00-08:30						
08:30-09:00	ITA-CET Training Courses	ITA-CET Training Courses	ITA General Assembly	Opening Ceremony	ITA Open Session 1	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)
09:00-09:30		ITA-AITES ExCo Meeting				Young Members General meeting
09:30-10:00						
10:00-10:30	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
10:30-11:00						
11:00-11:30	ITA-CET Training Courses	ITA-CET Training Courses	ITA General Assembly	Opening Ceremony & Keynote Lecture	ITA Open Session 2	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)
11:30-12:00		ITA-AITES ExCo Meeting				Young Members General meeting
12:00-12:30						
12:30-13:00	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break for ITA Member Nations Delegates		Lunch break	Lunch break
13:00-14:00						
14:00-14:30	ITA-CET Training Courses	ITA-CET Training Courses	WG Meetings	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)
14:30-15:00		ITA-AITES ExCo Meeting		WG Meetings	ITATECH Securing Board Committee	ITA General Assembly
15:00-15:20	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
15:20-15:40						
15:40-15:45						
15:45-16:00	ITA-CET Training Courses	ITA-CET Training Courses	WG Meetings	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)	Technical Sessions (At least 4 parallel sessions)
16:00-16:30		ITA-AITES ExCo Meeting		WG Meetings	ITATECH Activities	ITA General Assembly
16:30-17:00						
17:00-17:30						
17:30-18:00						
18:00-19:00						
19:00-20:00	ITA-CET Dinner	ITA President's Reception	WTC 2023 Welcome Reception	ITATECH Dinner	ITA Young Members Event	Candidature Member Nations Event
20:00-21:00						
21:00-22:00						
22:00-23:00						Congress Gala Dinner

A carefully designed programme of technical sessions, as per ITA requirements based on the above proposal will be provided in detail in order to avoid overlap in subject matter and timetable conflicts. Moreover:

- Parallel technical sessions will not overlap with open sessions and key note speakers.
- Key note speakers will be selected to showcase the developments of underground engineering towards the digital future.
- State-of-the-art digital poster session areas will maximize attendance and value.

All day Technical tours will be arranged for Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May, whereas a special off-site event<sup>1</sup> will be organized for Monday and Tuesday afternoon for those delegates that wish to attend, after lunch, special sessions on Mining & Environmental underground Remediation subjects.

#### Provisional technical visits (Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May):

The extensive tunnelling works ongoing in Athens in 2023 will enable some unique technical visits including:

##### Athens Metro Line 4

The € 1,6billion budgeted Design and Built Contract concerns a new Metro Line within the city of Athens that will be under construction in 2023. The 13km long, fully automated new METRO line 4, will consist of 15 stations. The tour will showcase the innovative techniques and the high standards that are specified for the construction of the project.

<sup>1</sup> Special off-site event

*On Monday and Tuesday afternoon the interested delegates will be transferred to Lavrion Technological & Cultural Park (LTCP) where additional technical sessions will be hosted; at an area where the famous ancient silver mines that were used during the classical era, to finance the formidable navy employed to defeat the Persians in the naval battle of Salamis and helped spawn the Athenian empire of the Classical era, is located.*  
*The special off-site event will continue with a cultural visit at Cape Sounion and the Temple of Poseidon.*

### *Immersed Road Tunnel Salamina-Perama*

The project concerns the design, construction, financing, operation, maintenance and exploitation of an approximately 15km long highway which includes a 1.2km long immersed double tube tunnel in an area with archaeological interest due to the conduct of the homonymous naval battle (22-09-480 BC) and three onshore tunnels with a total length of 2km. Construction is expected to commence in 2021, hence the participants will have the chance to visit a site where an immersed tunnel will be under construction.

### *The Hellinikon Project*

The interested participants will have the chance to visit one of the biggest projects of its kind in Europe which concerns the most ambitious development project ever undertaken in Greece. The approximate € 8 bn. investment will include, among other, deep excavations and a 1 km long Cut & Cover tunnel with 3 lanes per direction as part of the realignment of the heavy trafficked coastal urban motorway that currently crosses the area facilitating the direct connection of the developed land with the coastline and the beach.

### *New Road Tunnels in Metropolitan Area of Athens*

Three new urban road tunnels are planned in the metropolitan area of Athens [i. the 2.2km long double tube Kimis tunnel, ii) the 2.0 km long motorway tunnel that will connect Attiki Odos (highway), a main ring road of Athens, with PATHE (Athens – Thessaloniki highway) and iii) the 3 km long bi-directional urban tunnel connecting Rafina port and Ilioupolis]. Specific site visits will be organized for the interested participants of WTC2023.

All planned site visits are almost within the center of the Athens city or the near suburbs relative to the conference venue.

## **4. Organization**

The following structure for the Organization of ITA-AITES WTC2023 is proposed:

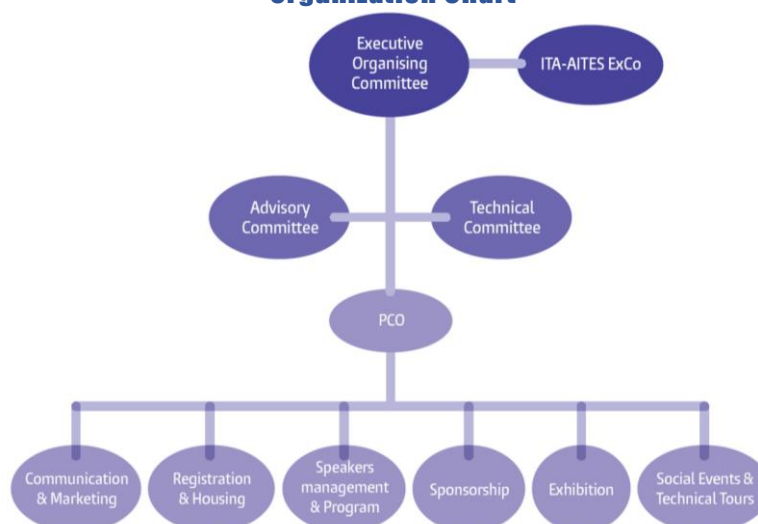
Upon the assignment for the organization of the congress (May 2020), the Executive Organizing Committee (EOC) will manage all the activities to deliver a successful WTC and will liaise directly with both the GTS Executive Committee and the ITA Executive Council as per ITA by-laws requirements. The EOC will communicate directly with the ITA Executive Council via both the ITA Executive Director and the assigned “Ex officio” member (I. Fikiris, President of the GTS) in ITA Executive Committee to ensure a smooth coordination with the ITA. On being awarded the ITA World Tunnelling Congress 2023 and General Assembly the following committees will be set up:

- The Advisory Committee (both National and International) will be responsible for advising and guiding the EOC to meet all the ITA-AITES objectives based on the experience and knowledge of its well-reputed members (both academics and world-leading professionals). The Advisory Committee will be chaired by Prof. George Anagnostou.
- The Technical Committee in conjunction with the EOC will be responsible for the technical content and the level of scientific contributions, format and proceedings.
- The PCO (Professional Congress Organiser) CONVIN will be responsible for securing a smooth operation of the congress-related activities and successful WTC.

Along with the Committees, two Scientific Counselors: em Prof. Theodosios Tassios and em. Prof. Pavlos Marinos have been entitled, who have both contributed their careers in expanding the Greek scientific borders

on engineering and tunnelling and have raised through their work the Greek Tunnelling Awareness. Both Scientific Counselors are considered world-leading influencers on engineering and will be mentoring the Committees along this journey providing valuable feedback and advice for an unforgettable ITA-AITES World Tunnel Congress.

### Organization Chart



The congress organization will be supported by a group of dedicated staff and volunteers through a recruitment program.

## 5. Activities of the MN and tunnelling activities

The Greek Tunnelling Society (GTS), founded in 1995, is the established and official representative of Greece in the International Tunnelling Association (ITA-IATES). 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 main body of the GTS has more than 200 active members. The GTS is a strong supporter of ITA activities.

In 2014 GTS supported the initiative of ITA for the establishment of the “Young Members Group” for young professionals in the field of Tunnelling and Underground projects and the Young Members Group of GTS was founded. The Greek Young Members Group is very active, participates in all national activities for tunnelling and related issues and organises regularly events for the young members (i.e. carrier days etc). One of the main objectives of GTS\_YM is to act as a forum for young members within GTS, keeping a direct relationship with the Young Members Groups of the ITA and attract new members in other GTS Working Groups.

Members of the GTS are currently participating or had in the past key roles in the ITA committees and activities. All these members participate either as organizing or advisory committee members ensuring the sharing of the gained experience of ITA on high level and demanding world tunneling congresses.

GTS has organized scientific events which have been warmly accepted and continues its work always relying on its members for an active and meaningful presence in the tunnelling industry.

Several national conferences are organised every year in Greece which are related to engineering. The majority of them are organised or co-organised by the Technical Chamber of Greece which counts over 100,000 licensed Greek engineers.

In the past 10 years, GTS has organized several scientific events and conferences such as: i) International Symposium Practices and Trends for Financing and Contracting Tunnels and Underground Works (2012), endorsed by ITA-AITES; ii) 2nd Eastern European Tunnelling Conference: Tunnelling in a Challenging Environment (2014) / endorsed by ITA-AITES; iii) One-day Seminar on Mechanized Tunnelling (2016). These three scientific conferences / training events took place in Athens and they were very-well received both on national and international level and are considered very successful. Moreover, members of the GTS had many times a key role on the organization of conferences partly related to tunneling or with tunneling Sessions (i.e. Hellenic Conference of Geotechnical Engineering and many other).

In the past 5 years many notable tunnelling projects have been completed or are currently underway in the Greece in a variety of ground conditions, with many different methodologies both in urban or free field environment. Typical cases include:

- ❖ The Athens METRO Extension Line
- ❖ The new Thessaloniki METRO
- ❖ The Tithorea – Domokos Railway Line Section
- ❖ The tunnels along the new alignment sections of Athens – Thessaloniki Highway
- ❖ The tunnels along the new alignment sections of Korinthos – Patra Highway
- ❖ The tunnels along the Ionia Highway which runs along the western part of Greece
- ❖ The Aposelemis hydraulic Tunnel
- ❖ The tunnels along the new high-speed Athens – Patra Railway
- ❖ The Kassandra mines

## 6. Budget

### Provisional Budget:

Our budget summary figures are based on a basic (conservative) scenario which assumes 2000 participants (1400 paid) and a realistic scenario which assumes 2500 participants (1800 paid). Similarly, as far as the budget from sponsorship and exhibition is concerned two scenarios are assumed including 150 and 200 exhibitors. Both scenarios assume same sponsorship (2 platinum, 10 gold, 10 silver sponsors).

Based on the above figures the basic financial outcome is estimated as below:

- ✓ Range of (total) expenses for WTC 2023: 1.775.000,00€ - 1.994.000,00€
- ✓ Range of (total) income from WTC 2023: 2.152.000,00€ - 2.625.000,00€
- ✓ MN surplus from WTC 2023: > 170.000,00€ depending on participation
- ✓ Range (total) of ITA fees (€50,000 + 7%): 200.500,00€ - 234.500,00€

The registration fees will be, approximately, as follow:

REGISTRATIONS	EARLY	STANDARD
Full registration	875,00 €	1050,00 €
Young Members	450,00 €	600,00 €
Category 3	550,00 €	700,00 €
Students Special Registration (under 28 yrs)	170,00 €	220,00 €
One day ticket	500,00 €	500,00 €

\* The registration fees will be increased by 100€ for last days registration (from May 1, 2023)



It should be noted that as experience of last years in Greece shows (based on the statistics of the City of Athens Convention and Visitors Bureau) all international conferences organized in Athens succeed world records of attendees and exhibitors. Especially during late spring.

Hence, considering recent statistics from WTC2019 in Naples the above scenarios could be most possibly easily attained if not well exceeded.

## 7. In Conclusion

Athens (Athene), the capital of Greece, during the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. was considered that period's "Silicon Valley" and served as a talent magnet attracting the scientific global interest where innovation and genuine creativity took place. Nowadays, and particularly during WTC2023, Athens may highlight recent underground industry trends, practices innovations and show the way of underground engineering towards the digital future.

Athens is considered a significant entrance connecting Europe with the Eastern and Southern part of the world, involving importing and exporting goods and services. Due to the its strategic location, leading international consulting and construction firms have a strong presence in Athens.

Athens' legacy in underground space is related to Greece's history and the country's development involving remarkable engineering infrastructure some of which are even today accessible to visit. Athens has a strong track record in delivering some of the largest and most ambitious civil engineering projects in Europe (e.g., the Egnatia Highway, the Athens METRO, the 2004 Olympic games infrastructure etc), whereas the near future looks extremely promising for the construction industry.

We are committed to organize a successful and memorable ITA-AITES World Tunnel Congress 2023 and offer what has been known as a traditional Greek hospitality.

Undoubtedly, Athens is the place to host WTC2023.

**We would be grateful if you support our effort to organize a World Tunnel Congress (WTC) and to host the ITA 2023 General Assembly for the first time in Greece.**

Greek Tunnelling Society