



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



LDC5
5TH UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON THE
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Technology as a Driver of Structural Transformation in the LDCs

Side-event at PrepCom2
Wednesday, 28 July 2021
08:15-09:45 (New York Time)

[Zoom registration link for the event](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of agility and of harnessing the power of technology. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data and drones can help enterprises in the least developed countries (LDCs) to enhance their productivity and competitiveness, and to move up the value chain ladder in agriculture, industry and the services sector. In the coming decade, we need to ensure that technology is harvested appropriately as a driver of structural transformation in the LDCs.

Similarly, digital trade – in both goods and services - enhances the opportunity for small- and medium-sized enterprises to participate in global trade, and FinTech can help enhance their financial inclusion. By supporting traceability and trade facilitation, blockchain technology can help to enhance the transparency and trustworthiness of trade transactions at speed. Technology in agriculture can revolutionize systems and help in adjusting to the impacts of climate change.

Join us to engage with experts and practitioners from global support initiatives and LDCs who will explore modes through which the LDCs can achieve structural transformation by harnessing the power of technology and trade, and also outline how the LDCs can best access capacity-building initiatives in technology for trade. The session will be moderated by **Dr Ratnakar Adhikari**, Executive Director, Executive Secretariat for the Enhanced Integrated Framework at the WTO. Speakers will include:

- **Mr Joshua Setipa**, Managing Director, United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries.
- **Dr Bernardo Calzadilla-Sarmiento**, Managing Director, Directorate of Digitalization, Technology and Agri-Business; and Director, Department of Digitalization, Technology and Innovation, United Nations Industrial Development Organization.
- **Dr Fahmida Khatun**, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh.
- **Ms Dorothy Tuma**, Former Chair of the East Africa Women in Business platform.
- **Dr Maxwell Otim Onapa**, Director, Science, Research and Innovation, Government of Uganda.

The session will be based around a panel discussion, together with questions, answers and discussions with participants. Overall, the session will:

1. Highlight the progress made to date in technology and structural transformation in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.
2. Support the LDCs to leverage the power of trade, technology and structural transformation in preparing for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the LDCs.
3. Share experiences on specific areas such as financial inclusion and digital agriculture in the LDCs for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.
4. Identify areas for further support, collaboration and action in favour of the LDCs in the fields of trade, technology and structural transformation.
5. Better link the LDCs and development partners through dedicated and LDC-focused initiatives.