

**Invitation: Key elements of responsible business conduct, with special attention to
gender
3:00-4:15pm CET, 16 September 2022**

Dear Madam/Sir,

On behalf of the International Trade Centre (ITC), the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), and the World Economic Forum (WEF), we cordially invite you to the 13th meeting of the Commentary Group on:

**Key elements of responsible business conduct, with special attention to gender
16 September 2022, 3:00-4:15pm Central European Time (CET)**

Please click [here](#) to join the meeting.

As a reminder, the Commentary Group's mandate is to provide input on the content of a new agreement being developed at the WTO to facilitate FDI and increase its development impact, as well as to help inform national, bilateral and regional investment facilitation efforts.

The 13th meeting of the Investment Facilitation Commentary Group will explore key elements of responsible business conduct (RBC), including supply-chain commitments, due diligence, stakeholder consultations, references to international standards, and the exchange of information on best practices. Particular attention will be given to the gender dimension of FDI, including in reference to how non-discriminatory treatment can be ensured and how women can reap more of the benefits of FDI. We will discuss to what extent and how these elements of RBC are being advanced through international investment agreements and other actions. The focus will be on identifying concrete measures that policymakers can adopt to advance the key elements of RBC. What RBC-advancing measures are most important and effective?

The findings will be captured in a summary report, to inform the adoption of policies and measures by governments and help delegates currently negotiating an Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development at the WTO.

Chair

Karl P. Sauvart, Resident Senior Fellow, Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI)

Speakers

- **Catharine Titi**, Research Associate Professor, University Paris II Panthéon-Assas, *“Implementing key elements of responsible business conduct: trends, challenges and the way forward”*.
- **Allan Jorgensen**, Head, RBC Centre, OECD, *“How to promote the uptake of key elements of responsible business conduct”*.
- **Colette van der Ven**, International Trade Lawyer, *“RBC and the promotion of sustainable FDI”*.

Concluding remarks

Matthew Stephenson, Head, Investment Policy and Practice, World Economic Forum.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Commentary Group meeting!

With kind regards,

Rajesh Aggarwal, Director (oic), Division for Market Development, ITC
Axel Berger, Senior Researcher, IDOS
Karl P. Sauvant, Resident Senior Fellow, CCSI, Columbia University
Matthew Stephenson, Head, Investment Policy and Practice, World Economic Forum.

Background materials

ITC-DIE project on [Investment Facilitation for Development](#)

OECD, “Due diligence guidance for responsible business conduct”,
<http://mneguidelines.oecd.org/OECD-Due-Diligence-Guidance-for-Responsible-Business-Conduct.pdf>.

OECD, “FDI qualities policy toolkit: Policies for improving the sustainable development impacts of investment”, <https://www.oecd.org/investment/investment-policy/FDI-Qualities-Policy-Toolkit-Consultation-Paper-2021.pdf>.

WEF, [Global Investment Policy and Practice](#) initiative, including workstream on investment facilitation.

Karl P. Sauvant and Federico Ortino, “[The WTO Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement needs a strong provision on responsible business conduct](#)”, *Columbia FDI Perspective*, no. 335 (11 July 2022).

Karl P. Sauvant, “[How would a future WTO Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development encourage sustainable FDI flows, and how could it be further strengthened?](#)”, in Kabir Duggal, Gustavo Vaughn, Elora Farias, Mateo Verdías, and Gino Rivas, *What Does It Mean to be “Pro Arbitration”? Reflections on George Bermann’s Legacy by Columbia Law School Community* (forthcoming 2022).

Karl P. Sauvant and Evan Gabor, “[Facilitating sustainable FDI for sustainable development in a WTO Investment Facilitation Framework: Four concrete proposals](#)”, *Journal of World Trade*, vol. 55 (2021), pp. 261-286.

Bios:

Allan Jorgensen

Allan Jorgensen is Head of the OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct and leads the work of the OECD to develop and promote global standards for responsible business through international cooperation, public policy development and global supply chains. He has two decades of experience working on sustainable business and finance in both the private and public sectors. He holds degrees in Political Science from the University of Copenhagen (Denmark) and in International Conflict Analysis from the University of Kent at Canterbury (UK).

Karl P. Sauvant

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). He stepped down as the Center's Executive Director in 2012, to focus his work, as a CCSI Resident Senior Fellow, on teaching, research and writing.

Matthew Stephenson

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. 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 in Afghanistan and managing economic programs in the Middle East. He is a member of the T20 Task Force on Trade and Investment. 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.

Catharine Titi

Catharine Titi is a tenured Research Associate Professor at CNRS–CERSA, University Paris-Panthéon-Assas. She is a member of the ESIL Board and she serves as Deputy Chair of the Academic Forum on ISDS. She sits on CAfA's panel of arbitrators and was appointed to the roster of the USMCA's Annex 31-B panelists. In 2016, she was awarded the Smit-Lowenfeld Prize by the International Arbitration Club of New York. Her latest monograph, [The Function of Equity in International Law](#), was published by Oxford University Press in 2021.

Colette van der Ven

Colette van der Ven is the Founding Director of TULIP Consulting, a Geneva-based consulting firm, where she advises governments and international organisations on how to design trade policy to promote inclusive and sustainable development. She is also a visiting lecturer in international economic law at the Graduate Institute, where she teaches the TradeLab clinic. She holds a Juris Doctor from the Harvard Law School and a Master's in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.