



2nd Global Supply Chain Forum 2026

RIYADH > 29 November
to 1 December

CONCEPT
NOTE

1 December 2026

King Abdulaziz International Conference Center (KAICC)

12:00 – 13:00pm (60 minutes)

PANEL DISCUSSION

Future-Ready Ports, Part II – Investment & Port-City Relationships

Description

Ports play a central role in facilitating trade, supporting economic activity, and connecting countries to global markets. Their ability to grow, adapt, and remain competitive depends on sustained investment in infrastructure and development.

Ports also play an important role in shaping the cities around them. By generating employment, trade, and economic opportunities, ports can attract people, businesses, and investment, contributing to the growth of the surrounding area. As cities expand around ports, however, tensions can emerge as port activities compete with urban needs for land, mobility, accessibility, and public space. This mutually beneficial relationship may become increasingly complex, making integrated port-city planning and coordination essential.

These interactions are further shaped by climate change, environmental pressures, risk management, security, and crisis response. Investment decisions therefore need to consider not only port performance, but also

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their vulnerabilities, wider economic, social, and environmental impacts. Strong cooperation between port authorities, cities, governments, the private sector, and local stakeholders can help align priorities and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals.

This session will explore how investment and stronger port-city relationships can support sustainable and resilient development, while sharing experiences, practical approaches, and good practices.

Questions for discussion

- How can ports and cities balance competing needs for land, mobility, accessibility, and public space as both continue to grow? What approaches can support more integrated planning?
- How can legal and institutional frameworks facilitate port investment and expansion, including through effective concession agreements?
- How can port investment generate wider economic and social benefits for surrounding cities and communities? What should be considered when planning major port development projects?
- How can port-city relationships turn climate challenges into opportunities for shared resilience and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Programme

Opening remarks: SG request

Mr. Mark Assaf, Chief, TrainForTrade, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD

Interactive discussion

Followed by a panel with the participation of:

- Ms. Beatriz Calzado, President, Port Authority of Las Palmas - tbc
- Mr. Gustavo Santana, President, Puertos del Estado- tbc
- Ms. Marleine Hilde Minko, Head of Cooperation Unit, Port Authority of Kribi - tbc
- Mr. Mark Jon S. Palomar, Assistant General Manager, Phillipines Port Authority - tbc
- Ms. Claire Percy, Dublin Port Company - tbc
- Mr. Marcelo Teper, Director, Centro Nacional de Capacitación Portuaria – tbc
- Mr. Juan Ignacio Leonardi, Director, Puerto Comodoro Rivadavia, Argentina – tbc

Interactive discussion

Moderator:

Mr. Mark Assaf, Chief, TrainForTrade, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD

Isha Abbasi, Associate Expert, TrainForTrade, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD

Availability of interpretation

English, French, Spanish, Arabic

Contact

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