

Ministerial Round Table

6 October 2021, 6–7.30 p.m. (CEST)



Regional integration for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable future



Description

The world is witnessing an uneven recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The poorer, smaller and more vulnerable a country, the more sluggish the speed of recovery. The current international trading system has so far failed to provide many of these economies with access to essential goods, including COVID-19 vaccines. To ensure a more resilient, inclusive and sustainable future, regional economic integration is becoming more critical than ever. Regional integration, particularly within regional trade agreements, is more responsive to the needs of developing countries, especially those which are smaller and more vulnerable. Regional trade agreements can also be a complement to the multilateral trading system in coordinating emergency recovery measures in a mutually beneficial manner.

Accordingly, this ministerial round table, entitled “Regional integration for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable future”, addresses ways to enhance the power of regional integration in support of the inclusive and sustainable recovery of developing countries. Specific focus will be placed on how regional integration can better help countries address socioeconomic needs in these recovery processes, including by developing fairer, greener and more inclusive markets for everyone.

This ministerial round table aims to promote tangible actions that will enable regional integration to establish and improve synergistic linkages between trade and socioeconomic and environmental imperatives.

OVERVIEW



Key issues

1. **With uneven recoveries** from the COVID-19 pandemic, regional economic integration is more critical than ever to help developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, bounce back stronger.
2. **Regional integration can complement the multilateral trading system** in coordinating emergency trade and recovery measures in a mutually beneficial manner.
3. **It is critical to find ways to enhance the power of regional integration** in support of inclusive and sustainable recovery for developing countries, with specific focus on socioeconomic needs.

Participants

Opening remarks:

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Speakers:

Ms. Marsha Caddle, Minister in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Investment, Barbados

Mr. Shri S. Kishore, Vice Minister, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India

Ms. Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General, The Commonwealth Secretariat

Mr. Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining, African Union Commission

Ms. Eleanor M. Fox, Walter J. Derenberg Professor of Trade Regulation, New York University, School of Law

Moderator:

Ms. Kaymar Jordan, Editor-in-Chief, The Gleaner Company

Contacts

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