

High-level Investment Forum

Investing in landlocked developing countries: Trends, experiences and the way forward

ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQ, New York

1 October 2008

Jointly organized by UN-OHRLLS, UNCTAD, World Bank

Many landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) have liberalized their economies in recent years and opened up new sectors for private investors. Public sector divestments and privatization have stimulated local entrepreneurial activities, while national investment promotion agencies of LLDCs have begun to target strategic investors from abroad to exploit new business opportunities or to help turn around loss-making State enterprises. However, despite these efforts, the total FDI flows to the group of 31 LLDCs remain insignificant. The High-level Investment Forum aims at bringing together policy makers and private sector practitioners from LLDCs, as well as current and prospective international investors to analyze current trends in FDI flows to LLDCs, exchange experiences and best practices and to explore future opportunities for FDI to these countries.

Programme:

8:30 – 9:30 **Registration for non UN building pass holders** (UN-OHRLLS welcome desk at the visitors' entrance – 1st avenue and 46th street)

10.00 - 10.30 **Opening**

Chair

- Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General, Special Advisor on Africa and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Opening addresses

- Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General
- H.E. Mr. Hamed Diane Semega, Minister of Transport, Mali, Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries
- H.E. Mr. Enkhmandakh Baldan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Envoy of the President of Mongolia
- Mr. Habib Ouane, Director of the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, UNCTAD



10.30 - 12.45 **Roundtable I**

FDI trends and prospects in LLDCs: opportunities and challenges

When domestic resources in terms of finance, technology or human capital are limited, FDI can make a difference through transfers of technology and business processes, knowledge of export markets and non-debt creating transfers of capital. FDI can also play a key role in providing the physical infrastructure that underpins economic activities, freeing scarce government resources for investment in social development. Many LLDCs have liberalized domestic economic policies with a view to attracting a larger share of global FDI flows. In this session, panellists will consider recent trends in FDI flows to LLDCs and discuss new business opportunities for foreign direct investors.

Moderator: Mr. Habib Ouane, Director of the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, UNCTAD

Lead presentation

- Challenges and opportunities for investing in LLDCs
Mr. James Zhan, Officer-in-Charge, Division on Investment and Enterprise, UNCTAD

Panellists

- Mr. Omar Zakhilwal, President & CEO of the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency
- Mr. Gary Litman, Vice-President, Europe and Eurasia, International Division, US Chamber of Commerce
- Ms. Maggie Kigozi, Executive Director of the Uganda Investment Authority
- Mr. Abou Diallo, Deputy Director General, Mali Investment Agency

13.00 - 14.45 **Business networking luncheon**

15.00 - 17.00 **Roundtable II**

Best-practices in the formulation and implementation of investment policies in LLDCs

Foreign direct investors take investment decisions on the basis of a broad array of factors that make up the investment climate. Government policies in FDI-receiving countries, in particular the regulatory environment, are key among location-specific factors that influence investment decisions. In this session, panellists will consider recent developments in the formulation and implementation of investment policies in LLDCs and discuss to what extent they respond to investors' expectations.

Moderator: Ms. Eva Molnar, Director, Transport Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Lead presentation

- The regulatory environment for FDI in LLDCs
Mr. John S. Wilson, Lead Economist, International Trade, Development Research Group, World Bank

Panellists

- H.E. Mr. Soulivong Daravong, Minister of Planning and Investment, Lao PDR
- Mr. Ryaz Shamji, General Manager, Golden Rose Agrofarms Ltd., Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Mr. Oleg Dyachenko, Representative of the Sustainable Development Fund "Kazyna", Kazakhstan
- Ms. Suzana Tangu Mjuweni, Investment Promotion Manager, Malawi Investment Promotion Agency

17.00 – 17:30 **The way forward**

Presentation by moderators on main conclusions and recommendations.