

Report on the 4th virtual meeting of the Commentary Group on a Multilateral Framework on Investment Facilitation for Development

3 July 2020

The 4th virtual meeting of the Commentary Group on a Multilateral Framework on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFF4D) took place on 3 July 2020, from 8:00am to 9:30am, EDT.

The meeting **focussed on concrete investment facilitation measures that should be included in the WTO framework on investment facilitation for development.**

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Matthew Stephenson, Policy and Community Lead, International Trade and Investment, World Economic Forum, and the concluding remarks were made by Mr. Karl P. Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University/CCSI. The attached programme lists the speakers. Twenty-four members participated, along with staff providing support through an informal secretariat. Five background documents were circulated in advance: an Inventory of Measures (“inventory”); summaries of the last three meetings of the Commentary Group; and a summary of the Informal Consolidated Text of the WTO Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development.

During the meeting, participants suggested three or more concrete investment facilitation measures that may not already be included in the in the inventory. Participants were also encouraged to provide measures that they believe are particularly helpful for increasing the development of FDI.

Discussion highlights

A. The Argentine Chamber of Commerce and Services: simplification and coordination of investment procedures

Argentina’s Chamber of Commerce and Services presented a document highlighting a list of recommendations of investment facilitation measures aimed at attracting and retaining investment, especially by developing countries:

- Establishing a sound regulatory framework covering issues of investment facilitation to ensure the security and reliability of regulations.

- Maintaining standards of openness to facilitate the flow of capital and intermediate inputs needed by investors.
- Ensuring adequate customer care by skilled personnel handling investor inquiries timely and efficiently. The lack of skill is a bottleneck for any successful customer care strategy.
- Implementing a Single Window using technologies of the fourth industrial revolution.
- Building and maintaining a database of SMEs to assist investors in identifying qualified local suppliers and facilitate linkages.
- Creating a National Investment Facilitation Committee (NIFC) like the ones relating to the TFA, not only as a platform for dialogue but also as a platform for the implementation of an IFF4D.

B. Invest Barbados: overcoming the pandemic with digitalisation

After highlighting that the advent of COVID19 has underscored the need for FDI as a catalyst to spur economic development, Invest Barbados listed the following measures as being important in making the transition to operating under COVID19 circumstances:

- Developing a business continuity plan to provide an immediate roadmap for the new norm of day-to-day operations and adapting internet-based marketing, engagement and facilitation strategies.
- Maintaining consistent and timely communication with existing and potential investors across electronic platforms. Sharing with investors changes in investment protocols affecting the public and private sectors. These new practices are expected to be implemented permanently, including through the sharing of information on the webpage of the IPA, social media and email, as well as allowing for feedback from investors on this information.
- Enabling electronic submissions. This has reduced processing times and increased overall efficiency. Examples of the documents obtained online are the embarkation and disembarkation certificates.

C. Ithraa, Oman: enhancing communication through digitalisation

The following investment facilitation measures were highlighted by Ithraa, the Omani IPA, in mitigating the impact of the global pandemic on the economy and investors:

- Establishing a communication platform among that connects digitally all relevant authorities, including customs clearance authorities, freight forwarders, banks, and freight insurance. This system reduced the time for clearing inwards goods at airports and ports from a few days to one day or even a few hours.
- Enabling obtaining and submitting documents and certificates online. Oman established an online licenses and approvals platform (Invest Easy) that allows for issuing a license for foreign companies in fewer than two days.
- Making available value propositions online. The Invest in Oman platform presents opportunities to interested investors and allows investors to create profiles, register their companies and create linkages with Omani SMEs.
- Establishing digital solutions to intra-governmental coordination. The Bayan e-customs system provides effective communication and coordination across government.

D. Henry Loewendahl, WAVETEQ: managing outreach to investors

- Establishing fit-for-purpose investor targeting systems, such as customer relationship management systems. Very few IPAs have a comprehensive database and information on existing investors.
- Ensuring the availability of quality value propositions with adequate information, including sector-based value propositions with the information that investors actually need.
- Creating inventories of investment zones and industrial parks.

E. Philippe Yvergnaux, Business France: maintaining repositories and incorporating SDGs

- Developing a dashboard of the availability of investment facilitation measures by country and IPAs for benchmarking. This dashboard could incorporate indicators to provide an overview of the investment climate in terms of issues relating to the facilitation of investment.
- Relating IPA objectives to the sustainable development goals (SDG) and evaluating the performance of investment against the SDGs.
- Addressing trade and investment barriers.
- Establishing IPA-IPA partnerships.
- Measuring the value of investment by contribution to the SDGs.
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F. Craig Burchel, Huawei Technologies: access to telecommunication services

- Providing digital services is important, and such services should be made affordable to prevent an increase of the digital divide. This could be mitigated by working in partnership with local telecom operators to reduce the cost of access to IT.
- Automating procedures in partnership with local data providers, such as local telecom and web services.

G. Hazem Mulhim, EastNets, the needs of foreign investors regarding information technology

- Access to free zones accepting enterprises that are 100% foreign owned could help facilitate investment in countries that have ownership restrictions.
- An issue that EastNets faced when investing in countries concerns transfer pricing and intellectual property valuation. These issues are particularly important for companies involved in the export of services (e.g., software) across borders to markets with different price schemes.
- The lack of harmonisation and coordination in taxation across borders (e.g., withholding tax); the low levels of cyber security are also common challenges for IT MNEs.

H. KenInvest: coordination and technical assistance

- Conditioning incentives, to give differential incentives for different investment.
- Encouraging coordination, especially IPA – IPA coordination. This could increase transparency and consistency between IPAs that are in the same regional framework.
- Including multilateral commitments for development and technical support for the implementation of investment facilitation measures.
- Regulating transfer pricing multilaterally.

- Strengthening aftercare.

I. Juma Al Kait, Foreign Trade Affairs at Ministry of Economy of the United Arab Emirates: dynamic and proactive action by the government

- Mobilising governments for the implementation of investment facilitation.
- Creating a comprehensive regulatory framework that is not only focussed on attracting investment, but also facilitating sustainable investment.
- Enhancing transparency with view to preventing disputes.

J. Yofi Grant, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre: addressing the needs of new FDI

- Assigning an investment ombudsperson, who also encourages foreign affiliates alignment with government priorities.
- Paying attention to aftercare, to help investors negotiate the nuances of the local cultural, economic and regulatory environment.
- Careful use of incentives. While incentives are not the most important factor in choosing investment destinations, they play a role when deciding among similar opportunities in different countries.
- Designating recognized sustainable investors.

Annex I: Participating members in the 3rd Commentary Group meeting

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Yusif	Abdullayev	Acting President, Azerbaijan Export and Investment Promotion Foundation (AZPROMO)
Juma	Al Kait	Assistant Undersecretary for the Foreign Trade Sector in the Ministry of Economy
Azzan	Al Busaidi	Chief Executive Officer, Ithraa, Oman
Vincent	Andayi	Engineer - Subcontracting & Partnership Exchange (SPX) Programme, Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), Kenya
Fatma	Azri	International Cooperation and Committees Director - Omani IPA Ithraa
Mohammed	Baba	Investor Relations Department, Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission
Kaye - Anne	Brathwaite	Chief Executive Officer, Invest Barbados
Craig	Burchell	Vice President Global Trade Affairs, Huawei Technologies
José	Chinjamba	Agency for Private Investment and Promotion of Exports AIPEX Angola
Crispin	Conroy	ICC Representative Director to Geneva, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
Yofi	Grant	CEO, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC)
Khalil	Hamdani	Visiting Professor, Lahore School of Economics
Joseph	Hanson	Senior investment promotion officer, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC)
Moses	Ikiara	Managing Director, KenInvest, Kenya
Henry	Loewendahl	Group CEO of WAVTEQ and Senior Vice President representing fDi Intelligence, Financial Times
Hazem	Mulhim	Chief Executive Officer, EastNets
Caren	Mutai	Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest), Kenya
Eugenia	Okyere	Principal Investment Promotion Officer, Ghana Investment Promotion Centre
Sebastian	Reil	Senior FDI Consultant, FDI Center
Lourenço	Sambo	General Director, The Agency for Promotion of Investment and Exports (APIEX) of Mozambique, Mozambique
Karl P.	Sauvant	Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University, CCSI

Maria Laura	Sluga	General Coordinator of the Foreign Affairs Department, Argentine Chamber of Commerce and Services
Matthew	Stephenson	Policy and Community Lead, International Trade and Investment, World Economic Forum
Philippe	Yvergniaux	Director, International Cooperation, Business France
Speakers		
Azzan	Al Busaidi	Chief Executive Officer, Ithraa, Oman
Kaye - Anne	Brathwaite	Chief Executive Officer, Invest Barbados
Henry	Loewendahl	Group CEO of WAVTEQ and Senior Vice President representing fDi Intelligence, Financial Times
Hazem	Mulhim	Chief Executive Officer, EastNets
Karl P.	Sauvant	Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI)
Maria Laura	Sluga	General Coordinator of the Foreign Affairs Department, Argentine Chamber of Commerce and Services
Matthew	Stephenson	Policy and Community Lead, International Trade and Investment, World Economic Forum.
Philippe	Yvergniaux	Director, International Cooperation, Business France
Secretariat		
Mohamad	Fakhreddin	Project Officer, Investment Facilitation for Development, Research and Strategies for Exports, International Trade Centre
Yardenne	Kagan	Project Officer, ITC/DIE Project on Investment Facilitation for Development, International Trade Centre
Quan	Zhao	Trade Policy Advisor, Research and Strategies for Exports, International Trade Centre

Annex II: Invitation and agenda

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Deutsches Institut für
Entwicklungspolitik



German Development
Institute



International
Trade
Centre

WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

COMMITTED TO
IMPROVING THE STATE
OF THE WORLD

INVITATION: 3 July 2020, 4th VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE COMMENTARY GROUP ON A MULTILATERAL FRAMEWORK ON INVESTMENT FACILITATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Dear Colleague,

We would like to invite you to participate in the 4th meeting of the Commentary Group, to take place virtually on 3 July 2020, from 8:00am to 9:30am Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), 14:00 to 15:30 Central European Time (CET), 20:00 to 21:30 China Standard Time (CST).

As a reminder, the Commentary Group's mandate is to provide input on the content of the framework being developed at the WTO for facilitating cross-border investment and for increasing the development impact of such investment.

As background documents, please find the following attached:

- a) The updated *Inventory of Concrete Measures to Facilitate the Flow of Sustainable FDI*.
- b) Summaries of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd meetings, which will also be shared with WTO negotiators.
- c) A summary of the Informal Consolidated Text of the WTO Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development

The 4th meeting will focus on concrete investment facilitation measures that should be included in the WTO framework. During the meeting, each organization will have up to 3 minutes to suggest three concrete investment facilitation measures, *ideally measures that have not already been included in the inventory attached to this invitation*, that he/she thinks are particularly important to facilitate the flow of FDI and especially sustainable FDI. (It is also fine to suggest measures from the *Inventory*.) We would also appreciate participants providing a brief explanation of why each suggested facilitation measure would be particularly helpful for facilitating FDI flows.

The goal is to develop additional (preferably tested) facilitation measures that we can recommend to WTO negotiators. It would be especially desirable if we could discuss measures that facilitate sustainable FDI flows, as well as measures that can be particularly helpful for restarting FDI in light of the steep decline of flows expected as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As with previous meetings, a summary of the discussions will be made available to the WTO's Structured Discussions.

Moderator: Matthew Stephenson, Policy and Community Lead, International Trade and Investment, World Economic Forum.

Opening speaker: María Laura Sluga, General Coordinator of the Foreign Affairs Department, Argentine Chamber of Commerce and Services

Discussion starters:

Kaye Brathwaite, Chief Executive Officer, Invest Barbados

Azzan Al Busaidi, Chief Executive Officer, Ithraa, Oman

Henry Loewendahl, Group CEO of WAVTEQ and Senior Vice President representing fDi Intelligence, Financial Times

Hazem Mulhim, Chief Executive Officer, EastNets

Philippe Yvergniaux, Director, International Cooperation, Business France

Panelists: All participants.

Concluding remarks: Karl P. Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University/CCSI.

To join the meeting, kindly click on the link below shortly before 14:00 am CET on 3 July and follow the instructions. If you are not able to connect online, you could connect using the dial-up options provided at the end of this email.

Join Zoom Meeting

If you face any technical difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact Mohamad Fakhreddin (mfakhreddin@intracen.org). For general questions, please contact Yardenne Kagan (ykagan@intracen.org)

With best regards,

Karl P. Sauvant

Columbia University/CCSI

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Matthew Stephenson

World Economic Forum

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cc Rajesh Aggarwal (ITC), Axel Berger (DIE), Sean Doherty (WEF), Mohamad Fakhreddin (ITC), Yardenne Kagan (ITC), Quan Zhao (ITC)

Speakers bios:

Kaye-Anne Brathwaite, Chief Executive Officer, Invest Barbados

Ms Kaye-Anne Brathwaite holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics and Accounting, as well as a Master of Science in Business and Financial Economics. An Economist by training, she worked as a Senior Economist in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs until 2007. Desirous of learning all aspects of Business and Finance, she then entered the world of banking and credit. During her twelve-year stint in banking, the former executive banker managed an extensive portfolio, providing financial and investment solutions to players in a wide range of industries. In September 2019, Kaye assumed the role of CEO of Invest Barbados. Kaye has a love for teaching and this aspect of her life began in 1995. She is currently a certified online lecturer/ facilitator with the Cave Hill School of Business, University of the West Indies. She believes that knowledge should be shared and the greatest satisfaction one can have, is knowing that the knowledge imparted has charted the course of success for the recipient.

Azzan Al Busaidi, Chief Executive Officer, Ithraa, Oman

Mr Azzan bin Qassim Al Busaidi, is CEO of Ithraa – Oman’s investment promotion and export development agency. Mr Al Busaidi holds a degree in Economics from Sultan Qaboos University and an MBA from the University of Strathclyde. He is also a graduate of the Oxford University National Leadership & Competitiveness Program. Prior to his appointment as Ithraa’s CEO, he worked for two years as part of the Implementation Support & Follow-up Unit (ISFU) in the Diwan of Royal Court as ISFU’s Head of Business Environment & Finance Program. In this role, he was responsible for supporting and following-up on public sector initiatives designed to enhance Oman’s investment environment. Over the past ten years, Mr. Al Busaidi has represented Oman at numerous high-level events, presenting on the sultanate’s investment and export offer to international dignitaries and global business leaders.

Henry Loewendahl, Group CEO of WAVTEQ and Senior Vice President representing fDi Intelligence, Financial Times

Mr Henry Loewendahl was previously Product Director in the Financial Times, Managing Director of Investment Products in OCO Global, Manager of Inward Investment in IBM, and Senior Consultant in PwC. Henry has 20 years of FDI experience working with over 120 economic development organisations and multinationals in over 60 countries. Henry has a PhD on FDI and is a pioneer in expanding our knowledge of FDI, competitiveness, and investment promotion. He is the inventor of fDi Markets, fDi Benchmark, IncentivesMonitor, FDI Professionals, & FDI Accounting and has over 50 publications and presentations on FDI and investment promotion. Over 1,000

economic development organisations and multinationals have subscribed to WAVTEQ developed products and Henry has managed projects delivering over \$10 billion of FDI.

Hazem Mulhim, Chief Executive Officer, EastNets

Mr Hazem Mulhim's background is multi-layered, established through a career spanning 35 years in international markets. After his graduation from Bulgaria with a Master's degree in Electronics Engineering and Medical Electronics, Mr Mulhim began his professional career working at Siemens in Kuwait in 1980, where he experienced first-hand how computing was starting to transform the health industry. As the digital revolution was just starting worldwide in the early 1980s, he took a decision to get closer to the epicentre of innovation, moving to the US to work. There, he would accentuate his entrepreneurial vision and develop a deeper insight into the emerging technologies and markets. Later in 1984, he moved to Jordan to establish what now is EastNets. In 2007, EastNets acquired SIDE International, a leader in AML solutions based in Belgium. This expansion strategy worked and soon EastNets was serving a 750-strong client base. Mulhim's acute vision and industry insight would help EastNets secure multiple prestigious international awards and in one recent case achieving leadership in one global compliance industry vertical. Mulhim had also continued his academic drive, earning a Certificate of Advanced Management Program (AMP) from the prestigious Institute of INSEAD, France, and an OWP from IMD Lausanne, Switzerland.

Karl P. Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia University/CCSI

Karl P. Sauvant introduced the idea of an International Support Program for Sustainable Investment Facilitation in the E15 Task Force on Investment Policy in 2015. From there, the proposal was taken forward in the WTO. He has written extensively on this subject (see <https://ssrn.com/author=2461782>), participated in various events relating to it and currently assists the ITC and DIE on a project on Investment Facilitation for Development. He retired in 2005 as Director of UNCTAD's Investment Division and established, in 2006, what is now the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI), stepping down as its Executive Director in 2012, to focus his work, as a CCSI Resident Senior Fellow, on teaching, research and writing.

María Laura Sluga, General Coordinator of the Foreign Affairs Department, Argentine Chamber of Commerce and Services

As Foreign Affairs General Coordinator at one of the main business associations in Argentina, Ms María Laura Sluga represents Argentinian business views in strategic international fora and engage with relevant stakeholders – including intergovernmental organizations, governments, academia, media and civil society – in relation to business key priorities. She holds a dual degree in International Relations and Political Science, a Master degree in International Economy and Politics, and an MBA from IE Business School.

Matthew Stephenson, Policy and Community Lead, International Trade and Investment, World Economic Forum

Matthew Stephenson is Policy and Community Lead for International Trade and Investment at the World Economic Forum, where he manages the Global Investment Policy and Practice initiative. This initiative works in several emerging markets to identify measures that facilitate investment and maximise its development impact. Previously he led the workstream on outward FDI at the IFC, worked on Africa and on investment at the OECD, and led the economic team on Afghanistan and economic programmes in the Middle East at the U.S. Department of State. He is a member of the T20 Task Force on Trade and Investment, has a PhD from the Graduate Institute in Geneva, a master's from the Harvard Kennedy School and a bachelor's from Oxford University.

Philippe Yvergniaux, Director, International Cooperation, Business France

Mr Philippe Yvergniaux has 27 years' experience in FDI attraction, as international director then general manager of French regional IPAs from 1993 to 2005, then country director at Invest in France Agency for the British Isles (2005-2009) and North America (2009-2015); in January 2015 he was appointed Director of International Cooperation at Business France. In this role, he is charged with leading efforts to develop partnerships with, and provide technical assistance to, trade and investment promotion agencies throughout the world. Prior to 1992, Philippe worked as a civil engineer on rural development projects in Africa, Indonesia, and Haiti. He is married with 4 children and 4 grandchildren.