



**Multi-year Expert Meeting on Commodities and Development  
9–10 April 2014**

*Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XXVI*

**Bios of the speakers and moderators**



**Samuel K. Gayi**, Head of the Special Unit on Commodities, UNCTAD, Geneva

Samuel Gayi started at UNCTAD in 1994 as an Economic Affairs Officer in the Office of the Special Coordinator for Least Developed Countries. He is currently Head, Special Unit on Commodities. He holds a Ph.D. in Development Economics from the University of Manchester and has taught in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana. He was also the Principal Planning Economist/Acting Manager, Strategic Planning Division, African Development Bank, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Samuel has researched and published on a range of development issues of relevance to the least developed countries and Africa, including, Trade Diversification, Financial Sector Reforms, Domestic Financial Resource Mobilization, WTO/trade issues, Structural Adjustment and Poverty Reduction, and Trade Performance and Commodity Dependence.



**Boubaker Ben-Belhassen**, Deputy Director of the Trade and Markets Division, Economic and Social Development Department, and Secretary of the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Mr. Ben-Belhassen holds a Ph.D. and an M.Sc. in agricultural economics and an M.A. in economics, all from the University of Missouri, USA. His areas of specialization include commodity market modeling, price and policy analysis and food security issues. He has also strong experience in intergovernmental processes. In September 2013, he was designated as FAO Focal Point for the post-2015 development agenda, coordinating FAO's contributions to the post-2015 process. Previously, he had served as Senior Attaché de Cabinet in the Office of the Director-General of FAO. Mr. Ben-Belhassen has written on several issues related to food commodity markets, policy developments and global food security.



**Nathan Kemp**, Economist, International Grains Council, London

Nathan Kemp graduated with an honours degree in Economics & Politics from the University of Kent at Canterbury in 1999. His career to date has been centred around financial and commodities markets, working in both private and public sector capacities. After three years as an assistant economist at Bank of America, focusing mainly on currency and bond markets, he joined the London-based International Grains Council (IGC) in 2003. The IGC is an intergovernmental organisation which seeks to further international cooperation in grains trade, including by improving market transparency through information-sharing, analysis and consultation on grain market and policy developments. As one of a small team of economists, his main focus is overseeing the Council's analysis of the global maize (corn) market.



**Loke Fong Han**, Senior Economist, International Cocoa Organization, London

LOKE FONG HAN is the Senior Economist of the International Cocoa Organization based in London, United Kingdom. He began his career as an assistant secretary in the research and planning division of the Ministry of Primary Industries, Malaysia, before moving to the international division and to eventually head the palm oil development division. He has wide experience in research, market situation analyses of major commodities (palm oil, forestry, rubber, cocoa, pepper), country briefs, assisting in the ministry's publications, providing inputs for the National Agriculture Policies, the Industrial Master Plans, the annual IMF consultations, Economic Reports, the various Inter Agency Planning Groups for the Malaysian Economic Planning Unit's five year plans. He has presented papers at national, ASEAN and international forums on issues related to commodities, and undertook negotiations in the WTO in the Committee on Agriculture, Non-agriculture products and trade policy review mechanism for Malaysia, and the Common Fund for Commodities. As Under-Secretary of the palm oil division, he extended his expertise to formulate national policies to promote the development of the palm oil industry, working closely with the various stakeholders of the industry. He was engaged in the roundtable process in the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable palm oil. He was a Member of the Malaysian Palm Oil Board and has served the Malaysian government for 26 years. As the senior economist of ICCO, he conducts research, prepares terms of reference for economic studies, documents for ICCO Council's and the Consultative Board's deliberations, strategic action plan, organization's work programmes, certification, sustainability, farmers' organizations, diversification, and traceability issues. He has helped organized two roundtables on sustainable world cocoa economy, international workshop on safe use of pesticides in cocoa and harmonized legislation for food safety, certification workshops, and the World Cocoa Conference. His current focus is on the implementation of the Global Cocoa Agenda, the road map for the cocoa sector.



**Ammar Assabah**, Deputy Director, International Olive Oil Council, Madrid, Spain

Mr. Ammar Assabah, Algerian, Ingénieur en chef, holds a PhD in rural economics. He is Deputy Director in the International Olive Council (IOC) since 2011. Before that Mr. Ammar Assabah was, Central Director at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Director-General at the National Seed & Plant Inspection and Certification Centre (CNCC), Secretary-General at the Technical Field Crops Institute (ITGC), Head of Department at the Technical Field Crops Institute, Policy officer at the National Olive Products Board (ONAPO) and Head project officer at the Technical Field Crops Institute. He has managerial responsibilities, being President, Board of Governors, National Agricultural Research Institute of Algeria (INRAA); President, Board of Governors, Algerian Grain Agency (OAIC); Member, Supervisory Board, National Tobacco Agency-Agricultural Development Agency (SNTA-SAGRODEV); Member, Board of Governors, National Insurance Board-National Agricultural Mutual Insurance Fund (CNA-CNMA), and Professional responsibilities as Member of the Central Negotiations Coordination Unit for the accession of Algeria to the World Trade Organization, 2002-2011, and Member of the Standing Committee on the EU-Algeria Association Agreement 2004-2011 (March). Mr. Ammar Assabah is 62, is married and has 4 children.



**Carlos Risopatron**, Director of Economics and Environment for the International Copper Study Group, Lisbon, Portugal

Carlos Risopatron, Director of Economics and Environment, International Copper Study Group, Portugal

Carlos holds degrees in Economics and Engineering from the University of Chile. He has been producing research for different institutions for over 30 years. In 1983-1989 he worked as a consultant for the UN-ECLAC Dept of Natural Resources. In 1990-1995 he was Economic Advisor to the Ministries of Mines & Planning and ENAMI Corporation in Chile. In 1996-2001 he ran his own consulting practice, then in 2002-2004 he was an Inter-American Development Bank Economic Advisor for the Venezuelan National Assembly. In 2005-2007 he was a UN staff officer for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and then a UNDP Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister of East Timor. Since 2007 he has been a staff member at the International Copper Study Group in Lisbon, Portugal. ICSG is an intergovernmental organisation that serves to increase copper market transparency and promote international discussions and cooperation on issues related to non-ferrous metals.



**Tang Ke**, Professor, Hanqing Advanced Institute of Economics and Finance, and School of Finance, Renmin University of China, Beijing, China

Ke Tang is a Professor in the Hanqing Advanced Institute of Economics and Finance and School of Finance at the Renmin University of China, where he teaches courses in finance in the graduate programs. He received his B.A. in Engineering from Tsinghua University in 2000, Master of Financial Engineering from University of California, Berkley in 2004, and his Ph.D. in Finance from Cambridge University in 2008. His research has covered such topics as: commodity markets, Chinese stock markets and continuous-time asset pricing models. His works and views have been presented in various conferences held by institutions such as UNCTAD, OECD and FAO etc. He currently serves as the managing editor of Quantitative Finance.



**Alexandra Laurent**, Statistician, Special Unit on Commodities, UNCTAD, Geneva

Alexandra Laurent joined the Special Unit on Commodities (SUC) of UNCTAD in 2001 (formerly known as the Commodities Branch). For 10 years, she contributed to the development of the Infocomm, an electronic portal on commodities, and supported the implementation of the Infoshare, a sharing database implemented in Cameroon, the Pacific islands and the Caribbean. In 2011, Mrs. LAURENT was appointed as statistician of the SUC. In this capacity, she is responsible for two recurrent publications: (1) The State of Commodity Dependence - a biannual report that provides individual country profiles for 154 developing countries with regard to their commodity-dependence status. The second issue of this document is currently under preparation, and (2) The Commodities at a glance (CAG), a regular publication - available in both English and French - that presents and disseminates topical information linked to international primary commodity markets in a clear, concise and friendly format. After a fourth edition on food security issues, the upcoming volume of the CAG deals with the rare earths' problematic. Mrs. Laurent holds a Master degree in Management from SKEMA business school, Sophia Antipolis, France and a Master of Arts in International Finance from the University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom.



**Franz-Josef Wodopia**, Member of the Board and Chief Executive of the German Coal Association, Herne, Germany

Prof. Wodopia was born in Heidelberg, Germany, on 12 December 1957. In 1981 he finished his studies at Heidelberg University with a diploma in economics. Afterwards he worked as a research assistant and assistant lecturer at Heidelberg University. In 1985 he obtained his PhD in economics. From 1986 to 1988 he worked as scientific staff member with the German Coal Mining Association in Essen, Germany. In 1989 he started working for the German Mining, Chemical and Energy Industrial

Union in Hannover, Germany. His last position there was Head of the Mining and Energy Industry Department. Since 1 July 2005 Prof. Wodopia has been the Chief Executive of the German Coal Association and since 1 May 2006 he also has been a Member of its Board. Since 26 January 2009 Prof. Wodopia has been Vice-president of EURACOAL. From 2000 to 2007 he held a chair for economics for engineers and since 2007 he has been an honorary professor at Georg Agricola University of Applied Sciences in Bochum, Germany.



**Valérie Ducrot**, Manager, UNECE Gas Centre

From 1995 till 2009 Valérie Ducrot held a number of positions such as communication manager, human resources expert, project manager in the Group GDF SUEZ. Her responsibilities included the managerial communication of the merger between Gas de France and SUEZ. During a number of years she, as a human resources expert, took part in negotiations with the French Unions. In April 2009 she joined the United Nations UNECE Gas Centre in Geneva, and in July 2010, she was appointed Head of the UNECE Gas Centre. The UNECE Gas Centre was

instituted in 1994 as a technical cooperation programme "Promotion and Development of a Market-Based Gas Industry in Economies In Transition – the Gas Centre". It was established to assist governments and gas companies in Central and Eastern Europe in their efforts to create market-based gas industries. Today, the Gas Centre is a unique UN platform for sharing best practices, for discussions on topics of interest and policy development, enhancing the network for gas companies worldwide. The Gas Centre's programme is developed based on priorities of the member companies. Current areas of interest include new gas supply, transit, gas legislation and regulation, security of supply, LNG business, long-term contracts, natural gas vehicles and the Gas Centre database (accessible to members only). The Gas Centre contributes to the UN Secretary-general's global initiative of sustainable Energy. For All in the areas of security of energy Supply, market analysis and sustainable development. She holds an MBA from Ecole Management de Lyon, 1995, and, Political Sciences, Master in International Law, 2004.



**Dr. Abhishek Deshpande**, Lead Oil Markets Analyst, Natixis

Dr Abhishek Deshpande leads the oil and oil products research at Natixis, providing price forecasts, trading strategies and analysis of developments across the global oil and oil product markets. Prior to joining Natixis, Abhishek worked for a business consulting firm in Cambridge. Abhishek has a doctorate in Chemical Engineering from Cambridge University and holds Chartered Engineer status with the Institute of Engineers, UK. While pursuing his degree, he spent time working for Indian Oil Corporation Limited. Abhishek has appeared on CNBC, Bloomberg TV, presented at Oil & Gas conferences and is quoted regularly by financial media globally. He has also published

articles in financial and energy journals such as Petroleum Economics.





**Euloge Anicet Nkounkou**, International Expert in Petroleum, Minerals and Energy Law, Canada

Dr. Euloge Anicet NKOUNKOU, the First Philosophiadoctor in International Law of Petroleum, Minerals and Energy (Doctorate thesis topic: Contractual and Extracontractual Modes of Legal stabilization, substantive and procedural of transnational oil and mining investments in 550 pages) is currently international Expert in renewable energy with Garethconsulting Firm. Prior this, he worked as Special Advisor at the office of the Dean of African diplomatic corps in Canada, he was also appointed with Ultramar oil company in Canada belong to Valero US oil Corporation. Before that position, Dr. Euloge

Nkounkou has served as Expert and International Negotiator of Treaties, the price of Barrels of Oil and Gas and Exploration-Exploitation Contracts of Natural Resources with the Garethconseil Firm specialize in natural resources cases. In May 2009 he worked as Researcher, Legal Associate Fellow to the Department of Natural Resources to the Centre of International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL). He holds Postgrade Diploma in European Law (University of Lausanne) Switzerland (1995); Master's Degree in business Law & International Trade (University of Montreal (2002); PhD in International Law of Petroleum, Minerals and Energy, University of Laval, Canada (2011). His doctoral thesis (600 pages) treat the area relatively unexplored in International Law of Petroleum, Minerals and Energy. It's furthermore, the contribution made in the interest of protecting the rights of oil and mining companies in the World.



**Zainab Ahmed**, National Coordinator, Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), Abuja, Nigeria

Mrs Zainab S. Ahmed is the Executive Secretary and National Coordinator of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI). An accountant and public sector executive with extensive knowledge and diverse experience in public sector reforms, and management, Zainab has served the Nigeria Public Service in various high ranking positions. She was the Chief Finance Officer the Nigeria Mobile Telecommunications

Limited (MTEL) and until her appointment by the President of Nigeria in 2010, the Managing Director Kaduna Investment Company Ltd. She holds a B.Sc. in Accounting from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and Masters in Business Administration (MBA). Mrs Ahmed is a Fellow of Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) and Fellow, Institute of Certified Company Commercial Accountants of Nigeria among other professional organizations. Zainab Ahmed has earned national and international commendations for her accomplishments in re-positioning NEITI as a courageous voice and agency in the growing agitation for good governance of Nigeria's abundant natural resources in oil, gas and mining industry within a short time.



**Marie Gay Alessandra V. Ordenes**, National Coordinator, EITI, Philippines

Marie Gay Alessandra V. Ordenes is a lawyer by profession, having obtained her Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines where she also earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science. After passing the bar, she first worked as an associate of the Jimenez Gonzales Law Firm where she specialized in corporate and commercial litigation, arbitration and contracts. She thereafter

became a court attorney of the Philippine Court of Appeals where she worked on cases of public interest involving anti-money laundering law, environmental cases, administrative law and public office. She was also employed at the Office of the President as a legal adviser for the Director General of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. She is currently the National Coordinator of the Philippine Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.



**Degol Hailu**, Senior Policy Advisor, Bureau of Development Policy, UNDP, New York

Degol Hailu is currently Senior Policy Adviser and Team Leader on Economic Governance and Globalization at UNDP. Between 2008 and 2009, he was the Acting Director of the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in Brasilia. Prior to joining the UNDP, Degol spent quite a few years at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, researching, teaching and consulting. He holds a PhD in Economics from the University of London. Degol is widely published on development issues. He co-authored a book, published in refereed journals and produced numerous working papers and policy briefs (see [www.degolhailu.info](http://www.degolhailu.info)).



**Sven Behrendt**, Managing Director, GeoEconomica, Geneva

Sven Behrendt is Managing Director of GeoEconomica, a political macro risk research and rating firm with offices in Germany and Switzerland. He is a seasoned specialist in international affairs, the evolution of the global political economy, and the emerging nexus between international finance and geopolitics. During his international career he held positions at the Carnegie Middle East Centre in Beirut, the World Economic Forum in Geneva, and the Bertelsmann Center for Applied Policy Research in Munich. Behrendt holds a PhD in International Relations and International Public Law and a M.Sc. in Public Administration from the University of Konstanz, Germany. He is a member of the International Institute for Strategic Studies.



**Alexander Medina**, General Director of Mining of the Dominican Republic

Alexander Medina Herasme has 39 years in the mining industry. Currently is the General Director of Mining of the Dominican Republic since 2012, looking after all government ruling mining activities in the country. He Has a bachelor degree in Chemical Engineering from Tec of Monterrey in Mexico and MBA from Santo Domingo Tec (INTEC). Also attend to the Executive Management Course of Queens University in Ontario, Canada. He has been professor of the chemical engineering school at Santo Domingo University (UASD) for 3 years. In 1975 joined Glencore Xstrata Falcondo nickel mine where was professionally developed until his retirement in 2009. He also has held several managerial positions in that company, including Strategic Business Manager, Communities and PR Director, Project Manager for Energy Conversion and Corporate Environmental Director in Toronto, Canada corporate office.



**Marlenis Águila Zamora**, Especialista A en Uso Racional de la Energía en la Dirección de Energías Renovables del Ministerio de Energía y Minas, Cuba

Marlenis Aguila Zamora joined the Ministry of Basic Industry in 1989, specifically in the nickel industry, where she worked as a specialist for the analytic control of nickel products from the Pedro Soto Alba and Ernesto Che Guevara's plants. In 1990, she moved to the Nickel Research Center, and in 2004 she held the position of Manager in the Lab Project Unit of this center. In 2008, she moved to the Ministry Central Office to work as a specialist in the branch of Science and Innovation, in the Technical Division. In 2011, she occupied the position of Technical Manager of the Basic Industry, and since October 2012 she is working in the Renewable Energy Depart. of the Ministry of Energy and Mines. She has conducted several research works for the development of chemical methods and chemical analysis of different minerals, for the study of reference core samples, in the application of international regulations and in the preparation of international projects for the treatment of final and intermediate products in the nickel extraction process. She has worked in the design of quality control systems and in technical reports. She has a master degree in metallurgical chemistry. She has attended important national and international conferences, among them, International Conference on Mineral Resources Exploitation (CINAREM 98), the V and VI International Quality Symposium 2003-2006, different workshops for enterprising youths and women, 2004 and 2006, the 12<sup>th</sup> World

Conference on Wind Energy and Renewable Energy Exposition, WWEC 2013.

The specialist Marlenis belongs to the work team for the development of renewable energies in Cuba.



**Daniel Favrat**, Directeur du Centre de l'Energie, Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland

Daniel Favrat graduated from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology of Lausanne (EPFL) with a MS (1972) and PhD (1976). He then spent twelve years in industrial energy research centres in Canada and in Switzerland (CERAC SA). Since 1988, he is full professor at EPFL. He is now director ad interim of EPFL energy Centre since Aug 2013. He was director of the Laboratory for industrial energy systems (LENI) until July 2013. His fields of research include the optimization of energy systems, and the design of advanced energy conversion technologies. He is author of more than 100 journal papers and of several books on "Thermodynamics and energy systems". He is vice-chair of the energy committee of WFEO (World Federation of Engineering Organizations and member of the Swiss and French academies of technology. He is also a member of the editorial board of Energy and of the International Journal of Thermodynamics.



**Moustapha Kamal Gueye**, Green Jobs Programme, Enterprises Department, International Labour Organization, Geneva

Moustapha Kamal Gueye is Policy Specialist - Green Jobs, at the International Labour Organisation in Geneva. Kamal comes from UNEP where he served as Acting Head, Green Economy Advisory Services from 2009 to 2012. Before UNEP, he was for three years Senior Programme Manager-Environment Cluster at the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) in Geneva. Previously, Kamal spent twelve years across Asia, managing policy research projects on renewable energy, environment and sustainable development at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) in Japan. He is a member of the Management Committee for the Global Social Observatory and participates in the Expert Group on "Measures to Address Climate Change and the Trade System" under the E-15 Initiative. A citizen of Senegal, Kamal holds a Ph.D. and Master degrees from Nagoya University, Japan; DEA and LL.M from Dakar University; and Executive Certificates from the World Bank Institute, Washington; Columbia University, NY; Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development, Japan; and Integrated Research and Action for Development, India. He is a visiting lecturer at the University of Tokyo and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. Kamal speaks Wolof, French, English and Japanese.



**Glenn Gemerts**, Senior Geologist, Chairman of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining and Metals (IGF), Suriname

Mr. Gemerts is a Senior Geologist who served for many years as Head of the Suriname Geological & Mining Service (GMD) and as Deputy Director Mining of the Ministry of Natural Resources. For several years he also served as Managing Director and President Director of the State Mining Company, N.V. Grassalco. Mr. Gemerts was a Member of the Gross Rosebel Task Force Negotiation Team and a Member of the Advisory Group for the Development of the Bakhuis Bauxite Deposits. For now, Mr. Gemerts serves as an Advisor to the State Mining Company, N.V. Grassalco. Since 2005 Mr. Gemerts is a Member of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining Minerals and Metals (IGF) and has been Vice Chairman for South America and the Caribbean. In 2013 he became Chairman of IGF.



**Robert Piller**, Director, Auprès Consult

Mr. Robert Piller launched Auprès Consult in 2003, the company's services resulting from his twenty-plus year career managing trade finance, structured finance, credit and country risk, and financing working capital. Having worked across industries – commodity trading, insurance, banking, and consulting – he can draw laterally on a broad spectrum of concepts and tools to be applied in varying financial contexts. To date, Mr. Piller has been invited to speak at 19 conferences and seminars on the implications of Basel II for Trade Credit and Political Risk Insurance. Prior to founding Auprès Consult, Robert Piller was a Vice-President in Andersen's Business Risk Consulting practice in Switzerland, where he was developing new services in the areas of receivables, trade credit, and working capital management. From 1993 to 2000, Robert Piller held managerial positions in finance and risk management within the commodity trading sector for Vitol S.A. and Cargill International S.A. At Vitol he was a leading member of the policy-setting Corporate Finance Committee. Prior to this, he served as finance director for Vitol's nonferrous metals trading subsidiary. At Cargill, he co-led a team providing internal consulting services on trade finance and credit risk management. Mr. Piller began his career in New York in 1983 underwriting political risk insurance. At AIG, he progressed to manage the underwriting of the trade finance and contract-related covers of political risk insurance. Accepting a position with a merchant bank in London in 1989, he broadened his experience in structured trade, project, and aircraft finance. Since 1999, Robert Piller has been an adjunct professor in the Geneva MBA programme of Webster University (St. Louis, Missouri) and has lectured in the International Commodity Management programme of the Haute Ecole de Gestion in Geneva. Robert Piller holds a BA in Government and International Relations from the University of Notre Dame (Indiana) and earned an MBA from the University of Virginia's Darden Graduate School of Business.



**Gianluca Sambucini**, Secretary of the Committee on Sustainable Energy, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Gianluca Sambucini is the Secretary of the Committee on Sustainable Energy since 2007 and Secretary of the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). He has been working at the UNECE since 1994 with an experience at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) between 1997 and 1998. He has managed the Energy Efficiency 21 Programme from 2003 to 2007 during which a major technical cooperation project was launched for a more advanced energy efficiency market formation by promoting investment conditions, policy reforms and capacity building in the UNECE Region. He has contributed as team leader to several publications, including the UNECE Energy Series and "Investiguide".

Mr. Sambucini hold a PhD in International Cooperation and Sustainable Development Policies (University of Bologna) and a Master Degree in Rural Development Planning (University of East Anglia, Norwich). In 1987, he graduated in International Political Science (University La Sapienza, Rome).