



### Side Event Draft Programme

**Title: “TRANSFORMING THE CLIMATE FOR BUSINESS TO ACCELERATE PRIVATE SECTOR-LED GROWTH AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE MDGs”**

**Time:** 1:15 – 2:45 p.m.

**Venue:** Delegates Dining Room

### Context

A favourable investment climate is vital for economic development. The extent to which a given country provides an enabling business environment strongly influences the decisions of domestic and international investors. Business environments are shaped by government policies, laws and regulations, and the way in which they are implemented. African policy-makers recognize that obstacles to both domestic and international investment are seriously impeding Africa’s development.

According to the Investment Climate Facility, if Africa is to reach the core MDG of reducing the number of people living on less than US\$1 a day by half by 2015, it must achieve a sustained economic growth rate of at least 7 per cent per annum.

### The Programme

#### Welcoming Remarks

Amir A. Dossal, Executive Director, UN Office for Partnerships

Louise T. Blouin MacBain, Founder and Chairman, Louise T. Blouin Foundation

### Chair

H.E. Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands

### Speakers

Omari Issa, Chief Executive Officer, Investment Climate Facility for Africa

Hiromasa Yonekura, President and CEO, Sumitomo Chemical

Jeffrey L. Sturchio, Chair, Business Action for Africa & The Corporate Council on Africa

Amos Namanga Ngongi, President, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

Bruce Wrobel, Chairman and CEO, Sithe Global Power

Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid

### **Session objectives / desired outcomes**

This event will serve as an opportunity for heads of African governments and business leaders to explore and discuss how the business and investment climate can be improved through effective public-private cooperation frameworks.

More specifically, the session will aim to:

- Create a better understanding of the challenges and consequences of weak investment climates for business and governments
- Discuss how business and governments can work together to harness each others core strengths to improve the investment climate, by:
  - Finding ways of opening and maintaining effective lines of dialogue
  - Sharing examples of best practice in governance
  - Examining how the private sector can assist governments with capacity building and skills development to improve the prospects for businesses at all levels to invest, grow and create jobs

### **Main issues and challenges to address**

This event will highlight good practices and experiences in Africa of policy and regulatory frameworks that promote economic growth and contribute to poverty reduction by encouraging entrepreneurship, enterprise development, investment and trade. Issues to discuss include:

- Encouraging transparency and good governance standards
- Building capacity for well functioning institutions of governance
- Streamlining regulatory and legal processes to enable businesses – both large and small – to grow.

### **Provisional questions to guide speaker remarks**

- What are the most common bottlenecks and barriers to improving the investment climate and how can we overcome them?
- How can business most effectively assist governments in improving the investment climate?
- How can durable dialogue frameworks be established between business and governments?
- What can we learn from existing investment climate initiatives?
- What are the constraints and opportunities in promoting a robust SME sector?

### **Outcome**

- An outcome of the meeting will be a white paper on improving the business and investment climate in Africa – summarising the key points of the discussion, which could subsequently be shared with session participants and delegations to the High Level Meeting on Africa’s Development Needs.

### **Host Organizations**

United Nations Office for Partnerships  
 Business Action for Africa  
 LTB Foundation  
 Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations

### **Supporting Organizations**

Africa Investor  
 Commonwealth Business Council  
 Corporate Council on Africa  
 Public-Private Alliance Foundation