

Enhancing sustainable investment flows in Africa: opportunities and challenges of investment facilitation through international agreements

Agenda

Date: 3 September 2025, 11:30-14:00 CEST

Organizers: UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Participants: African IIA negotiators, investment policymakers, IPAs

Background

Sustainable foreign direct investment (FDI) continues to be a critical driver of inclusive economic growth and job creation across Africa. However, attracting and retaining investment that supports sustainable development has become increasingly challenging. Many African countries also face technical and institutional capacity constraints that may hinder the effective implementation of investment facilitation measures.

Bilateral, regional and multilateral international frameworks – including the AfCFTA Protocol on Investment and the WTO Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) Agreement – can offer valuable tools and institutional support to address on-the-ground challenges and promote sustainable investment. However, the implementation of their commitments through a sustainable development lens is key in maximizing their potential benefits.

This webinar aims to raise awareness of both the opportunities and challenges that international investment facilitation commitments present for African countries in the lead up to the 14th WTO Ministerial Conference in March 2026 in Cameroon. It seeks to support African IIA negotiators, investment promotion agencies (IPAs), and policymakers in enhancing the sustainable development impact of their international investment facilitation commitments. To this end it will provide information to support them in leveraging technical assistance, capacity-building initiatives, and special and differential treatment provisions to their fullest potential.

Moderation by Hamed El Kady, Chief, International Investment Policies, UNCTAD

11:30–11:45	Opening Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nan Li Collins Director of Investment and Enterprise Division, UNCTAD; Chair, UN Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative Nathalie Bernasconi-Osterwalder Vice-President, Global Strategies and Managing Director, Europe, IISD
11:45–12:00	International commitments on investment facilitation: key characteristics and trends over time UNCTAD
12:00–12:15	Investment Facilitation provisions in the AfCFTA Investment Protocol Makane Moïse Mbengue, Professor of International Law, University

	of Geneva and Director of the Department of International Law and International Organization.
12:15–12:30	Lessons learned from ASEAN Investment Facilitation Framework, Intra-MERCOSUR Cooperation and Facilitation Investment Protocol and Brazil's CFAs Daniel Uribe, Lead Programme Officer, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Programme, South Centre
12:30–12:45	Break
12:45–13:00	Maximizing the development impact of the WTO IFD Agreement UNCTAD
13:00–13:15	Implementing IIA commitments on investment facilitation at the regional and national level: opportunities and challenge IISD
13:15–13:30	Key challenges and opportunities for investing in Africa: private sector perspective Jumia Group
13:30–13:45	Discussion and questions and answers
13:45–14:00	Way forward and concluding remarks: integrating investment facilitation into investment governance reform efforts Hamed El Kady, Chief, International Investment Policies, UNCTAD

