

An African Digital Structural Transformation

16 April 2018, 10:00 – 11:30, UNCTAD Room XXVI, Geneva, Switzerland

UNCTAD E-commerce Week | Organised by South Africa

Recognising the rapid but uneven development of digital commerce, as well as a range of unanticipated policy questions, this session aims to explore the implications for Africa's long-term development in the context of the emerging global digital economy.

A key objective of this session is to go beyond simple pronouncements of the benefits of digital commerce and examine both challenges and opportunities in relation to trade policy and development in Africa, particularly in respect to the continental integration agenda, industrialisation, structural transformation and economic diversification. This session focuses on the scope for digital industrial policies for Africa to achieve its own digital structural transformation.

Key policy issues that the session may take up would include:

- Locating e-commerce in wider processes of digital transformation
- Implications of the digital divide and global distribution of e-commerce
- Policy interventions that promote inclusive digital trade
- Policy frameworks for digital upgrading, e-commerce readiness and industrialisation in Africa

10:00 AM – Introduction by convener and moderator Xavier Carim, Ambassador, South African Permanent Mission to the WTO, Geneva

10:05 AM – Speaker from the Mission of Rwanda, Permanent Representative to the UN and other international organizations in Geneva, H.E. Dr. François Xavier Ngarambe

10:15 AM – Speaker from University of Bath and visiting fellow at the LSE, Dr. Shamel Azmeh

10:25 AM – Speaker from IT for Change, Bangalore, India, Parminder Jeet Singh, Executive Director

10:35 AM – Speaker from LSE, UK, Assistant Professor, Dr. Laura Mann

10:45 AM – Discussant, Richard Kozul-Wright, Director, Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, UNCTAD

10:55 AM – Q&A Session

11:25 AM – Wrap-up

11:30 AM – End

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