



7<sup>th</sup>

# WORLD INVESTMENT FORUM

INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

18-22 OCTOBER 2021

[worldinvestmentforum.unctad.org](http://worldinvestmentforum.unctad.org)



PRELIMINARY

# PROGRAMME

OPENING CEREMONY & WORLD LEADERS INVESTMENT SUMMIT

2021年10月18-22日 / 18-22 OCTOBER 2021 DABAO, CHINA



UNITED NATIONS  
UNCTAD



## ABOUT THE WORLD INVESTMENT FORUM

The UNCTAD World Investment Forum is the pre-eminent global platform for investment and development. The Forum devises strategies and solutions for global investment and development challenges. It facilitates multistakeholder collective action devised to stimulate investment in development. The Forum offers a unique opportunity to influence investment-development policymaking, shape the global investment environment, and network with global leaders in business and politics.

Over the past decade, the World Investment Forum has made [remarkable achievements and far-reaching impact](#) on investment-development policymaking. Previous editions took place in Accra (2008), Xiamen (2010), Doha (2012), Geneva (2014 and 2018) and Nairobi (2016). The Forum was set up to fill the institutional gap on investment matters in the global economic governance architecture. Since its inception, and in the absence of a multilateral forum for cross-border investment, the Forum has provided a global platform to gather policymakers, the private sector and other key stakeholders for high-level discussion and action to shape international investment policy. The Forum biennially gathers investment stakeholders from more than 160 countries, drawing in a broad scope of participants that encompass the full spectrum of upstream and downstream investment stakeholders, thereby integrating sustainable development into the entire “investment chain”. The stakeholder landscape encompasses high-level participants from the global investment community, including Heads of State and Government, ministers, executives of global companies and stock exchanges, sovereign wealth fund managers, impact investors, investment treaty negotiators, heads of investment promotion agencies (IPAs), international investment location experts, industrial zone and infrastructure developers, project financiers, heads of international organizations, parliamentarians, civil society representatives, eminent scholars, and the international media. This has proved paramount in amplifying development-oriented outcomes.

## INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY

This year’s World Investment Forum, the seventh edition, will discuss investing in sustainable recovery. Today’s key challenge for the international community is to build forward better, which will not be possible without reigniting international investment as an engine of growth. The Forum will therefore address global challenges for international investment in the post-pandemic era, which is shaped by transformative policy, technology and sustainability trends and new demands for greater resilience.

A first challenge for the international community is to mobilize global investment for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNCTAD research shows that the global pandemic has reversed the achievements made between 2015 and 2019 in terms of investment in the Goals. In order to get the SDGs back on track, it is essential for the global investment community to mobilize investment, channel it into SDG sectors, particularly in poverty-ridden countries, and ensure that it generates sustainable development impact. The second challenge is the realignment of the global investment governance in the new era of global economy. The third challenge relates to new technologies and the new industrial revolution, which will have potentially far-reaching consequences for the global value chains (GVCs) with important implications for growth and development.

Central among the discussions at the Forum will be the strategies and policy measures required to restart the engine of international production and restore supply chains. It will also be important that participants draw conclusions on the impact of the crisis on global investment flows. The post-pandemic global investment–development paradigm shift requires a new development strategy for countries and the restructuring of firms at the global, regional and country level.

At the World Investment Forum 2021, the global community of investment–development stakeholders will gather to debate solution-oriented initiatives and build global partnerships to advance sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.

In light of the current context, the Forum will have all sessions accessible online, through a state-of-the-art platform. Overall, it will consist of over one hundred events, including a grand opening, the Global Leaders Investment Summits, the Global Investment Game Changers Summit, ministerial round tables, community-oriented conferences, private sector-led sessions, high-profile stakeholder round tables, networking events, award ceremonies and a virtual Investment Village.

For further information: James Zhan, Lead, World Investment Forum ([diaeinfo@unctad.org](mailto:diaeinfo@unctad.org))

# PROGRAMME IN DETAIL

MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021

10:00–11:00

## GRAND OPENING CEREMONY

The opening ceremony will take place in the presence of the highest-level representation from the UNCTAD member States, the global business community, as well as other investment stakeholders and international organizations.

Event manager: Mr. Joerg Weber

Contact email: Joerg.Weber@unctad.org

08:30–11:30

## GLOBAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION CONFERENCE (in partnership with the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA))

### Session 1: Promoting investment in the health sector

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused a global crisis, with health systems collapsing, regular lockdowns, travel bans and curfews. The economic consequences have also been devastating, with a global growth contraction of -3.5% in 2020 (International Monetary Fund, January 2021), particularly affecting low-income countries that were unable to put in place economic support measures.

The pandemic has revealed large deficiencies in healthcare systems in developed and developing countries. As a response, national governments are seeking finance for investment to address the current problems in the health sector, but also potential and projected challenges, such as a prolonged pandemic, virus variants, and aging populations. Foreign direct investment (FDI) can play a critical role in bringing funding, but also the needed technology and expertise.

This session will examine the role of IPAs, special economic zones (SEZs) and other successful instruments to promote investment in the health sector. Key points from this session will be summarized in a brief note for dissemination to investment promotion stakeholders, including IPAs, SEZ authorities and investment policymakers.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- What role could IPAs play in attracting investment in the health sector? Which subsectors are key for countries to be better prepared for future healthcare challenges?
- How effective are SEZs that target healthcare services or medical cities in attracting investments that strengthen national healthcare systems?

### Session 2: Attracting and retaining investment in tourism

The Covid-19 crisis has impeded economic activity across the world and tourism has been one of the most affected industries. For countries that are heavily dependent on tourism, such as small island developing States in the Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Pacific, the loss of revenues and jobs has been particularly devastating. Other countries that are developing this sector, such as in the Middle East, are also affected, and need to develop new business models not only to retain investments in times of lockdowns and travel restrictions, but also to adapt post-pandemic to subsectors in tourism that have been transformed, for instance the conventions and events industry.

This session will examine the role of governments and IPAs in helping to retain and attract new investments in tourism, and ways to mitigate risks related to pandemics or similar crises. Key points from this session will be summarized in a brief note for dissemination to investment promotion stakeholders, including IPAs and investment policymakers.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- When confronted with a crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, what can governments and IPAs do to retain investment in the tourism industry?
- How do you attract new investment in tourism and mitigate the risks related to pandemics or similar crises?

Event manager: Mr. Paul Wessendorp

Contact email: Paul.Wessendorp@unctad.org

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09:00–11:30

## **HIGH-LEVEL ROUND TABLE: BEYOND THE BOTTOM LINE** (in partnership with the Family Business Network (FBN))

### **How can family business advance the sustainability agenda?**

To deliver on the SDGs by 2030, an ambitious global effort is required over the next decade to accelerate sustainable solutions to the world's economic, and environmental, social and governance (ESG) challenges. Two thirds of businesses worldwide are owned or managed by families, employing 60% of the world's workforce and contributing over 70% of global gross domestic product. Family businesses are key actors in ensuring a transformative and sustainable future, to create a shared prosperity for all, mobilize investment in sustainable development and define success across generations. Increasingly, family-owned enterprises around the globe are embedding sustainability in their business practices. Family offices and family foundations can also be a catalyst in promoting sustainable business models that drive impacts beyond the traditional bottom line.

Family businesses need to be empowered to maximize their potential and seize the untapped opportunities associated with embracing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a first-of-its-kind partnership between the United Nations and the global family business community, UNCTAD and FBN jointly developed the global initiative Family Business for Sustainable Development (FBSD). Its ambitious package of deliverables aims to mobilize business families and their firms to embed sustainability into their business strategies, thereby committing to concrete, measurable contributions towards the SDGs. Key components of the FBSD initiative include, among others, the family business sustainability pledge and the adoption of transparent and comparable core sustainability indicators for family firm reporting and a capacity-building programme.

To encourage sustainability reporting and higher levels of transparency, FBSD is launching its online platform to benchmark and track progress against core sustainability indicators for family business.

#### **Issues to be addressed:**

- What are the key drivers for family firms to adopt the sustainability agenda?
- Is there a business narrative for adopting sustainability practices in privately held firms?
- Are the SDGs a fitting blueprint for fostering sustainability among family businesses?

Event manager: Ms. Christiane Stepanek-Allen

Contact email: [Christiane.Stepanek@unctad.org](mailto:Christiane.Stepanek@unctad.org)

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11:00–12:00

## **SUSTAINABLE STOCK EXCHANGES GLOBAL DIALOGUE** (in partnership with the United Nations Governance Centre, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and Fintech.tv)

The Sustainable Stock Exchanges (SSE) initiative is a peer-to-peer learning platform for exploring how exchanges – in collaboration with policymakers, investors, regulators and companies – can promote responsible investment to accelerate sustainable development. Launched by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2009, SSE is a United Nations Partnership Programme, co-organized by UNCTAD (Investment and Enterprise Division), the United Nations Global Compact, UNEP (Finance Initiative) and the United Nations-supported PRI. Today, SSE counts over 100 stock exchanges around the world as partner exchanges. In addition, SSE welcomes participation from securities regulators, investors, issuers and other key stakeholders.

For over a decade, the flagship event of SSE has been its biennial Global Dialogues, the largest global gathering of stock exchange CEOs exclusively devoted to responsible investment. This year the Global Dialogue will take place as a series of one-on-one interviews with stock exchange CEOs and other market leaders. This series of pre-recorded discussions with market leaders will provide a platform to facilitate a sharing of experiences among exchanges and further strengthen consensus and action among key capital market actors in their contribution to the SDGs.

This series will be kicked off by a discussion among members of the SSE Independent Advisory Committee, comprised of capital market leaders whose role is to provide the SSE Governing Board advice and feedback on the work of the Partnership Programme. This high-level gathering will identify key global challenges and the role exchanges can play in addressing them, setting the stage for the series of one-on-one interviews with market leaders from around the world.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What role can stock exchanges play in accelerating action to address climate change? The role of disclosure guidance, market education and new products (e.g., green bonds, green equity indices, carbon credit trading, etc.).
- What are the latest developments among securities regulators in promoting sustainability? What are the key challenges (e.g., issuer disclosure, asset management greenwashing, ESG ratings and data providers)?
- What opportunities lie ahead for sustainability-themed products in the areas of bonds, equities and derivatives?
- What are the main challenges for financing sustainable development? What are the priorities for SSE and its partner exchanges?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

**ACADEMIC TRACK OPENING PLENARY: SETTING THE FUTURE RESEARCH AND POLICY AGENDA ON INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT** (in partnership with the Graduate Institute, Center for Economic and Policy Research, United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research, Academy of International Business (AIB), and Oxford University Press)

For more than three decades, UNCTAD has contributed to advance thinking, policy analysis and technical assistance on FDI, the activities of multinational enterprises (MNEs) and international production. The year 2020 marked 30 years of UNCTAD's *World Investment Report*, each edition covering the latest trends in FDI globally and analysing fundamental topics related to FDI and development.

Academic Track is organized in collaboration with leading academic institutions and associations in disciplines related to investment and development. The Track will consist of a series of events with the aim of providing a platform for discussions, as well as integrating research and opinions from leading scholars, researchers, executives from global companies and senior policymakers. The programme will cover issues related to foreign investment, MNEs and development in a global context, across multiple disciplines.

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino

Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

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14:30–16:00

**INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT FUND CONFERENCE**

An important development in sustainable finance in recent years is the proliferation of sustainable investment funds as a potential mass market financial tool that can make a positive contribution to sustainable development. This session will bring together asset owners, asset managers and regulators to discuss the latest development in the global sustainable investment fund market and possible measures to make sustainable funds work better for sustainable development in the post-pandemic era, in particular in developing countries.

**Issues for discussion:**

- How can sustainable investment funds contribute to the post-pandemic recovery? What are the challenges and opportunities?
- How can regulators and other stakeholders work together to improve the quality and maximize the development impact of sustainable investment funds?
- How can developing economies tap into the potential offered by the sustainable fund market?

Event managers: Mr. Yongfu Ouyang and Mr. Joseph Clements

Contact emails: Yongfu.Ouyang@unctad.org, Joseph.Clements@unctad.org

## TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2021

08:00–9:00

**IPA EXECUTIVE BREAKFAST** (in partnership with WAIPA)

**New investment promotion strategies in the post-pandemic era**

The Covid crisis has revealed the value of IPAs as intermediaries between governments and their business communities. Many IPAs played a critical role in helping investors through the crisis and in mobilizing private sector support for efforts to combat shortages, particularly with respect to personal protective equipment. IPAs have also showed the ability to adapt quickly, continuing and expanding their service offering under very difficult circumstances.

The executive breakfast will feature a presentation by a prominent figure in the investment promotion community who will reflect on the transformation that IPAs have experienced and on what to expect in the “new normal”. How can international investment contribute better to sustainable and inclusive development?

Event manager: Mr. Paul Wessendorp  
Contact email: Paul.Wessendorp@unctad.org

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8:00–16:30

## **FAMILY BUSINESS CONFERENCE (organized by FBN)**

Thematic partnership sessions address key and emerging issues for the family business community, identify strategies and showcase innovative approaches to ensure impact and a sustainable future across generations.

### **FBN’s Global Governance Initiative**

Launch of a new multi-year project that focuses on codifying family business governance lessons over the past 30 years, ranging from succession to writing a family constitution. The initiative is spearheaded by the Family Business Council Gulf chapter.

### ***Enabling Next Generation Legacies – book launch***

This book will significantly contribute to these best practices and empower “next gens” to make their mark and redefine success based on their own value system. Many of them have contributed to building these practices into the book. Yet, this is much more than a book. It is a useful and practical guide, asking relevant questions and providing concrete tips on how to tackle difficult issues that next gens face daily as they increasingly find their place in the family and business organizations.

### **Leveraging new philanthropic models to achieve the SDGs**

Business families are rethinking how they leverage philanthropy to address social and environmental issues and create lasting impacts using innovative approaches and partnerships.

### **From family business to families in businesses: Creating a lasting legacy through family offices**

As families think and act beyond their legacy businesses, the family office has become both an important investment and education vehicle for families to reinvent themselves and transfer value and assets across generations. Family offices can also be a game-changer in transforming business models that drive impacts beyond the traditional bottom line.

### **The evolving role of transparency in privately owned family firms**

While family businesses account for two thirds of all enterprises worldwide, the full scope of their impacts is largely unknown since the majority of them are privately owned and, in turn, are often not subject to the same level of scrutiny demanded of publicly traded firms. This has recently begun to change as more business families expand the concept of responsible ownership to include a deeper understanding of their impacts and an increased commitment to transparency.

Event manager: Ms. Christiane Stepanek  
Contact email: Christiane.Stepanek@unctad.org

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09:30–11:00

## **SOVEREIGN WEALTH AND PENSION FUNDS DIALOGUE**

### **Leveraging institutional investment for the post-pandemic recovery**

The Covid-19 pandemic has once again demonstrated that environmental and sustainability issues constitute material risks for institutional investors such as public pension and sovereign wealth funds. As “universal owners” with large investment in companies across a huge range of sectors and markets, these funds are in a unique position to drive sustainability along the investment chain and channel more capital into key sectors that can contribute to post-pandemic recovery and long-term sustainable development, in particular in developing countries.

This session will bring together international institutional investors and policymakers to discuss the challenges and opportunities for investing in sustainable development in the post-pandemic era, with a focus on developing economies where capital for sustainable development is much needed.

**Issues for discussion:**

- How can sovereign wealth funds, pension funds and other institutional investors contribute to post-pandemic recovery?
- How can institutional investors from developed and developing regions work together to channel more investment to sustainable development in developing countries?
- How can governments facilitate long-term institutional investment in sustainable and inclusive development and maximize its development benefits?

Event managers: Mr. Yongfu Ouyang and Mr. Joseph Clements

Contact emails: [Yongfu.Ouyang@unctad.org](mailto:Yongfu.Ouyang@unctad.org), [Joseph.Clements@unctad.org](mailto:Joseph.Clements@unctad.org)

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11:00–12:00

## **THE ROLE OF DERIVATIVE EXCHANGES IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** (in partnership with Chicago Mercantile Exchange)

### **Embedding sustainability into commodity derivatives**

Many stock exchanges that are members of the SSE initiative are also commodity derivative exchanges. In addition, there are also dedicated commodity derivative exchanges focused exclusively on this market. In order to achieve the SDGs and move the world to sustainable commodity production, it is important to work with commodity derivative exchanges as a key leverage point for establishing the marketplace for standardized sustainability-themed products (e.g., sustainable agricultural products, green energy markets, responsibly produced commodities, etc.).

The SDGs call on all actors, including the private sector, to work to address the world's most pressing sustainability challenges. Given that the size of derivative markets far exceeds that of equity markets, it is an important area of investment and finance that needs to be harnessed to promote the achievement of the SDGs.

Commodity producers and users of commodity derivatives markets are increasingly concerned with specific sustainability aspects of commodities. Beyond commodity derivatives, other derivative products (e.g., weather futures, carbon emissions trading markets) may be instrumental in achieving climate adaptation and mitigation and other aspects of the SDGs.

This multi-stakeholder session will bring together key commodity derivatives players such as commodities exchanges, market intermediaries, commodity derivatives users and investors, and securities market regulators to address opportunities and challenges for incorporating sustainability considerations into commodity derivatives.

The session will feature discussions of a new UNCTAD–SSE research report on the role of derivative exchanges and sustainable development. The session will support the further development of derivatives that embed sustainability principles. Exchanges and market participants will benefit from discussions on the opportunities and challenges involved in including sustainability considerations in the derivatives ecosystem.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What role can derivative exchanges play in promoting sustainable development?
- Which commodities best lend themselves to the incorporation of sustainability principles?
- What is the appropriate balance between transparency/allowing the user to choose versus setting the benchmark standard?
- At what point does it become necessary for purposes of price discovery for sustainability issues to be included in the contract specification?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact email: [Anthony.Miller@unctad.org](mailto:Anthony.Miller@unctad.org)

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11:30–12:00

## **UNITED NATIONS INVESTMENT PROMOTION AWARDS 2021**

### **Promoting investment in healthcare**

The Covid-19 crisis has caused major changes in the work of IPAs worldwide, not only in their modus operandi but also in their strategic focus. Already early in the crisis some agencies took swift action to support government efforts to boost the national production of personal protective equipment. When the pandemic prolonged, more IPAs started to include

healthcare as a target sector, building new knowledge and expertise and helping the government in improving investment conditions in the sector.

In 2021, UNCTAD has been monitoring the online promotion by IPAs of investment opportunities in healthcare and has conducted an IPA survey on the promotion of investment in the health sector. Based on UNCTAD research and the survey, this year's edition of the United Nations Investment Promotion Awards recognizes the work of IPAs in attracting investment in healthcare projects, with consideration of innovative approaches to investment promotion and facilitation.

Event manager: Mr. Paul Wessendorp  
Contact email: Paul.Wessendorp@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

## GLOBAL LEADERS' INVESTMENT SUMMIT I

### Investing in a sustainable and resilient economy

The summit segments of the World Investment Forum, the Global Leaders Investment Summits, are the headline events of the Forum. They give a platform to global leaders from government, business and the international community to present their vision for the future of investment and sustainable development. The summits discuss the immediate challenges and opportunities in investment and interrelated trade, technology and sustainability issues, and longer-term developments that we should become aware of.

This first 2021 Global Leaders' Investment Summit will address the challenge of restarting the investment engine of growth for a sustainable recovery and of mobilizing global investment to meet the SDGs. It will pay particular attention to the role that global investment governance needs to play in this regard. At a time when the global pandemic has had a severe impact on investment flows in general, and investment in the SDGs in particular, with some of the achievements made during the years 2015–2019 now being reversed, it is essential for the global investment community to remobilize investment, channel it into SDG sectors, particularly in poverty-ridden countries, and redouble efforts to ensure that it generates sustainable development impact. The realignment of global investment governance towards increased regionalism and protectionism, and the shift in national economic policies from liberalization to regulation and intervention, poses an additional challenge in this regard.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- What national, regional, and global policy approaches are best suited to restart the engine of international production and restore supply chains?
- How can governments, the private sector and the international community remobilize and reinvigorate investment in the SDGs, particularly in the poorest countries?
- What can the United Nations contribute to support these efforts?

Event manager: Mr. Joerg Weber  
Contact email: Joerg.Weber@unctad.org

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16:30–18:30

## ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

### Measuring the contribution of firms towards achievement of the SDGs

Enterprises around the world have an important bearing on achieving the SDGs. Efforts are being exerted at a global level to promote meaningful disclosure on the contribution of enterprises towards the Goals by harmonizing sustainability accounting and reporting frameworks and standards.

UNCTAD's Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) published *Guidance on Core Indicators for Entity Reporting on the Contribution towards the Attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals* in 2019 to facilitate enterprise reporting. This round table will enable participants to review the latest developments on this topic. The event will bring together key players in this field with a view to promoting further harmonization, consistency and comparability in measurement and reporting.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- What is the present status of global efforts aimed at harmonizing frameworks and standards on SDG reporting?
- What needs to be done to further promote more consistent measurement and reporting?
- What are the main challenges in linking micro-level SDG reporting data with macro-level reporting by national statistical agencies?



- What is the best approach to building the technical capacities needed to report on the indicators?
- How could governments be assisted in assessing the private sector's contribution to SDG implementation and in enabling companies to report on SDG indicator 12.6.1?

Event manager: Mr. Richard Bolwijn and Mr. Yoseph Asmelash

Contact email: Richard.Bolwijn@unctad.org; Yoseph.Asmelash@unctad.org

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16:30–18:30

## HIGH-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT AGREEMENTS CONFERENCE 2021

### International investment treaty-making in the new era of global economy

International investment agreement (IIA) reform remains a daunting task for all United Nations member States, with challenges exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Policymakers, IIA practitioners, civil society and legal scholars need urgently to take stock of ongoing reform efforts during the pandemic, both in terms of what IIA reform measures countries and regional organizations have undertaken or are considering to undertake in response to the crisis, and how to maintain and strengthen the reform momentum in light of the increased fragility of economies around the world that places added emphasis on the importance of FDI as a means of development finance. The 2021 IIA Conference will aim to pave the way for further inclusive, transparent and synchronized IIA reform processes in the pursuit of sustainable development in the post-Covid-19 era.

Forward-looking IIA reform is well under way. All treaties concluded in 2020 contain several reform features that are in line with those outlined in *UNCTAD's Reform Package for the International Investment Regime (2018)* or *Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development (UNCTAD, 2015)*. These features address five areas: (a) safeguarding the right to regulate, while providing protection; (b) reforming investment dispute settlement; (c) promoting and facilitating investments; (d) ensuring responsible investment; (e) enhancing systemic consistency. UNCTAD policy tools have also spurred action to modernize old-generation treaties. Countries are increasingly interpreting, amending, replacing or terminating outdated treaties (phase 2 of IIA reform).

Given that, to date, such reform actions have addressed a relatively small number of IIAs, there is broad scope and urgency to pursue them further. Currently, the stock of old-generation treaties is 10 times greater than the number of modern, reform-oriented treaties, and the majority of known investor–State dispute settlement cases have to date been based on old-generation treaties.

UNCTAD's newly launched *International Investment Agreements Reform Accelerator* offers a practical tool for intensifying IIA reform efforts. Based on a stocktaking of recent reform efforts, the 2021 High-level IIA Conference will offer the platform for accelerating IIA reform and taking concrete steps towards a more coherent and consolidated process for modernizing old-generation IIAs.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- Taking stock of IIA reform efforts.
- Procedural reform: Investment dispute settlement.
- Accelerating IIA reform in the public interest.

Event managers: Mr. Hamed El-Kady and Ms. Diana Rosert

Contact emails: Hamed.El.Kady@unctad.org, Diana.Rosert@unctad.org

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16:30–18:30

## HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON MULTINATIONAL ENTERPRISES AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The policies and practices of MNEs affect gender equality in the workplace in host countries of foreign affiliates. Depending on MNE home country norms and values, and those of its customer and stakeholder bases, outcomes in developing countries can be positive, although this is not automatic. This high-level panel will examine the various mechanisms through which MNEs transfer gender policies and practices to local firms, and the impact on gender outcomes, notably female employment and the gender wage gap, with the aim of individuating the best policy measures and initiatives that can ensure foreign investment translates into real benefits for women.

The discussion will build on recent research and policy analysis on the topic, including that discussed in UNCTAD's report *Multinational Enterprises and the International Transmission of Gender Policies and Practices*.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- Do the benefits associated with FDI also translate into more gender-equal labour market outcomes?

- Which policies can enable gender equality in FDI host countries?
- What is the role of domestic labour market legislation in promoting women’s participation in the economy?
- How can responsible investment principles and corporate social responsibility standards influence MNE practices?
- Does the inclusion of gender equality in international trade and investment agreements help to prevent the lowering of relevant labour market standards for the purpose of promoting investment?
- How can the adoption of reporting standards help drive a change in corporate gender policies and practices?

Event managers: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino and Ms. Claudia Trentini  
 Contact emails: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org, Claudia.Trentini@unctad.org

16:30-18:30

## **IMPACT INVESTING IN EMERGING MARKETS (in partnership with The Blended Capital Group)**

### **Scaling up impact investing in emerging markets**

This event will be a dynamic, moderated round table of policymakers, investors and thought leaders seeking to scale up impact and sustainability-aligned investment into emerging and frontier markets. It will feature examples of break-through impact investing projects, including innovative business models where private and public capital is fusing to drive social purpose drawn from, inter alia, Brazil, India, Kenya, Senegal and South Africa.

#### **Issues to be addressed:**

- Getting the blend right: Mobilizing blended finance towards businesses and projects that are replicable, scalable and can achieve the SDG objectives of localization based on high-quality governance and collaboration along the whole investment chain. Successful examples of SDG 17 “Partnership” will be presented.
- Systemizing impact: Escaping the “project by project” mentality to forge new pathways that systemize and accelerate the scaling up of impactful business models. Align investable impact models and businesses with the SDGs and make them fit for purpose for larger investment investors including pension funds, family offices and sovereign wealth funds.
- Reinventing public–private collaboration: How can we bring multilateral, developmental and broader overseas direct investment public finance together with private families, institutional asset owners and sovereign entities to deliver in the final decade on the promise of the SDGs?

Event Manager: Mr. Anthony Miller  
 Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

16:30–18:30

## **SHOWCASING REFORMS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL INVESTMENT: EXPERIENCES FROM SELECTED COUNTRIES**

This will be an interactive session during which top government officials from selected countries showcase how they are dealing with investment policy reforms to achieve the SDGs and their national development objectives.

#### **Issues to be addressed:**

- High-level policymakers will present their countries’ investment policy reform initiatives, emphasizing the key actions undertaken to improve the business climate and highlighting strategic policy decisions to increase potential contribution of domestic and foreign investment to achieve the SDGs and their national development objectives.
- Policymakers will be able to explore new investment policy perspectives and interact with other countries’ representatives through Q&As.

Event manager: Ms. Chantal Dupasquier  
 Contact email: Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org

16:30–18:30

## **BLOOMBERG GLOBAL INVESTORS CONFERENCE**

Description to follow

18:30–20:00

## DAILY E-GATHERING

The conference platform will provide for daily e-gatherings among the participants, bilaterally or with numerous participants, to reflect on the day's events, network and explore possibilities of collaboration and joint initiatives. These gatherings will be facilitated by the secretariat.

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18:30–20:00

### ACADEMIC TRACK DAILY ROUNDUP (AIB and academic partners)

The daily roundup sessions will address, through an academic lens, the key issues and themes debated at the Forum.

Interactive networking opportunities to share, collaborate and benefit from peer learning will be provided during and between sessions.

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino

Contact email: [Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org](mailto:Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org)

## WEDNESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2021

09:00–10:30

### FACILITATING THE SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE–CITY LINK (in partnership with UN Habitat)

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought to light some of the challenges associated with increased urbanization, including densely populated and poorly planned areas. Urban centres have not only been epicentres for the transmission of the Covid-19 virus, but also proved to be particularly challenging settings within which to respond effectively to the pandemic. Existing inter-urban inequalities are likely to be exacerbated, with the most vulnerable sectors of society, including urban informal sectors, being the hardest hit by the negative economic consequences of the crisis.

SEZs can play an important role in fostering more sustainable, resilient cities and urban centres. This specialized event will exchange practices about how the "SEZ–city link" has been successfully developed across countries and discuss its role in achieving a resilient recovery post-pandemic. Specific attention will be given to the important facilitating role of local economic actors, notably city-level IPAs.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- The role of SEZs and city-level IPAs in contributing to sustainable urbanization.
- How can linkages between SEZs and the city-level domestic private sector be facilitated.
- Ways that city-level IPAs can facilitate investment in key SDG-related sectors post-pandemic.

Event manager: Ms. Stephania Bonilla-Feret

Contact email: [Stephania.Bonilla@unctad.org](mailto:Stephania.Bonilla@unctad.org)

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09:00–10:30

### TALKING BUSINESS

#### Middle East and North Africa

An interactive session in which top government officials from the Middle East and North Africa showcase investment opportunities in their countries.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- High-level policymakers present their countries' investment plans, policies and opportunities, emphasizing key actions taken by government to improve the business climate and highlighting strategic investment interests to achieve the SDGs.
- The session provides a chance for business to explore new investment horizons and interact with country representatives through Q&As.

Event manager: Ms. Chantal Dupasquier

Contact email: [Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org](mailto:Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org)

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09:00–10:30

## **OUTWARD FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT: POLICIES TO SUPPORT FIRM INVESTMENT AND MAXIMIZE HOME COUNTRY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** (in partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the World Economic Forum (WEF))

In recent years, companies from developing economies have increasingly invested abroad, seeking business opportunities outside their home countries. This is a recent trend, as until the turn of the century firms from developed economies dominated global cross-border direct investment. Because developing economies are the source of these investments, understanding the impact of such outward FDI (OFDI) on the home economies where these firms are headquartered is of great importance. OFDI can contribute to sustainable developmental outcomes, by generating home country effects that promote trade, employment, upgrading, growth and other aspects of economic development in source economies. However, the precise nature and characteristics of OFDI home country effects remain little understood. Moreover, even less is known about the most effective policies and measures governments can introduce to leverage OFDI for sustainable development. As a result, investment policymakers in developing countries have both a limited knowledge about the links between OFDI and home country sustainable development outcomes and remain hesitant to introduce policies to harness OFDI for sustainable development.

This session will address these knowledge and policy development constraints by presenting and discussing the first draft of a ground-breaking, innovative *OFDI for Home Country Sustainable Development Policy Toolkit* that UNESCAP and WEF have jointly developed and will launch in 2021. The presentation of the Toolkit will be followed by an interactive panel discussion with investment policymakers from both developed and developing countries and the private sector. The aim of the panel discussion is to learn from the experiences of these countries in introducing OFDI policies, and the extent to which economies and firms are able to benefit from these policies and measures in support of home country sustainable development.

### **Issues to be addressed:**

- How can OFDI contribute to sustainable development outcomes in the home country source markets?
- How can government policies and measures promote and maximize sustainable development outcomes from OFDI? What lessons can we learn from those countries that have successfully implemented OFDI policies targeting home country sustainable development?
- What issues are most relevant for the firms engaging in OFDI for policymakers to consider when implementing home country development OFDI strategies, and adopting policies and measures?

Event manager: Mr. Richard Bolwijn

Contact email: Richard.Bolwijn@unctad.org

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10:00–13:00

## **WORLD ASSOCIATION OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCIES GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING** (closed session)

Description to follow

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11:00–12:00

## **SUSTAINABILITY BONDS** (in partnership with Climate Bonds Initiative)

### **Innovative tools for financing the SDGs**

Achieving the SDGs by 2030 will require new investments in the order of US\$ 2.5 trillion per year in developing countries alone. Sustainability bonds, or “SDG bonds” are fixed income investments that can play a role in helping to fill this investment gap. Different from conventional bonds, SDG bonds are specifically developed and explicitly labelled to fund projects that have positive social or environmental benefits, supporting one or more of the 17 SDGs. The SDG bond universe to date has mostly been made up of “green bonds”, bonds with an environmental or climate-related focus, but other SDG-themed bonds, such as water bonds and gender bonds, are starting to enter the market. The green bond market, for example, exceeded US\$ 168 billion in 2018 with a five-year growth rate of 466%. Along with the high growth of this sector, there is also an increasing diversification of issuers and types of green projects for which the proceeds of the bonds are being used, and lessons learned in the green bond arena are being applied to other SDG bonds.

This multi-stakeholder session will bring together key bond market players such as stock exchanges, securities regulators, issuers and standards bodies to address opportunities and challenges for further boosting the growth of the emerging SDG bonds sector. The session will support the continued growth of domestic, regional and global green and sustainability bond markets. Exchanges and securities regulators will benefit from discussions on the opportunities and challenges involved in growing SDG bond markets. The session will also further disseminate the conclusions of the SSE voluntary green finance action plan for stock exchanges.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What role can stock exchanges play? Experiences promoting sustainability bonds or developing listing segments for sustainability bonds.
- What is the appropriate role for regulators and what should be left to stock exchanges, investors and issuers?
- What role does reporting and assurance play in the further development of a sustainable debt market?
- What opportunities lie ahead for sustainability-themed bonds? Experiences from the development of gender and water bonds.
- What are the main challenges for taking this agenda forward?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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11:30–12:00

### UNCTAD SUSTAINABLE FUND AWARDS 2021

Sustainable funds, which integrate ESG considerations and the SDGs into their asset allocation process, have grown rapidly in number, variety and size. UNCTAD estimates that, today, there are nearly 4 000 such funds, with assets under management of over US\$ 1.7 trillion. These sustainability-oriented funds have become important instruments for institutional investors to invest in sustainable development, channelling billions of dollars into key sectors that are critical for achieving the SDGs.

Despite their rapid growth, the total assets of sustainable funds account for 3.2% of the entire fund universe, and most of them are domiciled and invested in developed economies. Meanwhile, a lack of transparency and inconsistency of standards around sustainability labelling have given rise to credibility issues and "ESG washing" concerns.

To encourage the development of high-quality, high-impact sustainable funds, and in particular those investing in SDG-related sectors and in developing countries, the UNCTAD sustainable fund awards recognize outstanding funds that demonstrate the highest standards of sustainability and impact, while outperforming their respective financial performance benchmarks.

- The **2021 UNCTAD Sustainable Fund Awards** are dedicated to sustainable equity funds, which represent the largest share of the sustainable fund universe by both number of funds and assets under management. Four winners will be awarded.
- The **2021 UNCTAD Sustainable Emerging Market Fund Award** will recognize the achievements and impact of sustainable equity funds that invest (solely or mainly) in emerging markets. Two winners will be awarded (including one fund domiciled in a developed market and one in a developing market).

Event managers: Mr. Yongfu Ouyang and Mr. Joseph Clements

Contact email: Yongfu.Ouyang@unctad.org, Joseph.Clements@unctad.org

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11:30–13:00

### SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES IN AFRICA (in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ))

#### Driving economic transformation in the post African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) environment

Special economic zones have been widely used for decades, however there is relatively little systematic research on their performance or social, economic and environmental impact, especially in the context of Africa. The UNCTAD *World Investment Report 2019* presented a comprehensive analysis on the number and types of SEZs. However, large gaps remain concerning data on their design and the benefits that they accrue to the host economy. Similarly, although the implementation of the AfCFTA agreement is set to impact SEZs on the continent significantly, there is a lack of research and policy guidance on how zones can adjust to the new regulatory environment. In this context, UNCTAD with the support of GIZ, has developed a handbook for SEZs on the continent. The handbook, in addition to providing best practices and

policy recommendations across a wide array of topics relevant to SEZs, also features case studies from a number of different zones within and outside Africa. In addition to the dissemination of the findings of the handbook, UNCTAD and GIZ are also arranging a series of technical cooperation workshops in different parts of Africa. The handbook and the related technical cooperation have a particularly strong emphasis on helping SEZs adjust to the new trade and investment environment in Africa, after the full implementation of the AfCFTA.

This session aims at discussing the aforementioned issues covered by the handbook with a wide range of stakeholders, including high-level representatives from African member States, SEZ managers, SEZ associations, United Nation bodies and specialized agencies. It will provide a timely opportunity for a high-level exchange on the development of SEZs on the continent, with a focus on the opportunities and challenges in the context of the implementation of the AfCFTA.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How have SEZs on the continent fared so far, and what are the current main challenges that impede their performance and contribution to sustainable development?
- In the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, what are the challenges faced by SEZ stakeholders, the main actions undertaken to face the crisis and the key lessons learned? What role can SEZs play to ensure a sustainable recovery post-Covid-19?
- How will the AfCFTA agreement impact SEZs? What are the main opportunities and concerns with the regards of the implementation of the agreement?
- In light of the expected changes in international trade and investment patterns, what will be the strategic focus of SEZs in Africa in the years to come?
- What can be the key guidelines for policymakers in the design and implementation of SEZ development programmes, or programmes aimed at improving existing SEZs?

Event manager: Ms Amelia U. Santos-Paulino

Contact email: [Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org](mailto:Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org)

11:30–13:00

## LAUNCHING A GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT (in partnership with WEF)

### Integrating finance and policy to unlock investment flows

Global FDI fell by 35% in 2020, yet at the same time the pool of capital destined for ESG investments grew to almost US\$ 2 trillion. The challenge is therefore not a dearth of capital, but bottlenecks to such capital flowing to productive investments where they are needed. There is thus an opportunity to integrate policy reform and finance mobilization to unlock investment flows given that these are symbiotically connected: policy reforms can attract new capital flows, while the existence of capital waiting to flow can motivate policy reforms.

This high-level session will discuss launching a new Global Alliance to Enable Action on Sustainable Investment to tackle these bottlenecks and grow sustainable investment flows. It would do so by launching national and regional “pathway projects” around the world that systematically identify and address bottlenecks to sustainable investment through public–private collaboration, learning from and building on the successful model of the existing Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, which has been carrying projects to facilitate trade for the past five years.

UNCTAD and the WEF are partnering on this new initiative; other relevant actors are welcome to join and help shape it.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- Which regions, economies, or sectors should be prioritized for projects to be established?
- How should sustainability goals be integrated into project design and implementation?
- What mechanisms are needed to ensure complementarity with ongoing initiatives?

Event manager: Mr. Alexandre Dabbou

Contact email: [Alexandre.Dabbou@unctad.org](mailto:Alexandre.Dabbou@unctad.org)

12:00–14:30

## SECURITIES MARKET REGULATORS AND SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT (in partnership with the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO))

The financial sector has a crucial role to play in helping to support the transition to a more sustainable future. Internationally, financial services firms and capital markets are deepening their consideration of sustainability-related risks, opportunities and impacts, for the benefit of investors and to help mobilize capital to support the transition. The growth of environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing and sustainability-related products has led to several challenges,

including concerns regarding consistency and comparability of available information, and the risk of greenwashing. Since the last World Investment Forum in 2018, regulators and policymakers worldwide have been examining issues relating to sustainable finance in their regulatory and supervisory roles in order to address these challenges and have been ramping up their efforts related to sustainable finance.

Organized in partnership with IOSCO and its Growth and Emerging Markets Committee (GEMC), this regulatory workshop is an opportunity to take stock of the most recent developments in the area of sustainable finance and to assist GEMC jurisdictions in initiating implementation of global standards in this area.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- Overview of recent developments including IOSCO's view related to sustainability-related issuer disclosures, the risk of greenwashing in asset management, and the role of ESG data providers and rating agencies.
- Discussion of expected near-future developments, such as the establishment of the IFRS International Sustainability Standards Board and the path to implementation of the IOSCO recommendations.

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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14:00–16:00

**INTERREGIONAL DIALOGUE ON FACILITATING INVESTMENT IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL PROJECTS** (in partnership with Chinese American IPA, Inc. and the East African Community and Southern African Development Community Secretariats)

Facilitating investment in SDG projects entails a wide range of stakeholders including local governments and regional integration schemes, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), development finance institutions, impact and institutional investors, and community groups whose goals are not always focused on profit maximization. Therefore, investment facilitation in SDG projects is a wide ranging and complex activity that goes beyond dealing with MNEs.

Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has radically changed the international investment landscape and pushed IPAs to change their way of doing business, their sector priorities and to embrace new technologies, while in many cases facing budget constraints. This and the accruing needs for SDG project finance are critical sources of stress for IPAs, adding to the complexity of the situation.

This interregional dialogue will present findings, recommendations, and best practices from UNCTAD capacity-building and advisory work in different developing regions. It will bring together high-level IPA executives and private sector representatives who will discuss the opportunities to facilitate investment in SDG projects, with a focus on the role of regionalization and regional value chains as a key strategy.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- IPA challenges in facilitating investment in SDG projects: pre- and post-pandemic.
- Regional cooperation in facilitating investment in SDG projects.

Event manager: Ms. Natalia Guerra

Contact email: Natalia.Guerra@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

**GLOBAL LEADERS' INVESTMENT SUMMIT II**

**International production and productive capacity: National strategies and global collaboration**

The second 2021 Global Leaders' Investment Summit will address the challenges arising from new technologies, the new industrial revolution and their impact on international production and productive capacity-building. Their consequences are potentially far-reaching for the configuration of GVCs with important implications for development and growth, including the risk of premature deindustrialization in low-income countries. While the changes that this will bring about in international production create many challenges, they can also provide profound opportunities for development and integration in emerging value chains provided countries are prepared for the changes in a holistic manner. National adaptation strategies need to work hand in hand with global efforts aimed at harnessing their full development potential, ensuring that no one is left behind.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How is international production likely to be configured in 2030 and what challenges and opportunities are likely to arise?
- How can governments, the private sector and the international community best prepare economies to take advantages of the opportunities for development emanating from the changing international production landscape and to counter the main challenges?
- What can the United Nations contribute to support these efforts?

Event manager: Mr. Joerg Weber  
Contact email: Joerg.Weber@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

**INTERNATIONAL PROJECT FINANCE****Investment in sustainable recovery**

Description to follow

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14:00–16:30

**HIGH-TECH SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES (in partnership with International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (tbc))**

Science and technology SEZs are an emerging type of SEZ – moving beyond the trade- and labour-intensive manufacturing activities of traditional SEZs. Some economies use science and technology zones to build innovation clusters and advance relevant industries. Others adopt science and technology zones with the aim of promoting economic diversification and technology development. Should all countries pursue the establishment of such zones? How to incorporate such zones into countries' development strategy and make them work for sustainable development? Such questions are relevant for policymakers, zone developers and enterprises alike.

This session will bring together SEZ associations and developers, policymakers and tenant enterprises to a discussion centred on how science and technology zones can contribute to the local economy and sustainable development.

The event will be summarized in the form of a small practical booklet for policymakers to assist them in planning science and technology SEZ.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How can inclusive growth be promoted through linkages and spillovers of science and technology zones?
- How can science and technology zones contribute to sustainable development?
- What are some of the best practices from science and technology zones around the world?

Event manager: Mr. Richard Bolwijn  
Contact email: Richard.Bolwijn@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

**DIGITAL GLOBALIZATION: THE NEW FRONTIER FOR MULTINATIONAL ENTERPRISES (organized by AIB)**

What is the evidence for digital globalization and what direction is it taking? Is it friend or foe for sustainable post-pandemic recovery and internationalization?

**Issues to be addressed:**

- Reassessment of the “conventional role” of foreign investment and MNEs for sustainable development.
- Potential impact on SDGs.
- The shifting national and international policy space in an era of digital globalization.
- Are there lessons from our international business research and evidence base to help identify smarter policies in light of opportunities and threats of digital globalization?

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino  
Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

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14:30–16:30



## **GENDER EQUALITY IN LISTED CORPORATIONS** (in partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC))

### **Embedding sustainability into derivatives**

Gender equality is a top priority on the international sustainability agenda. Businesses are improving their practices, developing public–private partnerships, and investing resources to achieve gender equality. While it is increasingly recognized that advancing gender equality through business operations and value chains means better talent, higher productivity, more customers, and a stronger bottom line, progress remains slow. To achieve the SDGs, the private sector needs to continue to advance at a fast pace.

Stock exchanges are uniquely positioned to influence their markets in a way few other actors can. To create positive peer pressure among exchanges, to actively promote gender parity in their markets and address this issue directly with companies, a newly released ranking of stock exchanges based on their issuers' board gender diversity will be the base for discussions.

#### **Issues to be addressed:**

- What role can exchanges play in promoting gender parity?
- What role does regulation play in achieving gender equality?
- How can exchanges assist in building up a sufficient career pipeline for women to be promoted in companies?
- How can exchanges actively increase female participation on their issuers' boards?
- What are the main challenges that markets face when promoting diversity?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact email: [Anthony.Miller@unctad.org](mailto:Anthony.Miller@unctad.org)

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15:30–17:30

## THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL TAXATION AND INVESTMENT

### Evaluating the Implications of changes promoted by the G20

Description to follow

Event manager: Mr. Bruno Casella

Contact email: Bruno.Casella@unctad.org

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16:30–18:00

## TALKING BUSINESS

### Latin America

An interactive session in which top government officials from Latin America showcase investment opportunities in their countries.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- High-level policymakers present their countries' investment plans, policies and opportunities, emphasizing key actions taken by government to improve the business climate and highlighting strategic investment interests to achieve the SDGs.
- The session provides a chance for business to explore new investment horizons and interact with country representatives through Q&As.

Event manager: Ms. Chantal Dupasquier

Contact email: Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org

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16:30–18:00

## SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES PART I (in partnership with the World Union of Small and Medium Enterprises)

### Leveraging the developmental impact

SMEs are the backbone of economies around the world, yet relatively few engage in international trade, and even fewer invest abroad. International trade and investment activities benefit productivity and can bring gains for both home and host economies, including the achievement of the SDGs. The new industrial revolution, the continued rise of emerging players, and the growing importance of GVCs are changing that landscape, rapidly making it imperative to take a fresh look at FDI and other forms of internationalization of SMEs directly.

This high-level session will bring together policymakers, business sector representatives, researchers and practitioners, to discuss the patterns and development impact of internationalization of SMEs at the micro and macro levels. Panellists will also explore ways to document the development impact on internationalization of SMEs, based on selected case studies. They will highlight special issues including the gender angle and the role of migrant and diaspora investors; identify the policy challenges for internationalization of SMEs in home and host countries; explore access to finance, business intelligence, digital technologies and skills, business and investment facilitation and investment promotion; and suggest ways for policy guidance, especially in terms of eliminating any policy bias favouring large multinationals. A particularly important aspect to be explored is the role of SMEs in South–South and intraregional FDI.

The session will lay the ground for a fully fledged and policy-oriented UNCTAD research project looking at the issues raised at the round table in a systematic way.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- What drives FDI and other forms of internationalization by SMEs?
- What can FDI by SMEs contribute to the development and international competitiveness of home and host countries?

- How can SMEs contribute to global or regional supply chain development via linkages?
- Are the gender, social and environmental practices of SME investors different from the practices of other investors?
- What are the main policy challenges for SMEs? Is there a policy bias towards large companies? If yes, in which areas, and how can they be dealt with? What kind of policy guidance can be provided and what role should UNCTAD play in it?
- What are the main new challenges that SME investors face during the pandemic? What kind of new policy challenges does the pandemic pose for policymakers to support SME investors?

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino  
 Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

16:30–18:30

## MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE ON INVESTMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As the world slowly emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic, a significant ratcheting up of investment will be required to revert income losses, increase inequalities and vulnerabilities, and boost employment. To achieve sustainable recovery and build forward better, governments, private sector and the international community will need to boost investment not only in productive capacity but also in infrastructure and social sectors. During the session, ministers and heads of international organizations will consider appropriate policy frameworks for rebuilding resilient international production networks and global supply chains and propose an action plan for investing in sustainable recovery.

### Issues to be addressed:

- What should be countries' key priorities in national and international investment policymaking in the coming years?
- What approaches are countries adopting specifically to accelerate investment in priority sectors for a sustainable recovery?

Event manager: Mr. Joerg Weber  
 Contact email: Joerg.Weber@unctad.org

18:00–19:30

## SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES – PART II (IN PARTNERSHIP WITH EIBA AND AIB)

### Leveraging the developmental impact

The aim of part II of this session is to contribute to the understanding about the internationalization strategies of SMEs, the opportunities they can seize and the challenges they face. Organized in partnership with the European International Business Academy and AIB, the round table offers cross-country perspectives on the internationalization of SMEs. The outcome of the round table will feed into a broader research project on the topic coordinated by UNCTAD. Academics, practitioners and policymakers will provide new insights on how SMEs invest in foreign markets and perform other international activities. Discussions will aim to shed new light on the essential role of SMEs in providing jobs, creating value, advancing innovation and contributing to sustainable development.

The round table will aim to identify major trends and key factors of success in the internationalization strategies of SMEs in both developed and developing countries. The insights and discussions will be based on surveys, case studies and the international experience of selected firms. This round table will also formulate selected policy recommendations for policymakers to improve the monitoring and the facilitation of the internationalization of SMEs.

### Issues to be addressed:

- In which regions and countries do SMEs invest? What are their objectives and strategies?
- What are the main factors that can lead to successful internationalization?
- What determines the mode of entry in individual host countries (FDI, trade, contractual arrangements, etc.)?
- What is the impact of SME investment on local communities in the host countries?
- Through which channels, and how, do SMEs contribute to the development of host economies?

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino  
 Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

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18:30–20:00

## EMPRETEC WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARDS

### Stories of resilience and success

UNCTAD created the Empretec Women in Business Award in 2008 as an acknowledgment of the great achievements of women entrepreneurs trained by the Empretec programme. The award, granted every two years, has made a real impact on the lives of past recipients. It has improved their access to further training, widened their markets and resources and boosted their motivation to continue growing their enterprises. It has also helped these women become role models in their communities. Recipients have excelled in developing innovative business ideas, providing jobs, and increasing incomes in their communities.

The seventh edition of the Empretec Women in Business Awards was held virtually on 10 December 2020 and recognized the contributions of inspiring women entrepreneurs trained by the Empretec programme. The Women in Business Awards 2020 was dedicated to the theme of “resilience” in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, which had a negative impact on women entrepreneurs given their overrepresentation in sectors particularly affected by lockdowns, i.e., retail trade, hotels, restaurants and education; and existing structural inequalities including unpaid care work, and limited access to finance, technology, markets, networks and social protection.

With the aim of boosting entrepreneurship motivation and spirit, and women empowerment, and to contribute to resilient and inclusive post-Covid-19 resurgence, UNCTAD gathered compelling stories from twenty women (selected among the +100 finalists of the seventh Empretec Women in Business Awards) to share their success stories. The stories, published on UNCTAD social media and websites, are told by the finalists and reveal each entrepreneur’s personal journey.

### Issues to be addressed:

- Women entrepreneurship: Growing markets, revenues and profits, creating employment and innovating with inspirational management and leadership style.
- Making women-led enterprises more resilient: Competencies that allow businesses to survive and grow.
- Official launch of Empretec Women in Business Awards 2022 (eighth edition): UNCTAD will announce the call for nominations to all Empretec centres for the awards.

Event managers: Mr. Lorenzo Tosini

Contact emails: [Lorenzo.Tosini@unctad.org](mailto:Lorenzo.Tosini@unctad.org)

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18:30–20:00

## DAILY E-GATHERING

Description to follow

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18:30–20:00

## ACADEMIC TRACK DAILY ROUNDUP (AIB and academic partners)

The daily roundup sessions will address, through an academic lens, the key issues and themes debated at the Forum.

Interactive networking opportunities to share, collaborate and peer learning will be provided during and between sessions.

Event manager: Ms Amelia U. Santos-Paulino

Contact email: [Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org](mailto:Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org)

## THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021

08:00–9:00

## GREEN ISLAMIC FINANCE (GREEN SUKUK)

Islamic finance has witnessed a rapid growth in recent years. In 2019, the value of Islamic banking assets was estimated to be around US\$ 1.99 trillion. Within this area of finance there is growing interest in environmentally themed products. "Green Sukuk" are Shari'ah-compliant investments in renewable energy and other environmental assets. Proceeds are used

to finance construction, to refinance construction debt, or to finance the payment of a government-granted green subsidy. They may involve securitizing future income cash flows from ring-fenced projects or assets with specific criteria attached.

This session will feature a discussion with representatives of stock exchanges that are innovating in the area of green Islamic finance, investors and standard setters in the area. The session will chart the progress to date and seek to provide insight on the future evolution of this area of finance.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What are stock exchanges doing to promote green Islamic finance?
- What are the key products in this area and what is the forecast for new products?
- What is needed to ensure the Islamic green finance ecosystem grows in the future and how can exchanges and regulators assist?
- What are key challenges that need to be addressed?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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08:00–13:00

## **WORLD ASSOCIATION OF INVESTMENT PROMOTION AGENCIES WORLD INVESTMENT CONFERENCE**

The twenty-fifth WAIPA World Investment Conference will be held alongside the UNCTAD World Investment Forum . In the wake of Covid-19 it will discuss, under the theme “Regeneration of IPAs in a new decade”, the crucial importance of IPAs during and after the pandemic that impacted lives and economies globally. Bringing together IPAs from all over the world, government officials, development sector leaders, decision makers from the private sector and academia relevant to FDI policy and strategy, the World Investment Conference will, during several panels, review the past two and a half decades of investment promotion, debate the rise of digitalization and the important of data-driven investment promotion, and examine how investors and locations alike benefit from IPAs and how IPAs are able to highlight their role further as a critical element in the promotion and facilitation of investments.

The annual meeting of WAIPA is comprised of an institutional portion and the conference itself. The General Assembly of WAIPA members (i.e., the institutional portion) precedes the WAIPA World Investment Conference. At this year’s General Assembly elections for the WAIPA Steering Committee will be held. The Steering Committee is the executive organ of the General Assembly and it shall consist of 14 members of WAIPA, 11 of which are elected by the General Assembly as directors, in addition to the WAIPA president and the two vice-presidents. Prior to the election of the new Steering Committee, the current Steering Committee will convene for a meeting.

### **Session/Panel 1: A quarter century of investment promotion: Success stories and the future outlook**

An overwhelming majority of IPAs were created after 1990. This surge of institutions specializing in investment promotion in the 1990s also influenced the creation of WAIPA under the auspices of UNCTAD in 1995. Slightly over a quarter century later we look at how the work of IPAs has changed, with agencies emerging and disappearing over the last few years; what international institutions can do to assist agencies; how their work has been impacted by Covid-19; and how IPAs can even expand their crucial role in promoting and facilitating investments into their countries or regions.

Potential speakers: Leaders of WAIPA Consultative Committee.

### **Session/Panel 2: Data-driven investment promotion: How data influences the world of IPAs**

As in most areas of life, data, their management and use, are becoming increasingly important issues for investment promotion. Agencies are helped to prove the value of their work by referring to data collected on FDI, and at the same time data helps agencies to take decisions more effectively and even to create leads for further investments. This panel will look at how important the collection of accurate data is and how IPAs can use data to their benefit.

### **Session/Panel 3: Business-oriented IPAs: High-end services and added value for investors**

IPAs are an important link between business and governments. As agencies are usually linked to the government, they understand the dynamics of government structures; however, being in contact with investors on a daily basis, it is crucial for agencies and their employees to speak the same language as the investor. This unique position has resulted in IPAs becoming of vital importance during the Covid-19 pandemic, that has imposed a difficult situation on many companies. This panel will examine how investors see the functions of IPAs, how governments may utilize IPAs more strategically and effectively, and how IPAs are able to highlight their role further as valuable elements in the promotion and facilitation of investments.

### **Strengthening IPA Advocacy Services 2021 Awards (in partnership with the World Bank Group (WBG))**

WAIPA together with WBG have jointly launched a global competition to find and award international best practices of IPAs advocating for reforms to improve the investment ecosystem for foreign investors (FDI).

Through this competition, WAIPA and WBG aim to emphasize the key benefits of IPA advocacy services. The competition will collect and disseminate IPA advocacy success stories and raise awareness in a way that hopefully inspires more IPAs to play a stronger role in advocating for reforms.

The winning IPAs will be selected by a jury consisting of delegates from WAIPA, WBG, UNCTAD and WEF and the awards will be presented during the twenty-fifth WAIPA World Investment Conference.

### **Launch of the WAIPA Business Advisory Board**

Since the establishment of WAIPA, the idea of creating a body that brings private sector expertise to the WAIPA member IPAs has been fully supported by the Steering Committee as well as the General Assembly of WAIPA. In line with WAIPA's strategy issued by its General Assembly, the proposal for a private sector advisory body has gathered momentum and led to the decision of the Steering Committee, in April 2020, to recommend the establishment of a Business Advisory Board (BAB).

The private sector will play an important role in the work of the WAIPA in establishing best practice and helping IPAs to enhance their corporate capacity and to provide the best possible assistance to the private sector before, during and after their investments. The private sector understands the need to put the United Nations SDGs on its priority list, and that projects can generate sound rates of return and at the same time have the best socioeconomic impacts. The private sector's main role in WAIPA will thus be performed within the WAIPA BAB.

It is intended that the BAB will be formally introduced at the twenty-fifth WAIPA World Investment Conference.

Event manager: Mr. Paul Wessendorp

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09:00–10:30

## **TALKING BUSINESS**

### **Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

An interactive session in which top government officials from Eastern Europe and Central Asia showcase investment opportunities in their countries.

#### **Issues to be addressed:**

- High-level policymakers present their countries' investment plans, policies and opportunities, emphasizing key actions taken by government to improve the business climate and highlighting strategic investment interests to achieve the SDGs.
- The session provides an opportunity for business representatives to explore new investment horizons and interact with country representatives through Q&As.

Event manager: Ms. Chantal Dupasquier

Contact email: [Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org](mailto:Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org)

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09:30–10:30

## **DECENT WORK AND SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES: AFRICA FOCUS (in partnership with the International Labour Organization)**

### **Making SEZs work for decent employment in Africa**

Special economic zones in their various forms are expanding globally, especially in developing countries. According to UNCTAD estimates, there are more than 5 000 SEZs in the world with upwards of 90% of these in developing countries. Since many first-generation SEZs often pursued an investment-attraction strategy centred on low wages and lax employment conditions, zones have been criticized for enabling the violation of worker rights across a range of dimensions. Although some newly created zones are going against this trend, widespread adaptation of decent employment standards in SEZs remains elusive.

Research by UNCTAD presents the economic case for zones to switch from a narrow focus on cost advantages to becoming champions of social responsibility and sustainable development. Yet follow-up research by the International Labour Organization and UNCTAD shows that significant awareness-raising and consensus-building are still needed to transform

SEZs into facilitators of decent work. The *Handbook on Special Economic Zones in Africa*, developed by UNCTAD, highlights best practices and puts forward policy recommendations on how to build SEZs orientated towards development and sustainability in Africa, particularly in light of the new trade and investment environment on the continent following the full implementation of the AfCFTA, which could pave the way for achieving decent work outcomes.

This session will focus specifically on the role of SEZs in Africa, with a panel discussion on how zones can create decent jobs, attract investment, support youth employment, promote gender equality in the workplace and establish strong linkages that build stable and prosperous local communities outside the zone.

The main objective of this event will be to provide a forum for experts and participants to exchange views on policy measures which enable zones to derive value from adequate labour standards and decent wages. The summary document from deliberations will steer the development of a practical guide for policymakers with tangible steps on how to incorporate decent work in SEZs.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What are the current approaches to integrating decent work into SEZ development objectives and operations?
- How can decent work standards enhance efficiency of SEZ operations and attract more investors?
- What are some of the best practices from SEZs around the world?

Event managers: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino and Mr. Anthony Miller

Contact emails: [Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org](mailto:Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org), [Anthony.Miller@unctad.org](mailto:Anthony.Miller@unctad.org)

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09:00–11:00

## **PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS BEYOND COVID-19 (in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO))**

### **Building productive capacity for essential medicine and medical equipment in low and middle-income countries (LMICs)**

The current pandemic has highlighted the exposure of LMICs to global vaccine supply shortages, despite efforts by the industry to increase manufacturing capacity, including in large developing countries. This challenge extends well beyond Covid-19. Routine vaccination programmes need to be maintained in LMICs to avoid increased mortality, especially among children. Building productive capacity in developing countries for vaccines beyond Covid-19 could make an important contribution to equitable access and pandemic preparedness in LMICs. Increased global cooperation is essential to achieve this goal.

At a World Investment Forum satellite event on 3 March 2021, UNCTAD in partnership with WHO launched a series of consultations with policymakers, investors, vaccine manufacturers and technology providers on how to coordinate and promote investment in LMIC-based vaccine productive capacity. The event involved major actors in the international Covid-19 response such as, inter alia, the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, IFC, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the African Development Bank and the Serum Institute of India. The purpose of this event is to report on these consultations, take stock of partnerships to date and discuss the way forward in intensifying partnerships for vaccine productive capacity.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How can multilateral partnerships help mobilize impact investment in LMIC productive capacity?
- How can LMIC policy frameworks be improved to promote foreign and domestic investment in pharmaceutical production?
- Can and should the current consultations led by UNCTAD and WHO be transformed into a more formal partnership?

Event manager: Mr. Ermias Biadgleng

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10:00–11:00

## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (in partnership with the International Corporate Governance Network (ICGN))**

Companies and investors have a mutual responsibility to preserve and enhance long-term corporate value. In doing so they must focus not only on aspects relating to a company's long-term financial value, but also on factors impacting the health of society and the environment. In essence this is about "the governance of sustainability" and the role of the board in

overseeing the integration of human and natural capital management in alignment with a company's purpose and long-term strategy.

This session will cover recent developments, including the integration of sustainability issues into the ICGN's Global Governance Principles during its recent update. The discussion will bring together key stakeholders in the area of corporate governance including regulators, issuers and investors.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What are the sustainability duties of corporate boards?
- How should companies clarify their responsibility to promote the success of the company to preserve and enhance share value, while also contributing to a sustainable economy, society and environment?
- How should boards expand risk oversight to include social and environmental systemic events such as ecological degradation and social inequality?
- What is the board's role in addressing climate change, and assessing business impacts and how the company can meet the needs of a net zero economy?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller  
Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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11:00–12:00

**LEVERAGING FINANCE, CAPITAL AND POLICIES FOR CLIMATE ACTION IN EMERGING MARKETS: THE ROLE OF BANKS** (in partnership with the Official Monetary and Financial Institutions Forum (OMFIF))

Central banks are becoming increasingly involved in green finance. Indicators of this growing interest include the creation of the Network of Central Banks and Supervisors for Greening the Financial System and the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosure established by the Financial Stability Board, which was chaired by then Bank of England Governor Mark Carney. Environmental factors are increasingly seen as material issues by investors who are incorporating such factors into portfolio allocation and risk analysis.

This session will gather central banks, regulators and experts from around the world to discuss the role that central banks can play in greening the financial system and prospects for harmonized international approaches. It will facilitate dialogue among central banks and regulators to improve clarity on the role central banks can play in green finance, as well as review progress to date and identify future challenges.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- The role central banks can play in mobilizing green finance and supervising climate related risks.
- Assessing central banks' capability to influence and improve green finance: Monetary policy and enhancing supervision.
- Understanding central bank mandates in the era of climate change: How to overcome challenges of managing financial stability and promoting green investment.

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller  
Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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12:00–14:30

**TASK FORCE ON CLIMATE-RELATED FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES IMPLEMENTATION AND CLIMATE ACTION** (in partnership with IFC and the Bloomberg Foundation)

Climate change is a key point on the global political agenda in 2021 and politicians, regulators and financial market actors have started to discuss how to address the issue with the means of the market and how to best help companies to become more climate resilient. As global financial markets take steps towards better integrating climate risk and opportunities into pricing mechanisms, disclosure provides the bedrock for progress in the pursuit of a more sustainable global economy.

There is a growing demand for decision-useful, climate-related financial information in annual reports and financial filings that has led to an increased need for issuers to update their knowledge on climate-related risks and reporting frameworks. Following this same trend, there are rapid advances associated with regulation and policy frameworks aiming to support climate resiliency in markets. A number of leading economists and experts see climate change as representing the greatest commercial opportunities of our time. Those companies and countries most effectively navigating the transition to net zero



and identifying the opportunities in providing solutions will not only be more resilient but will also achieve more sustainable growth.

Stock exchanges are uniquely positioned to advance climate disclosure through market guidance. They can support consistency and standardization of information that enables both local and global progress in climate reporting and use of climate-related data. Stock exchanges' infrastructure, networks and experience can contribute to addressing climate change via capital markets. Working with and learning from their peers can play an essential role in achieving climate-resiliency of our markets.

A newly published United Nations SSE model guidance on the Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) adoption, assisting exchanges' markets to implement the TCFD recommendations, as well as a new action plan, showing how exchanges can lead by example to make markets more climate resilient, are going to be the foundation for the session's discussion.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- Why is climate disclosure important?
- How can exchanges assist in implementing TCFD disclosure among their issuers?
- How can climate disclosure guidance be integrated in the wider context of exchanges' ESG guidance.
- What can exchanges do to lead by example?
- How do markets connect climate disclosure to investment?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller  
Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

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13:00–14:00

## **LAUNCHING LUNCHEON OF THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES (GASEZ) (in partnership with regional and global associations of SEZs)**

### **GASEZ: A global solution to sustainability of SEZs**

Special economic zones are widely used globally as an important policy tool, making significant contributions to growth and development in many economies. However, they are also regarded as privileged enclaves with negative social and environmental impacts. To optimize their development impact, a global exchange of experiences and good practices and a common platform that brings together financing partners, SEZ developers, host countries, IPAs and outward IPAs is much needed.

Key participants of the luncheon will include officials from regional and global associations of SEZs, individual SEZ representatives who are competing for the United Nations SEZs Award, as well as national SEZ authorities, financing partners and major SEZ developers. GASEZ partners will introduce the institutional framework and strategic plans for the alliance.

The luncheon will officially launch GASEZ. It will also create opportunities for networking with partners at international and regional levels for future work.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- Official launching and promotion of GASEZ to the global SEZs community.
- Networking and identifying possible partnership opportunities of GASEZ with other stakeholders.
- Discussion on strategic approaches and activities of GASEZ with major partners.

Event manager: Mr. Richard Bolwijn  
Contact email: Richard.Bolwijn@unctad.org

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14:00–15:30

## **TALKING BUSINESS**

### **Africa**

An interactive session in which top government officials from Africa showcase investment opportunities in their countries.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- High-level policymakers present their countries' investment plans, policies and opportunities, emphasizing key actions taken by government to improve the business climate and highlighting strategic investment interests to achieve the SDGs.
- The session provides a chance for business to explore new investment horizons and interact with country representatives through Q&As.

Event manager: Ms. Chantal Dupasquier  
 Contact email: Chantal.Dupasquier@unctad.org

14:30–15:30

### **SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT AND NATURAL CAPITAL (in partnership with Planet Tracker)**

Humans often take for granted that natural elements of their environment, which are relevant to sustain their operations, remain available and unchanged. However, with a growing awareness of climate-related risks to businesses' operations, the awareness of dependencies on natural elements has grown as well. Whether it is the reliance of fishing companies on oceanic resources, the dependency on wood or clean water, most non-financial companies depend on natural resources to a greater or lesser extent. Companies also need to be aware of the impact their operations have on the natural elements around them, especially if they are using resources prone to slow regrowth or scarcity.

Nature dependency does not only have an impact on actors in the real economy and non-financial companies. Apart from being subject to their own nature-related risks, financial sector companies, through the way of their involvement with non-financial actors and through their investments (especially in commodities, either direct or through derivatives), are also subject to the nature-related risks of the real economy.

As such, it is important for both non-financial and financial actors to become aware of these risks. Disclosure can help to inform investors and introduce a positive pressure on companies to act responsibly. In September 2020, an international financial sector-led informal working group was established to plan a Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures, with the goal of helping companies to identify, assess, manage and report their impacts and dependencies on nature.

This session will bring together key players in the research and reporting efforts on natural capital to discuss the role of investors, issues and exchanges and explore how exchanges may be able to raise awareness of these risks and opportunities in their own markets.

#### **Issues to be addressed:**

- What are nature-related risks and opportunities and how can companies find out theirs?
- How can exchanges assist in raising awareness for nature-related risks and opportunities among their issuers?
- How can the investment community as well as issuers be educated and informed about nature-related risks and the impact of their investments?

Event manager: Mr. Anthony Miller  
 Contact email: Anthony.Miller@unctad.org

14:00–16:30

### **GLOBAL INVESTMENT GAME CHANGERS SUMMIT**

#### **Investment and NIR4.0: Development implications**

The Global Investment Game Changers Summit will provide a platform to global leaders from business and government to present their vision for the future of investment and sustainable development with a special focus on the new technologies and business models that will shape the post-Covid-19 era. The Game Changers Summit will shed light on how businesses and policymakers are reimagining investments in key sectors of tomorrow, including digital health and pharmaceuticals, edtech, retail digitalization, clean energy, and telecommunications; and how they plan to build forward better, while they cope with the immediate disruptions caused by the pandemic.

The Summit will focus on “out of the box” thinking that can transform the world we live in and rewrite the rules and policies that govern it. Mobilizing investment and channelling it towards the SDGs is more urgent than ever before and requires bold and concrete solutions for a better future for all. The event will gather pioneers, leaders and visionaries who have successfully remodelled established policy, business and industry practice in their respective fields to create innovative business and governance models that reconcile economic success and sustainable objectives in the post-pandemic world.

#### **Issues to be discussed:**

- Technological change: Harnessing AI and blockchain for boosting productive capacities in developing countries.
- Health change: Ensuring equal and sustainable access to health care.
- Environmental change: Accelerating the shift to renewable energy, sustainable production and consumption.
- Social change: Reducing inequality and creating economic value through decent work and labour rights.
- Business change: Making the case for the company as a social enterprise, from philanthropy to b-corps.
- Governance change: Reimagining the role of regulation in a new era of globalization.

Event manager: Mr. Massimo Meloni and Mr. Hamed El-Kady  
 Contact email: Massimo.Meloni@unctad.org; Hamed.El.Kady@unctad.org

14:00–16:30

## FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

### Leveraging accounting and reporting tools for improving micro, small and medium-sized enterprises' (MSMEs) access to finance for post-Covid-19 recovery

The Covid-19 crisis is hitting MSMEs especially hard. Access to finance is of paramount importance for the survival of firms. The promotion of accounting standards that are both aligned with good practice and take into consideration the specific challenges of MSMEs contribute to improvements in access to finance. Services or skills in setting and maintaining proper accounts and generating meaningful financial statements can enhance MSMEs' chances of accessing financial resources during a global crisis. Thus, increased financial literacy could significantly facilitate MSMEs' access to financial aid in the post Covid-19 resurgence.

To foster the development of MSMEs and to facilitate their access to finance, joint efforts of international experts and leading authorities from the public and private sectors are required. This specialized event will provide a forum for sharing experiences and envisage strategies to deal with effects of the Covid-19 crisis and MSMEs' obstacles and needs in accessing finance. The discussions will build on existing standards and tools, including those developed by ISAR, such as those contained in *SMEGA – Accounting and Financial Reporting Guidelines for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises – Level 3 Guidance*, and *Accounting Training Manual for MSMEs*.

#### Issues to be addressed:

- Impacts of Covid-19 on MSMEs: The global pandemic has had the worst impact on MSMEs of any sector and tested their resilience, while also triggering creative solutions to keep their activities afloat.
- Facilitating access to financing and making MSMEs more resilient.
- Financial literacy and accounting for MSMEs as key factors for accessing financing and enabling MSMEs' survival and even growth during the pandemic.
- Financial inclusion and policy support for MSMEs: UNCTAD will present tools and materials to support access to financing and discuss effective and practical government policies for MSMEs.

Event manager: Mr. Richard Bolwijn and Mr. Yoseph Asmelash  
 Contact email: Richard.Bolwijn@unctad.org; Yoseph.Asmelash@unctad.org

14:00–16:30

## TRIPARTITE DIALOGUE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS, POLICYMAKERS AND BUSINESS LEADERS (in partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union)

### Channelling investment into sustainable development

The Covid-19 pandemic will have a long-lasting impact on the socioeconomic environment. In particular, it will pose considerable challenges to sustainable development, especially as the need for investment in development increases. As national legislatures, parliaments have a vital role to play in enabling, promoting and channelling investment in sustainable development and in setting appropriate regulatory frameworks. This extends to a broad range of sectors and policy areas.

Important considerations in this context are:

- The need to ensure that the implementation of nationally agreed sustainable development objectives is adequately financed and meets the needs of the people;
- The need for strong parliamentary oversight of governance issues, notably concerning issues related to investment regulation.

In this session parliamentarians from around the world will join in a multi-stakeholder dialogue with business executives, ministers and heads of international organizations to discuss and debate how legislators can help create an enabling environment for sustainable private investment for sustainable development in the post-crisis era.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How can the interaction between parliaments, government leaders and the private sector be improved to better deliver on sustainable development?
- What are the main challenges for investment for sustainable development at national level and how can this partnership contribute to overcome them?
- What are the global policy imperatives for sustainable financing for development in the post Covid-19 pandemic context?

Event manager: Mr. Alexandre Dabbou  
Contact email: Alexandre.Dabbou@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

**FUTURE PROOFING SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS IN THE POST PANDEMIC ERA (organized by AIB)**

What is the impetus of the pandemic on trends and issues of sustainability, resilience and changes in the landscape of GVCs, regional value chains and coordinated national value chains; what is the role of good international business research and what are the perspectives for this area? What is the role of GVCs for sustainable recovery, where does it leave developing countries now that banked on participation in GVCs, what possible answers can our international business research provide for policymakers and practitioners? What are the conditions that facilitate or impede the global diffusion of sustainable practices by multinational corporations?

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino  
Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

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14:00–16:30

**THE FUTURE OF RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT AND PRODUCTION**

The session will feature an agenda-setting academic panel that will discuss themes based on the overall Forum and the direction for future research and policy analysis.

Event manager: Ms Amelia U. Santos-Paulino  
Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

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16:30–18:00

**ROUND TABLE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL INVESTMENT MONITORING**

**Improving data on investment in the SDGs**

As we enter the last ten years of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, effective monitoring of investment flows in the SDGs has assumed increased importance. In line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which calls for high-quality disaggregated data, monitoring and follow-up as an essential input for decision-making to support the SDGs, UNCTAD in 2019 launched the *SDG Investment Trends Monitor*, which compiles data on current levels of spending in the main SDG sectors.

The assessment of the *SDG Investment Monitor* of current data and monitoring capacity shows that timely and harmonized data for investment levels in relevant SDG sectors should be considered a matter of urgency for better planning and cooperation among all stakeholders. The *Monitor* also demonstrated that there is currently a massive data gap on investment in the SDGs, which weakens our ability to monitor investment progress and needs.

**In collaboration with other international partners (international organizations, governments and NGOs) the session will discuss ways and means to fill the gaps in measuring investment needs to monitor SDG progress. The session will discuss some best practices in data monitoring in selected SDG sectors and countries.**

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What are the challenges and obstacles in SDG investment data collection and monitoring? Does the focus on capital investment match financing requirements on the ground to achieve SDGs?

- Can we make the existing data sets more relevant to the SDGs to improve monitoring of investment and financial flows into developing economies?
- What actions can be taken to increase the coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders to improve the SDG investment data monitoring?
- How can the reporting for private and public investment in the SDGs be harmonized in a better manner?

Event manager: Mr. Astrit Sulstarova  
 Contact email: Astrit.Sulstarova@unctad.org

16:30–18:30

## MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY POST-COVID-19

The UNCTAD Ministerial Round Table on Entrepreneurship will bring together international experts and leading authorities from the public and private sectors to discuss the future of entrepreneurship policies in a post-Covid-19 resurgence. Experts will share practical experiences and discuss new areas of policy initiatives that could help countries and MSMEs surmount the current crisis and lead them into a long-term green, inclusive and resilient recovery in support of the SDGs.

During the Covid-19 crisis many entrepreneurs have had to look for creative solutions to keep afloat. For many of them, the growing use of digital technologies has meant lower costs, greater access to markets, better coordination, higher integration and productivity gains.

Many industries have experienced growth since the onset of Covid-19 pandemic. Examples include enterprise technology services, home entertainment, artificial intelligence, robotics, telemedicine, hospitals, medical equipment suppliers, e-commerce retailing, e-learning, courier pick-up and delivery services, cybersecurity, and sanitary product manufacturing, among others.

Within this context, the Ministerial Round Table will provide a forum for international experts and leading authorities from the public and private sectors to share their experiences and envisage strategies to deal with the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on MSMEs and the entrepreneurship sector. In particular, the round table will seek to provide ideas on post-Covid-19 employment recovery and the re-opening of businesses that were forced into lockdowns.

### Issues to be addressed:

- What policies can help MSMEs overcome the effects of Covid-19, such as macro policies for unemployment alleviation and re-opening of closed businesses? What is the role of regional and international cooperation?
- What institutional changes are necessary to accommodate and improve on the innovations that occurred during the pandemic?
- Has the pandemic affected MSMEs' access to finance? Can increased digitalization help provide alternative sources of finance?
- Will Covid-19 reshape global supply chains, and what can entrepreneurs do to adapt? What policies can help improve market access (both domestic and international) for MSMEs?
- What will the increased use of digital communication technologies (Zoom, social media, teleworking, etc.) mean for employment skills development? Lessons learned from the UNCTAD Entrepreneurship Policy Framework 2.0 Revision and Empretec programme will be discussed.

Event manager: Mr. Alexandre Dabbou  
 Contact email: Alexandre.Dabbou@unctad.org

16:30–18:30

## HOW DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CAN WIN THE DIGITAL GOVERNMENT RACE

Covid-19 has accelerated the shift to online government services with positive results:

- Benin is now the fastest place in the world to start a business (in under two hours).
- El Salvador's online accounting tool automatically generates all tax and social security filings.
- Bhutan uses blockchain technology to register and deliver licences to cottage industries in its most remote valleys.

The data show the biggest winners to be small entrepreneurs, particularly women, young people and rural populations who no longer have to queue at multiple government offices or cope with lengthy and difficult-to-understand procedures in order to enter the formal economy.

This session will explore the latest developments, discuss how more developing countries can go digital, and identify the best way to impact vulnerable populations.

Event manager: Mr. Frank Grozel  
Contact email: Frank.Grozel@unctad.org

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16:30–18:30

## **T20 AND INVESTMENT: A CALL FOR INVESTING IN PEOPLE, PLANET AND PROSPERITY (in partnership with the Italian Institute for International Political Studies and Think20 (T-20))**

Following a year of unprecedented crisis, the international community has entered 2021 with a firm determination to build back, and the ambition to do it better than before.

It is in this spirit that the Italian presidency of the G-20 has been taking on and fulfilling its mandate, leading the international community towards the develop a shared vision to shape a brighter future for all. A vision that is summarized by the three pillars: people, planet and prosperity.

The role of public and private investment in this project is critical. While policies still need to remain supportive until the recovery is firmly established, the focus should gradually shift from current expenditures and tax breaks to investment, both public and private, for sustainable recovery – investing FOR people, planet and prosperity. The private sector is not only critical for financing sustainable recovery, it must also promote sustainable business practices to protect and enhance its human, natural and economic capital – investing IN people, planet and prosperity.

This session builds on the unique body of knowledge developed by the T-20, shaping the G-20 agenda across the 3 pillars of people, planet and prosperity, 11 thematic task forces and 120 policy areas.

The main objectives are:

- To take stock of the works of the G-20 and of the challenges ahead, towards the end of the term for the Italian presidency.
- To “walk the thought” and policy frontier of the economic challenges covered by the T-20.
- To highlight the role that investment can play to address these challenges.

### **Issues to be addressed**

- Green investments and the public–private link.
- Impact of digitalization on GVCs and services.
- New perspectives of joint public–private financing to support green and sustainable infrastructures.
- Women and the youth: Enhancing labour market access and job opportunities for vulnerable groups.

Event manager: Mr. Bruno Casella  
Contact email: Bruno.Casella@unctad.org

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18:30–20:00

## **DAILY E-GATHERING**

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18:30–20:00

## **ISAR HONOURS**

### **Promoting good practices and initiatives in reporting by companies on their contributions to the SDGs**

ISAR Honours aims to raise awareness and facilitate the dissemination of national and international best practices on sustainability and SDG reporting. It supports the public and private sector efforts on enhancing the quality and comparability of companies’ reporting on their contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and its usefulness for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs. The Honours recognize policy, institutional or capacity-building initiatives, publicly available at the national and international levels, that encourage and assist enterprises to publish data on their contribution to SDG implementation; and that assist governments in collecting such data for their SDG-monitoring needs. The Honours especially encourage proposals from developing countries to recognize their efforts in the area and facilitate improvements in companies’ reporting on sustainability issues, including by promoting the integration of sustainability information, such as ESG issues, into companies’ reporting cycle.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- Highlighting new developments as well as existing national, regional and international best practice in the area of sustainability and SDG reporting.
- Acknowledging honourees in the national and international assessment categories, as well as recognition of leading initiative by the special nomination from UNCTAD.
- Addressing the measurement of SDG indicator 12.6.1, which is related to sustainability reporting as part of the global monitoring framework of the SDGs.
- Celebrating the honoured initiatives as well as raising awareness of their profiles and achievements.

Event manager: Ms. Elena Botvina  
 Contact email: Elena.Botvina@unctad.org

18:30–20:00

### **ACADEMIC TRACK DAILY ROUNDUP (AIB and academic partners)**

The daily roundup sessions will address, through an academic lens, the key issues and themes debated at the Forum. Interactive networking opportunities to share, collaborate and peer learning will be provided during and between sessions.

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino  
 Contact email: Amelia.Santos-Paulino@unctad.org

## **FRIDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2021**

09:00–11:30

### **THE ROLE OF ENTERPRISE REPORTING IN SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT**

Description to follow

09:00-11:30

### **THE INVESTMENT, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT NEXUS IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA (in partnership with the World Trade Organization (WTO))**

The pandemic has exacerbated the pressures on global value chains (GVCs) that have emanated from the long-term structural transformation trends arising from changes in the political, technological, and sustainability spheres. The resultant reconfiguration of GVCs for recovery and resilience will have profound implications for the interrelationship between trade and investment, and their development impact. This high-level event, organized in cooperation with the World Trade Organization, will consider this ongoing trend, and identify policy solutions for national and international action to help developing economies address the challenges and reap the benefits of the evolving GVC landscape.

Issues for the debate:

- What are the most promising trade and investment strategies for developing economies to cope with the ongoing reconfiguration of GVCs in the post-Covid-19 era for their sustainable recovery and resilience-building?
- How can such strategies be translated into national and international policies?
- What are the trade and investment policy gaps that need to be urgently filled, nationally, regionally, and at the multilateral level?
- What is the role of international organizations such as UNCTAD and the WTO to assist developing economies with these issues?

Event manager: Mr. Joerg Weber  
 Contact email: Joerg.Weber@unctad.org

9:00–11:00

### **SHOWCASING REFORMS TO PROMOTE SDG INVESTMENT: EXPERIENCES FROM SELECTED COUNTRIES**

This will be an interactive session during which top government officials from selected countries showcase how they are dealing with investment policy reforms to achieve the SDGs and their national development objectives.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- High-level policymakers will present their countries' investment policy reform initiatives, emphasizing the key actions undertaken to improve the business climate and highlighting strategic policy decisions to increase potential contribution of domestic and foreign investment to achieve the SDGs and their national development objectives.
- Policymakers will be able to explore new investment policy perspectives and interact with other countries' representatives through Q&As.

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11:30–12:30

**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES AWARD**

Special economic zones – geographically delimited areas within which governments facilitate industrial activity through fiscal and regulatory incentives and infrastructure support – are widely used across most developing and many developed economies. Although the performance of many SEZs remains below expectations, failing either to attract significant investment or to generate economic impact beyond their confines, new zones continue to be developed, as governments increasingly compete for internationally mobile industrial activity. Policymakers face not only the traditional challenges of making SEZs succeed, including the need for adequate strategic focus, regulatory and governance models, and investment promotion tools, but also new challenges brought about by the sustainable development imperative, the new industrial revolution and changing patterns of international production.

The overall objective of the United Nations SEZs Awards is to showcase and highlight SEZs around the world that have been able to achieve good results across a range of dimensions despite contemporary challenges affecting them. In addition, the awards will be used as a platform for knowledge sharing and the dissemination of best practices for SEZ policymakers and practitioners from around the world.

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino

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11:30–13:00

**GROWING DIGITAL FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (in partnership with WEF)**

Digitalization is transforming the modern economy, gradually permeating all economic sectors and functions. It will underpin future growth and is key to Covid-19 recovery as well as future resilience.

One way to grow the digital economy and increase digital competitiveness is through attracting FDI (UNCTAD, *World Investment Report 2017: Investment and the Digital Economy*). Just like traditional FDI, such “digital FDI” takes place to be close to customers, access local knowledge, open new markets and more. While some digital service suppliers are relatively “asset-light”, meaning they do not require significant FDI to service a market, other digital service suppliers display a similar international asset footprint to traditional MNEs.

Yet promoting and facilitating FDI in the digital economy may require specific policies, regulations and measures because these investments are based on business models that vary from traditional brick-and-mortar businesses. These business activities rely heavily on data and know-how, often involve platform economies and leverage non-traditional assets.

There is an opportunity to launch digital FDI enabling projects (DEPs) to help create “digital friendly” investment climates. Countries in the Middle East and North Africa region are planning to collaborate with UNCTAD and the WEF to launch a regional DEP to identify policies, regulations and measures that governments can adopt to attract such investment. This session will discuss these plans, as well as opportunities for countries to join this effort and for other regions to also consider DEPs.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How can a DEP be designed and implemented (nationally and regionally)?
- What should be the goals of such projects, and can they build on existing initiatives?
- What sectors are digital enablers and should be prioritized in attracting digital FDI?

Event manager: Mr. Alexandre Dabbou

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14:00–16:00



## PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES FOR INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The objective of this round table is to raise awareness and inspire the formulation, implementation and evaluation of inclusive entrepreneurship policies for socioeconomic integration, social cohesion and sustainable development. The event will bring together key stakeholders, including focal points from the beneficiary countries, and offer a platform to share good practices and lessons learned during the implementation of the project Promoting Migrant and Refugee Entrepreneurship in East Africa, the Andean region and the Middle East. The round table will also reflect on the future of inclusive entrepreneurship policies in a post-Covid-19 resurgence and for SDG implementation.

### Issues to be addressed:

- The role entrepreneurship plays in addressing issues of migration.
- What specific entrepreneurship policy measures are needed and good practices towards facilitating socioeconomic integration of migrants and refugees in local economies?
- What are the key challenges and lessons learned in facilitating entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees?
- Are there any upcoming initiatives at national, regional and global levels to promote entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees in response to Covid-19?

Event manager: Mr. Alexandre Dabbou  
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14:00–16:30

## LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES MINISTERIAL AND BUSINESS EXECUTIVE ROUND TABLE (in partnership with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States) (by invitation only)

### The role of FDI in economic recovery

Foreign direct investment is an important potential source of development finance for least developed countries (LDCs) and can be complementary to official development assistance. Despite gradual improvements over the years in the legal and regulatory frameworks for investment in LDCs, the pandemic has been a shock to their economies, with FDI inflows significantly affected and existing structural weaknesses amplified.

Many LDCs are highly dependent on investment in extractive industries, which has been negatively affected by oil and commodity price shocks, while others are dependent on the travel and tourism sectors, which have been among the hardest hit by the crisis.

A lot still needs to be done to make LDC economies successful competitors for FDI projects. In line with the objective to achieve a truly inclusive and sustainable global economic recovery, providing support to institutions that promote investment towards LDCs is more important than ever. This high-level meeting of LDC ministers and business executives will discuss the role of FDI in economic recovery and reconstruction plans. It will seek to advance ideas on how to strengthen the investment climate of LDC economies and the role of IPAs in channelling investment towards sectors that are key for sustainable economic recovery.

### Issues to be addressed:

- Ways to improve the capacity of LDC governments to promote and facilitate investment.
- SDG-focused strategies for investment promotion and facilitation.
- Initiatives to diversify investment in LDCs, including the targeting of investment for SDG-related projects.

Event manager: Ms. Stephania Bonilla-Feret  
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14:00–16:30

## SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL MODEL ZONES

### Special Economic Zones as engines for the SDGs

Special Economic Zones in their various forms are expanding globally, especially in developing countries. According to UNCTAD estimates, there are more than 5 000 SEZs in the world with upwards of 90% of these in developing countries. Since many first-generation zones often pursued an investment attraction strategy centred around low wages and lax employment conditions, SEZs have been criticized for not adhering to adequate social and environmental standards.

Although some newly created zones are going against this trend, widespread adaptation of measures that would, in addition to unleashing the economic potential of SEZs, also make them drivers of sustainable development remains elusive. Recent research by UNCTAD presents the economic case for a “role reversal”: switching from a narrow focus on cost advantages to becoming champions of sustainability. Against this backdrop, UNCTAD recently presented the framework for the SDG model zone that functions as a menu of options for gearing SEZs towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the key objective to make SEZs work for the SDGs, from privileged enclaves to widespread benefits. Conceptually, the options are built around three key elements:

- A strategic focus on attracting investment in “SDG-relevant” activities;
- The highest level of ESG standards and compliance;
- Promoting inclusive growth through linkages and spillovers.

The proceedings of the event will be summarized in the form of a brief practical booklet for policymakers to assist them in planning SDG model zones.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What does an SDG model zone practically entail?
- How can SDG model zones make sustainable development impact a new locational advantage?
- What role can international partnerships between financing partners, SEZ developers, host countries, IPAs and outward IPAs play in the transition towards sustainable development-oriented zones?

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14:30–16:00

## **SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT CASES FOR EMERGING MARKETS**

Emerging markets increasingly offer sustainable investment opportunities. At the same time, emerging market economies often struggle to attract investment, especially through capital markets or private equity, whether because of a lack of investment products, a perception of heightened risk, or other factors. This event aims to present the practical experiences of investors and other stakeholders in emerging markets and offer lessons learned and best practice for the sustainable investment community.

The event will be organized in partnership with public and private investment institutions to showcase and highlight real-life sustainable investment opportunities in developing and transitional economies. In four 25-minute sessions, selected international institutional investors and asset managers will be invited to present investment products and ideas dedicated to emerging markets, while IPAs from developing countries will be invited to present the investment cases in their countries for international institutional investors.

The event will showcase opportunities to “do well by doing good” through long-term sustainable investment in developing countries, in particular in SDG-related sectors and areas.

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14:00–16:30

## **INVESTING IN INDUSTRY 4.0**

### **Investment policy implications of the new industrial revolution**

Industry 4.0 – the increased use of digital technologies such as automation, data analytics and the industrial Internet of things – is transforming nations, production systems and the way goods and services are delivered to markets. This wave of transformation is ongoing with important implications for industrial development, skills requirement, GVCs and for efforts of countries to effectively attract investment in Industry 4.0. Further advancement of manufacturing technologies will continue to drive the transformation process, with increasing disruptions to industries, adaptation to new ways of doing things, and participation by growing number of start-ups and technological firms. Understanding Industry 4.0 and the types of technologies that could enhance a product’s development production systems and manufacturing is paramount to addressing future industrial challenges.

While Industry 4.0 brings opportunities to increase efficiency, it is accompanied by significant challenges and risks that need to be carefully addressed. No country can afford to ignore the implications of Industry 4.0 and be left behind. Countries both big and small are introducing policy measures to attract technology-oriented investment to support Industry 4.0 transformation and align to digital industrial development. Some countries have been more effective at

attracting technology-oriented investment through their policy measures, conducive digital ecosystem and dedicated promotion and facilitation efforts. Lessons can be learned from the experiences of these countries.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- What is the investment landscape and technological development shaping Industry 4.0?
- How are multinationals and other firms adapting or positioning themselves to take advantage of investment opportunities and address challenges associated with Industry 4.0?
- How do countries participate, move up the value chains and attract investment from firms with digital technology advantage to support Industry 4.0 development?

Event managers: Mr. Kee Hwee Wee and Ms. Isya Kresnadi

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14:00–16:30

**ROUND TABLE ON REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION** (in partnership with Regional Commissions of the United Nations)

**Promoting FDI for regional integration**

Most regional economic cooperation organizations consider FDI an important factor for sustainable economic development and regional integration. Some regional organizations and cooperation frameworks have been more active than others in rolling out collective initiatives in support of a conducive investment environment and/or in joint investment promotion, and results vary. At this session, panellists from various regional organizations and cooperation frameworks will discuss new developments in the area of FDI trends. They will discuss how the regional investment approach has evolved in recent years in different regions. They will also discuss how the main challenges of regional integration in investment trends have changed in the face of new developments in the world economy. They will review recent regional investment trends and share their new experiences in investment and regional cooperation. They will also outline prospects for future regional cooperation.

Participants will also discuss new developments in technical cooperation. They will use the pilot Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries–UNCTAD project in improving statistical capacity on collection and dissemination of data on FDI and multinationals in Organization of Islamic Cooperation countries as a potential model for future activities, to be replicated in other regions of the world.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- How has regional integration in different parts of the world shaped over the past years global and regional investment trends and how will this integration affect them in the future?
- What are the main new challenges of regional integration in investment trends?
- What good investment-related practices and technical cooperation activities can be replicated across regional groupings?

Event manager: Mr. Astrit Sulstarova

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14:00–16:30

**ALIGNING MULTINATIONAL FIRMS FOR THE “DECADE OF ACTION”: A REAL PROSPECT OR WISHFUL THINKING?** (organized by AIB)

Achieving the SDGs requires the deep engagement of multinational firms. However, the business sector still lacks clarity and consistency on what SDG alignment looks like for the business sector itself. This panel will discuss what role MNEs can play in pursuing the SDGs and how MNE–government collaboration can further enhance this.

Event manager: Ms. Amelia U. Santos-Paulino

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14:00–16:30

**PANEL DISCUSSION ON FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT POLICIES AND TRENDS IN MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ISLAMIC DEVELOPMENT BANK** (in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade (ICDT))

Global FDI collapsed in 2020, falling by 42% to an estimated US\$ 859 billion, from US\$ 1.5 trillion in 2019. FDI flows have also considerably declined in member countries of the IsDB. The steep decline in greenfield announcements and international project finance in Africa and Asia is a cause for major concern. Without investment in the productive sectors of the economy, developing countries will struggle to rebuild from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In parallel, countries implemented investment policies to tackle the devastating economic and social effects of the pandemic. Numerous countries around the globe have taken measures in support of investment or for protecting critical domestic industries in the crisis. Support measures include the speeding up of investment approval procedures, the accelerated use of online tools and e-platforms, Covid-19-related services of IPAs, incentive schemes for health-related R&D, medical supplies, the acquisition by States of equity in struggling domestic key companies as well as State loans and guarantees for domestic suppliers in value chains. To protect their health sector and industries in other sectors considered as particularly important in the crisis several countries have tightened foreign investment screening mechanisms, introduced new regulations or are planning such steps. Other State interventions in the health industry include mandatory production and export bans for medical equipment, as well as reduction of import duties for medical devices. In this context, the IsDB and ICDT have taken a number of steps to respond to the crisis and to mitigate its impact on their member countries' development objectives.

**Issues to be discussed:**

- What was the impact of the pandemic on FDI flows to IsDB countries?
- What are the main policy responses taken by the IsDB and ICDT?
- How can the cooperation between UNCTAD, IsDB and ICDT be strengthened on issues related to investment trends and policies?

Event manager: Mr. Hamed El-Kady  
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16:30–18:30

## FORUM CLOSING

### **Ambassadors' Round Table on Investing in Sustainable Development: The way forward**

The Ambassadors' Round Table on Investing in Sustainable Development will close the seventh World Investment Forum with a deliberation of the key takeaways from the Forum for the Geneva investment-development community and beyond. Specifically, Permanent Representatives will reflect on key outcomes of the Forum for the future work of UNCTAD and the broader Geneva international organization setting in reigniting the investment engine of growth and its contribution to sustainable development.

The event will terminate with the Secretary-General's closing remarks for the World Investment Forum 2021.

**Issues for the debate:**

- How can the role of Geneva Permanent Representatives be enhanced in reigniting investment as an engine for sustainable recovery?
- How can interactions between Permanent Representatives and the business community be improved and further facilitated to promote Geneva as a global hub for promoting investment in sustainable development?
- How can interactions between the various Geneva-based international organizations be improved and further facilitated in the pursuit of making investment work for sustainable development?

Event manager: Mr. Joerg Weber  
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## WORKSHOPS

**MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2021**

12:00–13:30

### UNCTAD–WAIPA EXCHANGE PLATFORM

#### **Gearing up the digitalization of investment promotion: Strategies, good practices and lessons learned**

Investment promotion agencies, economic development boards and SEZs have been confronted with major operational challenges due to the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Some did well, others faced serious challenges, much

dependent on the extent and level of digitization. UNCTAD research has found that by June 2020, 35% of IPAs had little or no mention of Covid-19 restrictions or indications on how services continued.

Over a year into the pandemic, resilience has ruled and most organizations in charge of investment promotion are back to business in the “new normal”. Nevertheless, despite the digital divide, development agencies need to grasp the advantages of the new industrial revolution to become more efficient and impactful.

This session will deal with the changes and consequent improvements that digitalization in investment promotion and facilitation can bring about. From enhanced use of social media, numerical platforms and online one-stop shops to virtual reality site visits and artificial intelligence, the new industrial revolution can be the opportunity for the industry to thrive.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- The speed and nature of the digitalization of investment promotion organizations.
- UNCTAD business facilitation platform: e-regulations and e-registration.

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## TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2021

14:30–16:30

### SYMPOSIUM ON FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT STATISTICS AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

#### Better data for better policy advice and policymaking

Reliable data are essential for analysing the process of globalization in all its dimensions, including its impact on sustainable economic development, and, on this basis, for formulating development-oriented policies. Although recent years have seen progress in this respect, the scope and quality of FDI data in a number of developing countries, especially least developed countries, are still not adequate for the purposes of policy analysis and formulation.

The FDI statistics symposium will focus on the issues of FDI data compilation and analysis and its role in the formulation of FDI policies from a development perspective. In view of globalization and digitalization, it will explore issues relating to the nature of data and the problems arising from them, as well as data compilation methodologies and difficulties in their implementation.

The session will discuss ways and means to answer the specific needs of developing countries in data compilation and analysis to enable them to make informed policy decisions in the area of FDI. It will also raise the awareness of member States regarding internationally accepted standards relating to FDI data collection and reporting systems, including with respect to the activities of foreign affiliates in host countries.

In addition, the massive data gap on investment in SDGs calls for a better planning and cooperation among all stakeholders, including in the area of FDI statistics to develop harmonized data on investment in relevant SDG sectors.

**Issues to be addressed:**

- The relationship between statistics, impact assessment and policy formulation in the area of FDI. The types of data available and their advantages and deficiencies in view of policymakers’ needs, especially in developing countries.
- Leading problems faced by developing countries, especially least developed countries, in compiling statistics on FDI data and on the activities of multinationals.
- How globalization and digitalization have an impact on FDI data including treatment of conduit FDI and special purpose entities, ultimate investors and recording of intangibles.
- Ways and means to improve the availability and harmonization of FDI-related data (including through regional and international cooperation) and their usefulness to policymakers, particularly in developing countries.
- Can we make the existing FDI data more relevant to the SDGs to improve monitoring of investment and financial flows into developing economies?

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## FRIDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2021

08:30–10:00

## WAIPA WORKSHOP

### **Strategies to safeguard tourism investment** (in partnership with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (tbc))

The tourism sector has been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Global FDI plummeted by 74% in the tourism sector and job creation fell by 72% in 2020 compared with the same period in 2019 (UNWTO, Report on the UNWTO Global Tourism Investment Forum, 2 September 2021).

Governments around the world have implemented measures to support the sector and in many countries the role of IPAs is critical in rolling out tourism related support and promotion programmes. A recent WAIPA-World Bank Group survey revealed that 23% of IPAs surveyed are mandated to provide tourism related services, but due to the pandemic the actual number of agencies targeting tourism is increasing.

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11:00-12:30

## WAIPA WORKSHOP

### **Capacity-building for FDI practitioners**

The most recent WAIPA-WBG Global survey on the state of IPAs found that some of the most critical challenges next to budgetary and financial issues, as well as bureaucratic challenges, is human capital. Particularly for IPAs in developed countries the capacity of the staff is seen as a critical factor. In fact, in developed countries 80% of IPAs claim that this factor challenges their performance, while in developing countries this number is lower with 56%; for the latter challenges regarding budgets and bureaucratic procedures prevail.

Moreover, IPAs are bound to work with partner institutions. However, in the same survey it was reported that 57% of the respondents claim a lack of capacity or knowledge concerning partner entities. Both issues can be successfully tackled by constant capacity-building as undertaken by both WAIPA and UNCTAD. This workshop aims to look at successful strategies of IPAs to engage in capacity-building and how holistic approaches, in the sense of allowing other entities and practitioners to benefit from capacity-building on investment promotion matters, can play critical roles in serving stakeholders and investors more effectively.

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