



Fifty-fourth regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda

Institute for Diplomatic Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cairo

18–22 October (online) and 25–29 October 2026 (in person)

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The UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) secretariat is pleased to announce that the next regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda, which is designed for economies in the Arab region, will be hosted by the Institute for Diplomatic Studies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Egypt. The course will be held online from 18 to 22 October and in person from 25 to 29 October 2026.

The course will focus on the links between trade, investment, finance and development, including responses to multiple shocks. Its aims are as follows:

- (a) To enhance understanding of the relationship between trade, investment, finance and development and their links to country development strategies and building resilience;
- (b) To enhance understanding of current economic debates, the Sustainable Development Goals and the implications for policymakers in developing countries;
- (c) To provide participants with knowledge and skills that will prepare them for negotiations, as well as to design and implement trade and development policies. These tools are designed to meet the needs and interests of their countries.

The syllabus will draw on the perspective of UNCTAD, analytical work and lessons learned from technical cooperation activities, and will be enriched by the competence and expertise of representatives of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. Experts from Egypt will share national experiences in promoting and managing trade, investment, finance and development, among other topics.

The course is aimed primarily at mid-level government officials in ministries and institutions dealing with trade, investment, finance, development and technology issues who are involved in the formulation and implementation of national trade and development policies. Depending on the availability of places in the course, other applicants, such as university-level academics, may be considered. Kindly be reminded that participants who have previously completed a regional course on key issues on the international economic agenda may not be nominated again.

The course will be given in English, with simultaneous interpretation into Arabic from 25 to 29 October.



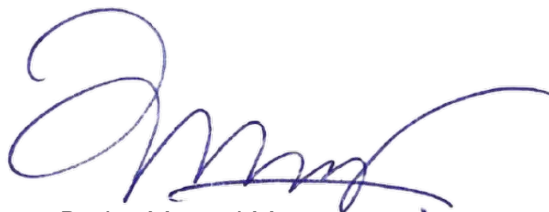
In the interest of efficiency, the application process is divided into two parts. First, UNCTAD member States in the Arab region are invited to present, by **4 September 2026**, the names and email addresses of qualified candidates to the secretariat through their permanent missions in Geneva. Second, these candidates will be contacted by the secretariat to complete an application online; the application process must be completed by **11 September 2026**. It is therefore advisable that this information be submitted as soon as possible. Member States of successful candidates will be notified of the decision of UNCTAD following the selection committee meeting to be held on **18 September 2026**.

Member States are encouraged to nominate more than one candidate per country. The selection committee will take into consideration all applications, provided that the candidates meet the eligibility criteria.

UNCTAD will provide airline tickets according to applicable United Nations policies, as well as hotel accommodation for all participants who travel from other countries in the region, in addition to sufficient funds to cover miscellaneous expenses. Similarly, local participants will receive a daily allowance to cover miscellaneous expenses. Selected participants will be responsible for obtaining adequate travel and medical insurance and a valid visa for travel to Egypt prior to their arrival.

An outline of the course syllabus, which provides a description of the course modules, learning objectives and questions for applicants to answer and the application guidelines are attached.

For additional information, please contact Ms. Randa Jamal, Chief, Policy Capacity-Building Section, Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD; tel.: 41 22 917 2718; email: randajamal@un.org.



Pedro Manuel Moreno
Acting Secretary-General of UN Trade and Development

14 August 2026

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Course syllabus outline

A description of the three course modules is provided in this outline. For each module, participants will be expected to gather information on a number of issues before the beginning of the course, in order that they may contribute to discussions by sharing the experiences of their countries.

Module 1: Development, development policies and the role of international trade and finance in a globalized world – Implications for economies of the Arab region

Description: This module will highlight topical economic issues at the global level and explore their implications for development strategies at the national level. The UNCTAD integrated approach will be used to discuss development challenges, examining the interdependence between different policy areas, including macroeconomic policies and management, international trade and finance, as well as new views regarding the nature and role of the developmental state in the light of the ongoing and lingering effects of multiple crises. The module will also address the interdependence between national, regional and international economic realities and related policy implications. In addition, the pursuit of national and international development policies and strategies will be placed within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, which provide the overall framework for sustainable development policies in the period 2015–2030. Opportunities to discuss national and regional experiences with regard to country-specific aspects will help promote the sharing of national experiences from across the region.

Expected outcome: At the end of this module, participants will have deepened their understanding of the implications of trade and financial integration for inclusive economic growth, structural change and technological upgrading. They should also understand the key challenges of development policies in aiming to achieve both human and economic development and economic growth. Participants will thereby develop their capacities to pursue appropriate policies and strategies in these areas at the national, regional and international levels, as well as to respond to crises, with a deepened knowledge of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Module 2: Harnessing benefits from trade – Changing dynamics in the multilateral trading system, trade logistics, regional trade agreements and the digital economy

Description: This module will highlight the role of trade and technology as enablers of development. It will address best practices and policy norms for harnessing the benefits of trade, including in the evolving digital economy. Import-dependent poor countries, in efforts to address challenges, have faced non-coordinated trade policy responses, including export restrictions on essential goods. In addition, large-scale subsidies introduced by major economies to support ailing industries are likely to distort international trade. Against this backdrop, this module will address economic recovery in relation to trade policies and the international trading system. The likely future contours of the international trading system will be explored in the light of the ongoing global economic crisis, structural difficulties under the World Trade Organization and the increasing level of trade tensions and unilateral protectionist trade measures. The module will provide an analytical overview of the Doha round of trade negotiations, including on the negotiating process and the main reasons for the end of this round of negotiations.

Expected outcome: At the end of this module, participants will be cognizant of important factors affecting the design of appropriate national trade policies and development strategies; able to identify

and understand key challenges and development opportunities in the international trading system and regional trade agreements; and have learned how to maximize gains from integration into the global economy. Participants will also better understand the role of the regulatory environment, institutional and physical trade infrastructures and trade-supporting services in fostering international trade competitiveness with regard to supporting productive and trading capacities, including transport, trade facilitation and electronic commerce and the digital economy.

Module 3: Enhancing productive capacities through foreign direct investment, enterprise development and science, technology and innovation

Description: This module will analyse the main features of enterprise development, foreign direct investment and science, technology and innovation, their development implications and the policy and administrative challenges they raise. Their role in broader development strategies will be investigated, along with their relationship with enterprise and industrial policies aimed at enhancing productive capacities. The module will begin by providing an understanding of the development perspective that needs to be addressed when enhancing productive capacities in an economy, following which an analysis of foreign direct investment will be provided, as the basis for an assessment of the links of international production systems with domestic enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, through value chains. Since foreign direct investment is mainly a complement to domestic investment, attention will be paid to the question of how domestic productive capacities can be enhanced through local enterprise development and how promoting technological upgrading and innovation capacity can bring benefits from global trade opportunities. The focus will be on the policies, institutions and strategies that can best help to attract foreign direct investment and embed it in host economies, notably through business linkages and enterprise development; and on why science, technology and innovation systems and innovation capacity are critical for competitiveness and sustainable development. In addition, the module will consider the development of value chains, a cross-cutting issue across the three areas to be analysed.

Expected outcome: At the end of this module, participants will have gained an understanding of the policy framework for developing productive capacities and identifying the links between foreign direct investment and development and its impact on local productive capacities. They will also be able to identify the links between small and medium-sized enterprises and development, particularly linkages for formulating strategies; and the links between innovation and development, particularly how an effective system for and strong capabilities in science, technology and innovation can improve the enhancement of local productive capacities and competitiveness and promote sustainable development. In addition, participants will be able to identify strategies to deal with the medium-term and long-term consequences of various types of shocks in the area of productive capacity-building.

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Questions for applicants

All applicants will be contacted by email to complete an online application. Kindly ensure that names and email addresses are sent to the Secretariat by **4 September 2026**.

The online application must include responses to two of the questions provided below. All applicants must answer question 1. They must then answer either question 2 or question 3.

Please ensure that responses take into account the economic development objectives of the applicant's country. The reply to each question should not exceed 250 words.

Question 1 (compulsory):

How is national development planning undertaken in your country? What are the broad macroeconomic principles and objectives that determine your Government's approach and the choice of policies used? What is the role of economic development and which are the relevant agencies responsible for its implementation? What are the indicators that best measure economic development in your country? What do they show about your country?

Please answer one of the following two questions:

Question 2:

What roles do trade, investment and finance policies play in addressing economic challenges in your country? What domestic and international constraints affect the choice and design of these policies and their implementation? What are their main effects?

or

Question 3:

What roles do technology and/or entrepreneurship and/or trade logistics play in supporting economic development in your country? Are these issues incorporated in your national economic development plans and strategies? If so, how? Give a brief description of the main challenges faced with respect to each of these three issues. If they are not part of your national economic development plans and strategies, explain why.

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Application guidelines

Applicant profile

This course is aimed primarily at mid-level government officials and academics dealing with international economic issues, including the formulation and implementation of policies in one or more fields covered in the course syllabus (outline attached). To be considered for nomination, candidates should meet the following requirements:

- (a) Have an advanced degree in economics, business, international relations, trade law or public administration. A first degree with proven relevant work experience may also be accepted if places in the course are available;
- (b) Have 4 to 10 years of relevant professional experience in a national public administration, a regional or international development organization, a research institute or a university, dealing with trade, investment, finance, development and technology issues and involved in the formulation and implementation of national trade and development policies;
- (c) Be in a position to use and disseminate the information and knowledge acquired during the course. It is important that participants remain in relevant positions for a sufficient length of time after completion of the course so that the skills and knowledge gained can be disseminated as widely as possible at their workplace;
- (d) Have a full working knowledge of English, the official language of the course, with proven written and verbal communication skills.

Instructions for submitting applications online

Candidates will be contacted to complete an online application. Applications must be submitted in English by **11 September 2026** and include the following documents:

- (a) Application form;
- (b) Detailed curriculum vitae;
- (c) Copy of passport;
- (d) Letter of motivation stating the following: how the applicant contributes to policy design and implementation in the areas of trade, investment, finance, development and technology; how the course will contribute to enhancing her or his professional and personal development; and why the applicant feels he or she should be chosen to attend this course;
- (e) short essay answering question 1 and one of the other two questions in the course syllabus outline relevant to her or his national context (no more than 250 words per question).

Nominations

Nominations should be submitted by **4 September 2026** to UNCTAD through the permanent mission accredited to the United Nations Office at Geneva or the World Trade Organization and contain the names and email addresses of the candidates. Nominated candidates will be contacted and asked to complete the online application by **11 September 2026**. It is therefore advisable that names and email addresses be communicated as soon as possible to the UNCTAD secretariat.

Nominations should be addressed to: Ms. Randa Jamal, Chief, Policy Capacity-Building Section, Technology, Innovation and Knowledge, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10; tel.: 41 22 917 2718; email: randajamal@un.org.