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**Expert Roundtable**  
**„Investment Facilitation for Sustainable Development“**

**Berlin, 19 March 2019**  
by invitation only

German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

## **Rationale**

To harness the advantages of foreign investment for sustainable development, it is critical that governments have investment policies and regulations in place that facilitate investment for sustainable development. Investment facilitation covers a wide range of areas, all with the ultimate focus on encouraging investment to flow efficiently and for the greatest benefit of host countries. In the current discussion at the World Trade Organization (WTO), parties focus, among other things, on promoting transparency, efficiency, consistency and predictability of investment-related policies and regulations. Measures related to this objective do not cover market access, international investment protection and international investor-state dispute settlement.

International discussions on investment facilitation have been very dynamic in previous years. Investment Facilitation was a central topic of the German G 20 presidency and further discussed among WTO members. At the WTO Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires in December 2017, a Joint Ministerial Statement on Investment Facilitation for Development was adopted and called for the start of "structured discussions with the aim of developing a multilateral framework on investment facilitation". The structured discussions on investment facilitation, mainly driven by developing and transition economies, is one of the main ongoing processes in the WTO and suggests that the multilateral trading system is still able to produce outcomes that support development.

Proponents of an international framework on investment facilitation for development expect that such a framework would lead to higher FDI flows. In light of the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, this focus is necessary but not sufficient: it is also important to focus on the qualitative contribution of foreign direct investment (FDI) to sustainable development. Sustainable FDI should not only contribute to economic growth in host countries, but should do so in a socially just and environmental-friendly way.

## **Objective**

The main purpose of the expert roundtable / workshop is to develop conceptual ideas and policy proposals on how to strengthen the contribution of international investment facilitation frameworks to sustainable development in developing countries.

## **Format**

The half-day roundtable brings together experts with strong expertise on investment facilitation and investment policy-making representing different countries, stakeholder groups (international organisations, governments, civil-society, business and research) and academic backgrounds. The discussion should be interactive, with short inputs from experts to kick-off the discussion, and focused on coming up with concrete ideas on how to design national and international investment facilitation frameworks to support sustainable development.

## Programme

- 09:00 - 09:10 Welcome and Introduction**  
*Axel Berger*, Senior Researcher, German Development Institute /  
Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)
- 09:10 - 09:30 The Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development: State of play**  
*H.E. Juan Carlos González*, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the  
WTO, Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment  
Facilitation for Development
- 09:30 - 09:50 Q&A**
- 09:50 - 11:00 Substantive perspective**  
Guiding questions:
- How can characteristics of sustainable FDI be identified and how can they be promoted?
  - Which concrete investment facilitation measures are particularly important to foster economic, social and environmental sustainability?
  - Which provisions are key to align an international investment facilitation framework and sustainable development?
- Three short inputs kicking-off a discussion among all participants:  
*Ahmad Gouri*, Senior Lecturer, University of Sussex  
*Ana Novik*, Head of Investment Division, Organization for Economic  
Cooperation and Development (OECD)  
*Bostjan Skalar*, Chief Executive Officer, World Association of Investment  
Promotion Agencies (WAIPA)
- 11:00-11:20 Coffee break**
- 11:20-12:30 Institutional perspective**
- How can the needs of developing and least-developed countries best be addressed in an international framework?
  - How can the capacities of host and home countries of foreign investors be leveraged for investment facilitation?
  - What role does multi-stakeholder participation and cooperation play to align international investment facilitation with sustainable development?
- Three short inputs kicking-off a discussion among all participants:  
*Talkmore Chidede*, Trade Law Centre  
*Christiane Gerstetter*, Senior Fellow, Ecologic  
*Matthew Stephenson*, Policy and Community Lead, International Trade  
and Investment, World Economic Forum (WEF)

**12:30-12:55 Main takeaways and ways forward**

Guiding questions:

- What are the key elements to better align investment facilitation with sustainable development?
- How can aspects of sustainable development be incorporated in international frameworks for investment facilitation?
- What is the role of bilateral and multilateral development cooperation to better align investment facilitation and sustainable development?

Three short inputs kicking-off a discussion among all participants:

*Jens Benninghofen*, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi)

*Geoffrey Gertz*, Fellow, Brookings Institution

*Rodrigo Polanco*, Senior Researcher, World Trade Institute (WTI)

**12:55-13:00 Concluding remarks**

*Axel Berger*, Senior Researcher, German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

**13:00-14:00 Light lunch**

**Venue:** [DBB Forum Berlin, Friedrichstraße 169, 10117 Berlin](#)

Please follow the signs displayed on video screens in the entrance hall of the DBB Forum.

**Organiser:**

This roundtable is organised by the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE) with financial support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

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