



**Webinar invitation: “The path forward for the WTO Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement”**

**13 October 2023**

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the International Trade Centre (ITC), we cordially invite you to a webinar on:

**The path forward for the WTO Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement**

**13 October 2023, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Central European Time (CET)  
virtually via zoom**

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

**Like all ITC events, participation in the webinar is free of charge.**

**It is necessary to register for the webinar (please [click here](#)), to receive the meeting link details.**

The webinar will have the following agenda and speakers:

***Opening remarks***

**Rajesh Aggarwal, Director (oic), Division for Market Development, ITC**

## *Moderator*

**Karl P. Sauvant**, Senior Fellow, Columbia University, CCSI

## *Panellists*

**Sofia Boza**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Chile to the WTO, co-Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development

**Jung Sung Park**, Deputy Permanent Representative to the WTO of the Permanent Mission of Republic of Korea in Geneva, co-Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development –

***“The next steps after the conclusion of the text negotiations of the Agreement”***

***Hamid Mamdouh***, Senior Council at King and Spalding LLP (Geneva office), and Visiting Professor, Queen Mary University of London, Centre for Commercial Law Studies (CCLS) – ***“What are options to integrate the Agreement into the WTO rulebook?”***

**Joel Richards**, Senior Technical Specialist, Permanent Delegation of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States in Geneva– ***“Special and differential treatment for developing countries and LDCs for the implementation of the Agreement and the importance of needs assessments”***

**Carlos Sebastian Guevara Aguirre**, Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Ecuador in Geneva – ***“The importance of the self-assessments and experience gained so far from Ecuador’s ongoing self-assessment”***

**Q&A and free flow discussions**

***Concluding remarks***

**Sofia Boza**, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Chile to the WTO, co-Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development

**Jung Sung Park**, Deputy Permanent Representative to the WTO of the Permanent Mission of Republic of Korea in Geneva, co-Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development

***“Key takeaways”***

**Rajesh Aggarwal**, Director (oic), Division for Market Development, ITC.

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**To join the meeting online, kindly click on the link that will be sent to you shortly before 3:00 p.m. CET on 13 October 2023 and follow the instructions.**

The webinar will be conducted in English and in an interactive manner; it will allow for questions by participants.

The text negotiations of the WTO Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement were [concluded on 6 July 2023](#).

This webinar focuses on the path forward for the Agreement. After a presentation of the current status of the Agreement, it will explore options for incorporating the Agreement into the WTO architecture. Secondly, it will discuss the Agreement’s special and differential treatment provisions, which are meant to help developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, to implement the Agreement with a view toward attracting more and better FDI. Thirdly, the webinar will discuss issues related to the needs assessments to be undertaken to determine the technical assistance and capacity building needs of developing countries in regard to the implementation of the Agreement.

After its formal launch in September 2020, the negotiations among over 110 WTO Members on the text of the IFD Agreement were successfully concluded in July 2023. The Agreement aims to facilitate greater developing and least-developed countries' participation in global investment flows by improving their investment climate. More specifically, it focusses (among other things) on improving the transparency of investment facilitation measures, simplifying and speeding up investment-related administrative procedures, strengthening the dialogue between governments and investors, and promoting the uptake by companies of responsible business conduct practices, to encourage sustainable FDI for sustainable development. The Agreement's special and differential treatment provisions for developing and least developing countries are particularly important as they greatly facilitate the implementation of the Agreement by these groups of countries.

We look forward to welcoming you to the webinar!

With kind regards,

Rajesh Aggarwal, Director (oic), Division for Market Development, ITC

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

**Background information:**

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

Axel Berger, Ann-Margret Bolmer and Zoryana Olekseyuk, *“Implementing an Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement: How to self-assess implementation gaps and technical assistance needs”* (Geneva: ITC, 2022), [available here](#).

Hamid Mamdouh, *“Legal options for integrating a new investment facilitation Agreement into the WTO structure”* (Geneva: ITC, 2021), [available here](#).

Hamid Mamdouh, *“Implementing the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement: practical legal considerations of provisional application”* (Geneva: ITC, 2023), [available here](#).

Karl P. Sauvart, *“[The new WTO Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement](#)”*, *Columbia FDI Perspective*, no. 363, 7 August 2023.

## **Bios:**

### **Rajesh Aggarwal**

Rajesh Aggarwal is Officer in Charge, Director, Division for Market Development, ITC. He is leading a programme assisting the private sector in developing countries to be the change agent for trade policy reforms and engage in business advocacy with their governments in the design and implementation of trade policies and negotiating positions that reflect business interests. Before joining the ITC, he worked for the Indian Government and participated in the WTO Doha Round of trade negotiations. He has published in the area of trade negotiations, including on “Dynamics of agriculture negotiations in WTO” in the *Journal of World Trade*.

### **Carlos Sebastian Guevara Aguirre**

Carlos Guevara entered the Ecuadorian Foreign Service in 2006. Currently, he is Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the WTO. Previously, he served at his country’s Embassy in Japan. He has a bachelor’s degree in Economics from the Ecuadorian National Polytechnic School, and a master’s degree in the same field from the University of Tsukuba (Japan). During his career, he has specialized in trade and trade related matters, working in both, Ecuador’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Trade. He has been involved in the investment facilitation negotiations since 2019.

### **Sofia Boza**

Sofia 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.

### **Hamid Mamdouh**

Hamid Mamdouh is Senior Council at King and Spalding LLP (Geneva office) and Visiting Professor, Queen Mary University of London, Centre for Commercial Law Studies (CCLS). Prior to retirement from the WTO at the end of September 2017, he was Director of the Trade in Services and Investment Division, since May 2001. Previously, he was Senior Counsellor in the Trade in Services Division and had been the Secretary of the WTO Council for Trade in Services since the establishment of the WTO in 1995. During that time, he was also responsible for legal affairs relating to Trade in Services.

### **Jung Sung Park**

Jung Sung Park has been the Deputy Permanent Representative to the WTO of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea in Geneva since January 2022. He has been the co-Coordinator of the Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development since June 2022. His previous positions include Director-General for policy coordination in industry, energy, trade, science ITC, and SMEs under the Prime Minister; Director for trade policy, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy; and Director for trade industry, Office of the President. He had participated in various bilateral FTA negotiations and led the single window team at Invest Korea.

### **Joel Richards**

Joel Richards is an international trade policy and private sector development professional with over 12 years of advising senior government officials and business executives within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) bloc on issues relating to trade and competitiveness. He is currently a senior advisor to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Commission's Diplomatic Mission in Geneva where he represents OECS member states at the World Trade Organization and other international bodies.

### **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 (<https://ssrn.com/author=2461782>) and currently assists ITC 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 on teaching, research and writing.