



DTL/MISC/2022/13
(22/256gd)

NOTIFICATION

Short courses on key international economic and development issues for delegates from permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva and the World Trade Organization First semester 2023

The UNCTAD secretariat is pleased to announce that another series of short courses on key international economic and development issues for delegates from permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva and the World Trade Organization will be held in the first semester of 2023.

The aim of the courses is to give delegates from permanent missions an opportunity to become better acquainted with topical issues and developments in the international economic agenda as they are reflected in the work of UNCTAD. Course descriptions are provided below.

Three courses will be held at the Palais des Nations on Thursday, 9 February; Tuesday, 14 March and Thursday, 27 April 2023.

The courses will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (10 a.m. to 12 p.m. if the course is held with remote participation and/or in a hybrid format) and will be delivered in English, with simultaneous interpretation into Arabic, French and Spanish. Courses will begin promptly at 10 a.m. to allow sufficient time for debate after the presentations.

The secretariat invites permanent missions to nominate delegates who follow matters pertaining to UNCTAD and/or the World Trade Organization to attend these courses. Course applications may be completed online at [short courses, first semester](#).

Queries concerning the courses should be addressed to Ms. Randa Jamal, Chief, Policy Capacity-Building Section/P166, Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD; tel: 41 22 917 2718; email: randa.jamal@un.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebeca Grynspan".

Rebeca Grynspan
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

16 December 2022

**Short courses on key international economic and development issues for
delegates from permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva
and the World Trade Organization
First semester 2023
Course descriptions**

**Maritime transport for sustainable development: Key insights and projections from
*Review of Maritime Transport***

9 February 2023, Room XXVI

Delivered by the Division on Technology and Logistics

Maritime transport is the backbone of international trade and the global economy. Over 80 per cent of the volume of international trade in goods is carried by sea, and the percentage is even higher for most developing countries. *Review of Maritime Transport* is an UNCTAD flagship report, published annually since 1968. The report provides an analysis of structural and cyclical changes affecting seaborne trade, ports and shipping, as well as statistics on maritime trade and transport. This year's edition has a particular focus on resilience-building in the face of the supply chain crisis and a chapter devoted to issues associated with the process of consolidation in container shipping. With regard to post-pandemic recovery, during this course, the findings in the report will be presented, to provide an update on the latest key developments with regard to seaborne trade, maritime and port business, freight rates, key performance indicators, seafarers' concerns and trade facilitation, among other aspects. Delegates will have the opportunity to engage on a range of issues, from freight rates to supply chains and prices, and the impact they may generate on economic development, particularly in developing countries, which face more challenges than other economies. The course will also serve to illustrate the links between maritime transport and the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Foreign direct investment trends and prospects and investment policies and their impact
on sustainable development**

14 March 2023, Room XXVI

Delivered by the Division on Investment and Enterprise

Global foreign direct investment showed a strong rebound in 2021, surpassing even pre-pandemic levels. However, recovery is highly uneven, with significant variations across regions and sectors. Investments in Goals-relevant sectors remain particularly fragile. Renewable energy and utilities are the sustainability sectors with the strongest growth, yet there are only a few large-scale projects in a limited number of countries. The least developed countries, which were significantly affected during the pandemic, with double-digit declines in almost all sectors, still show less favourable trends in Goals-relevant sectors. This course will discuss the ongoing reforms in international taxation and their implications for investment and investment policies. The discussion will focus on the adoption of a global minimum tax for multinational enterprises and other mechanisms for countering harmful tax practices. The course will address key issues arising from the complexity of the international investment regime and present the wide range of UNCTAD tools available with which to support the formulation of more balanced international investment policies. The course will present the latest trends in and prospects for global foreign direct investment and their impact on sustainable development. It will address current issues in international investment policymaking, with an emphasis on international tax reforms and investment policies, sustainable finance and investment and barriers to and challenges in promoting investment in sectors vital to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The course will be based on key findings in *World Investment Report 2022*, insights from intergovernmental discussions on investment and development and elements of the UNCTAD

investment policy framework for sustainable development. The course will focus on the following:

- Analysing recent trends in global cross-border investment
- Exploring relevant regional and sectoral trends, including in Goals-related and climate change-related investment sectors
- Discussing the latest developments in investment policy, with a focus on reforms in international taxation and understanding their implications
- Understanding which reform actions are the most relevant in order to make international investment agreements more effective in promoting and facilitating investment
- Outlining best practices and tools for investment facilitation, to attract and retain foreign direct investment

Voluntary sustainability standards and international trade

27 April 2023, Room XXVI

Delivered by the Division on International Trade and Commodities

International trade is recognized as a driver of inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction that contributes to the promotion of sustainable development under both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. However, training policymakers to map interlinkages between trade policy and sustainable development remains a challenge, along with ensuring that trade policy outcomes positively influence sustainable development. In this regard, implementing voluntary sustainability standards related to products and production processes can help ensure that products and production processes comply with a set of social, economic and/or environmental requirements in order to make global production more sustainable. Such standards may help generate higher productivity levels due to improved agricultural practices, training, input use and technology transfer at the level of producers, thereby allowing for higher trade volumes. However, the reliance of such standards on audits to ensure compliance has become a challenge during the pandemic. In addition, even before the pandemic, voluntary sustainability standards might have impeded trade, particularly in low-income countries. Certification, compliance and monitoring costs make it difficult for some producers, particularly smallholders, to obtain certification, and might drive them out of export markets. Such costs are proportionally higher in countries with weak institutions and/or a fragile regulatory environment. This course will address the following:

- Best practices in implementing voluntary sustainability standards to pursue sustainable trade, particularly in post-pandemic recovery
- Opportunities and challenges in using voluntary sustainability standards to make trade more sustainable and inclusive for developing countries
- Capacity to strategize the building blocks of sustainable global value chains