



GDS/MISC/2018/5
(18/194gd)

NOTIFICATION

**Panel discussion: South–South cooperation for building digital capacities
for industrialization in Africa
Pre-event in celebration of 40 years of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action**

Geneva, 4 October 2018, from 1.15 to 3 p.m.

A panel discussion on South–South cooperation for building digital capacities for industrialization in Africa, a pre-event to celebrate 40 years of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, will be held on Thursday, 4 October 2018, from 1.15 to 3 p.m., in room XXII of the Palais des Nations.

Background

The establishment of the Group of 77 at the end of the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1964 and the launch of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action in 1978, for promoting and implementing technical cooperation among developing countries, were two major steps towards the institutionalization of economic cooperation between developing countries. In 2009, UNCTAD set up the Unit on Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries to reinforce work on South–South cooperation, which is increasingly reshaping the global economic development architecture.

To celebrate 40 years of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and strengthen the UNCTAD commitment to South–South development cooperation, this panel discussion is being organized by the Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, and the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes, in partnership with the United Nations Office on South–South Cooperation, to discuss the ways in which South–South cooperation can help countries in Africa build digital capacities and avail themselves of the opportunities of and face the challenges posed by industry 4.0.

Overall objective

The high-level panel aims to provide a platform to raise awareness of the implications of industry 4.0 for industrialization and trade competitiveness in countries in Africa and discuss how South–South digital cooperation can provide a way forward for these countries, which have low digital capacities and lack digital infrastructure. Countries in Africa, especially the least developed countries, risk being left behind by the digital revolution, making it difficult for them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The panel will discuss how South–South cooperation can help these countries build their digital capacities and ways to finance such cooperation.

Format

The event will bring together high-level officials from diverse areas and organizations, including representatives of member States, the United Nations system, civil society organizations, international partners, industry and academia, as well as members of the media. It will be held in English.

Nominations and participation

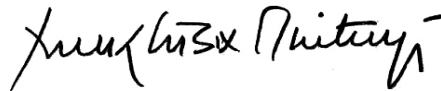
Registration should be completed online by **3 October 2018** at [South–South Cooperation for Building Digital Capacities in Africa](#). Nominations and related communications concerning representation at the meeting should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Unit on Economic Cooperation and Integration among Developing Countries, Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, Palais des Nations, CH-1211, Geneva 10; fax: 41 22 917 0050; email: florence.hudry@un.org.

Background documents

In order to facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat will make copies of the following publications available: *South–South Digital Cooperation for Industrialization: A Regional Integration Agenda*; *Trade and Development Report 2018: Power, Platforms and the Free Trade Delusion*; and *Economic Development in Africa Report 2016: Debt Dynamics and Development Finance in Africa*. Background documents will be provided in English and French, as available.

Further information and contact details

All other enquiries should be addressed to the coordinator in the substantive division, tel.: 41 22 917 3863; rashmi.banga@un.org.



Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD
27 September 2018