



Global Services Forum 2021

22 September 2021, online
10-11.30 a.m. AST, 4-5.30 p.m. CEST



Services-led transformation for post-pandemic recovery

High-level pre-event to UNCTAD 15

Background

Services are an essential component for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth. Services already represent two-thirds of global output, more than half of total employment, and about one quarter of world trade. This latter figure rises to around 50 per cent when the services components in the exports of goods are considered.

As services provide inputs to all sectors of the economy including agriculture and manufacturing, there will be no productive capacity improvement or economic diversification without strengthening services sectors. UNCTAD research finds that services are responsible for two thirds of total productivity growth in developing economies.

Services that are enabled by information and communications technology (ICT) play a key role in achieving structural transformation. They offer opportunities for higher-quality jobs and for the upgrading of productive and export capacity. Moreover, ICT services were proven to be more resilient to economic shocks than traditional services during the 2008–2009 global economic and financial crisis, and 2015 trade downturn. There is also some evidence that the same is true during the COVID-19 pandemic as seen for example in the European Union.

Taken together, services need to have a central position in the strategy for sustainable and inclusive recovery. The outputs of this high-level pre-event will contribute to [the fifteenth session of the Ministerial Conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development \(UNCTAD 15\)](#), which theme is “From inequality and vulnerability to prosperity for all”.

Objectives

- Increased awareness of the role of services in economic diversification and structural transformation.
- Improved understanding on policy options and strategies in harnessing the development potential of services in post-pandemic recovery.

CONCEPT NOTE
Unedited



UNITED NATIONS
UNCTAD





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Logistics

Venue: The event will be held online. The link to join will be provided upon registration.

Date and time: 22 September 2021, 10-11.30 a.m. AST, 4-5.30 p.m. CEST.

More information and registration: The event requires prior registration [here](#)

Languages: English, Spanish, French and International Sign.

Programme

Opening remarks by Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Introduction to panel by Ms. Kaymar Jordan, Editor-in-Chief, Jamaica Gleaner

Topics for panel

- How can trade promote the transformative role of services in economic diversification and structural transformation, including by their direct effects and by their contributions to all economic sectors?
- In which way can the international trading system support trade policy in enabling a services-led transformation?
- What should countries do to benefit from the transformative potential of the ICT services-enabled digital economy?

Panel

- H.E. Ms. Sandra Husbands, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Barbados
- H.E. Mr. Andrés Valenciano, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Trade, Costa Rica
- H.E. Ms. Margarida Rosa Da Silva Izata, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations and other international organizations, Switzerland
- Mr. Yao Sun, Deputy Director, Executive Committee Office for China International Fair for Trade in Services, China



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Closing remarks by

- Mr. Winfried Weck, Director, Regional Program Alliances for Democracy and Development with Latin America, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Panama
- Mr. Mario Castillo, Chief, International Trade and Integration Division, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Ms. Miho Shirotori, Officer in Charge, Division on International Trade and Commodities, UNCTAD

FIREFLY Cultural Exhibit - Barbados Coalition of Service Industries pre-recorded cultural event with the participation of performers from Barbados, the country host of the Global Services Forum 2021.

22 September 2021, 11.30 a.m.-12 p.m. AST, 5.30-6 p.m. CEST

Co-organizers

United Nations co-organizers



Other co-organizers

