



International  
Trade  
Centre



**Invitation: a session on Investment Facilitation for Development  
at the IISD's Trade and Sustainability Hub at MC13**

**“Making use of the WTO’s Investment Facilitation for Development  
Agreement for attracting sustainable and inclusive FDI”**

**27 February 2024**

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the World Economic Forum, we cordially invite you to a workshop on:

**“Making use of the WTO’s Investment Facilitation for Development  
Agreement for attracting sustainable and inclusive FDI”**

**27 February 2024, 5:00 pm - 6:00 p.m. Abu Dhabi time**

**in-person at Pearl Rotana Capital Centre, Abu Dhabi**

This workshop is being held in the framework of the [project](#) on Investment Facilitation for Development.

**Participation in the workshop is free of charge.**

**It is necessary to register to attend the workshop in person, please [click here](#) to register to attend the workshop.**

The text negotiations for an Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement, participated by almost 120 WTO Members, have [concluded in July 2023](#). The participants aim to announce this new Agreement and make the final text

publicly available at MC13. The Agreement seeks to help Members improve investment climates and facilitate FDI flows, particularly to developing and least developed country (LDC) Members, in the interest of fostering sustainable and inclusive development. This new Agreement, with development at its center, also contributes to creating a fairer trading system that works for all countries.

The workshop aims to raise awareness of the IFD Agreement by highlighting the objectives and key pillars of the Agreement. It will discuss benefits that the Agreement can bring to the WTO Members, and how countries can make best use of the Agreement to enhance their business climate, attract sustainable investment and boost economic growth and inclusive development. The workshop will also discuss technical assistance and capacity building support to countries in anchoring domestic reforms, conducting investment facilitation assessments and implementing the IFD Agreement.

The workshop will be conducted in English, in an interactive manner, and allow for questions by participants.

The workshop will have the following agenda and speakers:

**Moderator: Matthew Stephenson**, Head, Investment and Services, World Economic Forum

#### **17:00 – 17:10 Keynote address**

- **Maria Sonsoles García León**, Minister of Foreign Trade, Ecuador – ***“How can the IFD Agreement help developing countries attract high quality FDI that delivers on their sustainable development objectives?”***

#### **17:10 - 17:55 Making use of the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement for attracting sustainable and inclusive FDI**

- **Sofia Boza**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Chile to the WTO, co-Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development – ***“What is the state of play and future of the IFD Agreement?”***
- **Escipion Joaquin Oliveira Gomez**, Director, Division of Enterprise Competitiveness and Institutions, ITC – ***“Why does the IFD Agreement matter?”***
- **Axel Berger**, Deputy Director (interim), IDOS – ***“What do the data show regarding the economic impacts of the IFD Agreement?”***
- **Q&A and free flow discussions**

#### **17:55 - 18:00 Concluding remarks**

## **Focus of the session:**

The text negotiations for an Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement, participated by almost 120 WTO Members, have [concluded in July 2023](#). The participants aim to announce this new Agreement and make the final text publicly available at MC13. The Agreement seeks to help Members improve investment climates and facilitate FDI flows, particularly to developing and least developed country (LDC) Members, in the interest of fostering sustainable and inclusive development. This new Agreement, with development at its center, also contributes to creating a fairer trading system that works for all countries.

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We look forward to welcoming you to the workshop!

With kind regards,

Quan Zhao, Senior Programme Officer (Trade Policy), International Trade Centre

Matthew Stephenson, Head, Investment and Services, World Economic Forum

## **Bios:**

### **Axel Berger**

Axel Berger is Deputy Director (interim) at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability. He works on the design, effects and diffusion patterns of international trade and investment agreements, with a focus on emerging markets and developing countries. His other areas of research include the effects of an international investment facilitation framework, impact of free trade agreements on upgrading within global value chains, and role of the G20 in global governance. He teaches international political economy at the University of Bonn and regularly advises developing countries, development agencies and international organizations on trade and investment matters.

### **Sofia Boza**

Soffia Boza is the Ambassador of Chile to the World Trade Organization since July 2022. She has also taken over the co-Coordination of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development. Prior to that, she was an Associate Professor and Chief at the Department of Rural Management and Innovation at the University of Chile and Professor at the Institute of International Studies at the same University. She holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Seville and a PhD in Economics from the Autonomous University of Madrid.

### **Maria Sonsoles García León**

Maria Sonsoles García León is the Minister of Production, Foreign Trade, Investment and Fisheries of Ecuador. Throughout her professional career, she served as director of the Ecuadorian Federation of Exporters (FEDEXPOR). She was also director of the AEO Program in the National Customs Service of Ecuador (SENAE) and of the Association of Ecuadorian Fruit and Vegetable Producers. She was president of the Foreign Trade, Customs and Investment Policy Commission of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) - Ecuador and she taught law and commerce at universities in Quito and Guayaquil.

### **Escipion Joaquin Oliveira Gomez**

Oliveira-Gómez is the Director of the Division of Enterprises Competitiveness and Institutions of ITC. He has over 30 years of experience in drafting, managing, supervising, and evaluating multi-donor programmes and projects. His work has focused on the creation, strengthening and internationalization of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and strengthening of Business Support Organizations (BSOs) in developing and transition countries. He has, among others, served as Assistant Secretary General for Structural Economic Transformation and Trade of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States; Deputy Executive Director of the Caribbean Export Development Agency; and Deputy Minister in charge of Development Cooperation of the Dominican Republic.

### **Matthew Stephenson**

Matthew Stephenson is Head, Investment and Services, at the World Economic Forum, which includes the Global Investment Policy and Practice Initiative. Previously, he worked at the IFC, where he led the workstream on outward FDI. He has also worked at the OECD on Africa and investment and served as a diplomat for the U.S. Department of State, leading the economic team on Afghanistan and managing economic programmes in the Middle East. He has a PhD from the Graduate Institute in Geneva, a master's from the Harvard Kennedy School and a bachelor's from Oxford University.