

Preface

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The Global Enabling Trade Report 2012 reflects a world in which trade has rebounded from its 2009 slump. It is a world where trade is no longer dominated by developed economies but is now more concentrated in and among emerging economies. This shift highlights the virtuous role trade can play in economic growth and poverty reduction. With progress stalled in multilateral trade negotiations, the *Report's* practical focus on tackling barriers is increasingly important.

Many of this year's contributions reflect a growing recognition that trade facilitation is most effective when it is designed to support global value chains. Countries, like companies, increasingly specialize in tasks rather than products, adding value to intermediate products that cross many borders. Consequently, when countries enable trade, the benefits are not just local or bilateral but global. But global disaggregation of value chains through trade has brought challenges as well as opportunities. Cognizant of the need to safeguard advances made, the *Report* considers the issue of supply chain integrity and the steps both countries and companies can take to ensure that quality, security, and trade are mutually reinforcing rather than opposing. Several contributions also touch on the need to transform our perspectives on trade by updating the way we measure it. Because trade and investment go hand in hand, the *Report* has, since its inception, dealt with enabling factors beyond national borders.

Fundamentally, the *Report's* assessment of factors that enable trade provides a reminder of the attributes that govern a nation's ability to benefit from trade. These attributes are captured in the Enabling Trade Index, which stands at the core of the *Report* and includes four broad categories: market access, border administration, infrastructure, and the business environment.

The Global Enabling Trade Report arises from and is supported by the World Economic Forum's Supply Chain and Transportation Industry Partnership program. Since its introduction in 2008, the *Report* has become a widely used reference, forming part of the toolbox of many countries in their efforts to increase trade and helping companies with their investment decisions. The *Report* is the basis for high-level public-private dialogues, facilitated by the World Economic Forum around the world, that focus on practical steps that can be taken by both governments and the private sector to overcome trade barriers in a particular country or region.

The complete *Report* can be downloaded at www.weforum.org/getr. It contains detailed profiles for

all 132 economies covered this year. The profiles provide an overview of the results on all indicators included in the Enabling Trade Index.

The Global Enabling Trade Report would not have been possible without the distinguished academics and practitioners who have shared with us their knowledge and experience. We thank our Data Partners—the Global Express Association (GEA), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), The World Bank, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the World Trade Organization (WTO)—for making trade-related data available.

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