

## **Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance**

### **Technical Cooperation**

#### **Division on Investment and Enterprise**

Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by sharing some key figures and highlights from our work in 2024. You may find more detailed information about activities and main achievements in our Results and Impact Report, which is available online.

- Over the year, we produced 32 investment advisory reports, containing almost 500 policy recommendations, reaching audiences through over 700,000 downloads, a 22 per cent increase from the previous year
- Our training and capacity-building activities benefited over 18,000 people, with women accounting for 54%
- We maintained 16 databases covering foreign direct investment, national policies, international investment agreements, sustainable finance, and gender equality
- Traffic to our webpages and external sites grew by 30%, reaching over 8.5 million people.

- We created or extended more than a dozen partnerships, advancing our work on business facilitation, Empretec, the Sustainable Stock Exchange programme, International Investment Agreements and investment facilitation.
- And we received more than 240 official requests for technical assistance, and FDI data, up by 85% from the previous year.

In total, 127 developing countries, including 42 LDCs, 26 LLDCs and 19 SIDS benefited from these activities.

With these figures in mind, let me now turn to the main features of our work.

- **Investment facilitation is a key workstream of the division.** A major focus of our work is on digitalization. We help governments develop and deploy digital government platforms, including information portals and single windows for business and trade facilitation. These platforms streamline administrative processes, increase transparency, and make essential information more accessible to investors.
  - In this context, the 2024 edition of our flagship World Investment Report examined the role of investment facilitation and digital government tools in restoring investor confidence and supporting sustainable development. The report was downloaded over 124,000 times over the course of the year.
  - In 2024, we supported the launch of 12 new digital government platforms, bringing the global total to 102 platforms in 60 economies. These platforms reduced business registration requirements by up to 80

per cent, eliminated physical and procedural barriers, and significantly improved access for women and underserved groups.

- In 2024, over 7 million people visited information portals worldwide, enabling the creation of approximately 100,000 new businesses through online licensing, including approximately 41,000 registered by women. In addition, over 750 government officials - 53 per cent of them women - were trained on the basic principles of simplification and automation of government services.
- **Second, in the area of investment policy analysis and guidance,** we continue to monitor global investment data and policy trends to inform into our advisory services and publish regular monitors for the international investment community. Through our Investment Policy Reviews, we assess national regulatory frameworks and provide recommendations to strengthen investment climates and align investment strategies with sustainable development objectives.
  - In 2024, we finalized the Investment Policy Review for Tunisia, as well as the implementation reports for The Gambia and Sierra Leone. By the end of 2025, we completed our third regional IPR benefiting the CEMAC region, and an Implementation Report for Bangladesh; bringing the total number of IPRs to 55, benefiting more than 60 economies worldwide. Assessments conducted in several of these countries has revealed that, more than 650 recommendations have been implemented, many of them with the technical assistance from UNCTAD. This assistance included advisory services on policy, legal, regulatory, and institutional development.

- In the area of international investment agreements, we continue to support the modernization of investment treaties to make them more inclusive, balanced and conducive to sustainable development. In 2024, nearly 400 participants were trained in the negotiation, implementation and reform of their international investment agreements.
- We also continued to support African countries and the AFCFTA Secretariat in the negotiation and implementation of the AFCFTA investment protocol. In this context, we assisted the COMESA region to align their Common Investment Agreement with the emerging continental framework.
- **Third, in the area of enterprise development,** more than 16,000 entrepreneurs were trained in 2024 through our global network of Empretec centres.
  - We updated our curricula, Empretec 2.0, with an enhanced focus on innovation and start-ups. We also expanded our work in the circular economy and tailored our training to specific sectors, including a recent capacity-building workshop for logistics entrepreneurs in Uganda.
  - A major pillar of the Empretec programme is building national capacity by certifying local trainers and embedding entrepreneurship skills among young people. In 2024, we launched induction workshops for students in sectors such as smart logistics and mining.
- Finally, we continued to engage stakeholders across the investment value chain and support member States in the three pillars of sustainable investment,

by **promoting sustainable investment practices** and supporting them to channel finance at scale to where it is needed most. This was carried out by our dedicated workstreams, namely:

- Through our work on **International Standards of Accounting and Reporting**, we trained more than 1,000 participants on accounting and sustainability, with women representing more than 40 per cent. Our regional partnerships that promote sustainable reporting practices continued to expand, with new initiatives launched in Asia, Eurasia, and the Gulf region. The global network now includes 142 members across 65 countries and five regions.
- Our **Sustainable Stock Exchange (SSE) Initiative** grew to include 134 member exchanges, representing over 64,000 listed companies with a combined domestic market capitalization of \$125 trillion.
- Through our **Sustainable Institutional Investors** programme, we continued to engage sovereign wealth funds and pension funds and last year, we inaugurated the Future Investment Conference in Xiamen, which featured a dedicated Sovereign Wealth Fund roundtable. We continue to monitor data and resources through our **Sustainable Finance Observatory**, which covers policies, regulations, and best practices across 35 countries, representing 93% of global GDP.

Excellencies,

Looking ahead, our future orientation is shaped by an increasingly fragmented and complex global investment landscape. Geopolitical tensions, shifting supply

chains, and diverging regulatory approaches are creating new challenges for countries seeking to attract and benefit from investment. In response, we are strengthening our advisory services to help governments navigate this evolving environment. This includes building on our analysis and research from 2024 on *Global Economic Fracturing and Shifting Investment Patterns*.

We are also deepening our focus on investment and entrepreneurship in the digital economy, recognizing that it is the fastest growing sector of the global economy, yet investment remains highly concentrated in a few countries. Last year, international investment in the digital economy was the focus of our *World Investment Report*. We also recently launched a *toolkit for policymakers in the digital economy* and a report on *AI and entrepreneurship*.

At the same time, we will continue to monitor sustainable finance, which according to our *World Investment Report*, grew to more \$8.2 trillion in 2024, while recognizing that many developing countries still face challenges in accessing these flows. We are expanding our work on policy frameworks, project preparation, and innovative financing mechanisms, including opportunities linked to carbon markets and carbon credits.

These priorities will be central to our upcoming World Investment Forum, which will take place from 25 to 27 October in Qatar. We warmly invite all of you to attend and actively participate in this global platform for dialogue, partnership-building, and action.

Finally, it is important to recognize that demand for our services continues to grow, while our resources remain limited. In this context, we are increasingly working through partnerships to extend our reach and maximize impact. The World Investment Forum will serve as a key platform to build productive,

demand-driven, and results-oriented partnerships that deliver real and lasting impact in our core areas of work.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the donors who have generously supported our technical cooperation in investment and enterprise for development. I would like to thank in particular Cameroon, China, the European Union, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia.

I thank you for your attention.