

Workshop on “The Investment Facilitation Landscape: Emerging Trends and Approaches”

12 December 2025

L1 Meeting Room, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, India

Organised by

Centre for Trade and Investment Law, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi

in collaboration with

International Trade Centre, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank, the Confederation of Indian Industry and the World Economic Forum

By invitation only

Foreign direct investment (FDI) remains an important catalyst for economic growth and job creation, especially in developing countries. However, attracting FDI has become increasingly challenging. While India has been largely successful in this respect and offers an attractive market to foreign investors, more could be done to attract FDI inflows, in line with its national development objectives.

Investment facilitation has emerged—at the national, regional and multilateral levels—as a dedicated approach to attract FDI. At the regional level, the notable developments include the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) Investment Protocol, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Investment Facilitation Framework and the Intra-MERCOSUR Cooperation and Facilitation Investment Protocol. These frameworks intend to create a more stable, predictable and business friendly investment regime in the respective regions.

Importantly, investment facilitation has not only an inward dimension but also an outward dimension, as Indian enterprises are increasingly investing abroad to strengthen their international competitiveness; they are therefore interested in benefitting from investment facilitation measures in their (potential) host countries. Investment facilitation can provide an impetus to India's economic growth by streamlining administrative and approval processes and improving infrastructure for both domestic and foreign investors.

In view of the rapidly changing geopolitics—and given India's growing role at the global stage—this Workshop aims to understand what countries are doing regarding investment facilitation at the national, regional and multilateral levels. It also seeks to explore options for the way forward, including the role India can play in the emerging global economic order.

PROGRAMME

Session I: Inaugural Session 10.00 a.m. -10.45 a.m. IST

- Welcome remarks on behalf of the organizing and collaborating institutions, James J. Nedumpara, Professor and Head, Centre for Trade and Investment Law
- Special Address, Himani Pande, Additional Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Opening of the programme and introduction to the topic, Karl P. Sauvant, Senior Fellow, Columbia Centre on Sustainable Investment, Columbia University
- Keynote Address, Rajesh Agrawal, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Session II: India's Approach to Investment Facilitation 11.00 a.m.-1.00 p.m. IST

- Chair: Harsha Vardhana Singh, Chairman, IKDHVAJ Advisers LLP and Former Deputy Director General, WTO
- Investment Facilitation and the Indian Domestic Framework, Chandrasekhar Tampi, Partner, Mergers & Acquisitions, Projects, Energy & Infrastructure, Luthra & Luthra Law Offices
- Investment Facilitation and India: An International Perspective, James J. Nedumpara, Head and Professor, Centre for Trade and Investment Law
- Perspectives on India's Outward Foreign Direct Investments: Trends, Directions and Way Forward, Sumanta Chaudhuri, Principal Advisor, International Trade Policy, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and C.T. Vidya, Faculty, CESS, Hyderabad.
- Open floor: Discussant: Prachi Priya, Vice-President and Head-Policy Advocacy and Economics, Hindalco Industries Ltd., Discussant Questions and Discussion

Lunch: 1.00 p.m. - 2.00 p.m. IST

Session III: The International Investment Facilitation Landscape 2.00 p.m.-3.15 p.m. IST

- Chair: V. Anantha Nageswaran, Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India
- Investment Facilitation Framework: A Broad Overview, Arjun Goswami, Director- Public Policy, Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas
- Investment Facilitation: A Regional Perspective, Joel Richards, Director of External Trade, CARICOM (*Virtual*)
- Investment Facilitation Measures in Bilateral and Regional Investment Agreements, Dr. Dafina Atanasova, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD (*Virtual*)

- The Needs Assessment Process: Lessons Learned, Quan Zhao, Senior Programme Manager, International Trade Centre (*Virtual*)
- Open floor: Discussant 1: Pranav Kumar, Vice-President, International Trade Policy and Compliance, Reliance Industries Ltd., Discussant 2: Arpit Mallick, Legal Consultant, International Investment Treaties and Framework, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Questions and Discussion

Break - 15 min

Session IV. Investment facilitation and ease of doing business (3.30 p.m.- 4.30 p.m. IST)

- Chair: Sumanta Chaudhuri, Principal Advisor, Trade Policy Division, CII
- Investment Facilitation: Enhancing Investment Friendliness, Prabhash Ranjan, Professor and Vice Dean (Research), Director – Centre for International Investment and Trade Laws, Jindal Global Law School, OP Jindal Global University
- The International Business Community's Perspective, Matthew Stephenson, Head, Investment and Services, World Economic Forum (*Virtual*)
- Supporting Investment Facilitation Reforms, Priyanka Kher, Senior Private Sector Specialist, World Bank (*Virtual*)
- Open Floor: Discussant: Rajesh Aggarwal, Visiting Professor-Trade, ICRIER (*Virtual*), Questions and Discussion

Tea break: 4.30 p.m. - 5.00 p.m. IST

Session V. Options for Investment Facilitation Cooperation and the Way Forward (5.00 p.m.-5.40 p.m. IST)

- Concluding Remarks, James J. Nedumpara, Professor and Head, Centre for Trade and Investment Law
- Special Address, Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development
- Valedictory Address, B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, CEO, NITI Aayog
- Vote of Thanks, Shiny Pradeep, Assistant Professor, CTIL

Bios and Publications

Arjun Goswami

Arjun Goswami is the Head of the Public Policy practice for Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas, bringing over thirty years of experience with multilateral organisations and private institutions globally. He previously served as Chief of the Regional Cooperation and Integration Thematic Group at the Asian Development Bank (ADB) from 2009, which included knowledge work related to trade and investment, regional public goods and cross border connectivity. His career also includes roles at Standard Chartered Bank and Swidler & Berlin. At Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas, Mr. Goswami has been instrumental in contributing to the drafting of significant legislation, such as the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. He has also worked with the Government of India in consultations, international benchmarking, and legal and policy analysis related to financial sector legislation. His advisory work spans various technology and financial sector clients like American Express, the E-Gaming Federation, and Binance. He has also done strategic advisory work for the World Bank Group related to foreign direct investment. Additionally, he provides advisory services to organisations like CII, USISPF, and FICCI on trade and investment matters.

C. T. Vidya

C. T Vidya is a Faculty at the Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad. She received her Ph.D. in Economics from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras in 2013. Her research interests span international trade, with a particular focus on trade in services, global value chains, trade network analysis, and sustainable trade, especially in the Asian context. She has published over 25 research papers in international peer-reviewed journals and contributed to numerous policy reports in collaboration with leading global institutions such as ERIA (Jakarta), ADBI (Tokyo), Monash University (Australia), Centre for WTO Studies, New Delhi.

Dafina Atanasova

Dafina is an international investment law and policy expert, part of the UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) International Investment Agreements team. In her role, Dafina advises governments on the reform of their investment treaties and approaches to investment dispute settlement; she conducts research and analysis on international investment policies for UN Trade and Development's flagship publications such as the World Investment Report and contributes to consensus-building on sustainable investment policies for such forums as the World Investment Forum. Dafina has experience in international investment law and policy across Europe and in Asia. She was a lecturer at the Geneva LL.M. in International Dispute Settlement (MIDS) and policy researcher at the National University of Singapore Centre for International Law. She has litigation and arbitration experience in international commercial and investment disputes in Bulgaria and France and holds PhD in international law from the University of Geneva.

Harsha Vardhana Singh

Dr. Harsha Vardhana Singh is Chairman of IKDHVAJ Advisers LLP, and Senior Fellow, Pune International Centre. He has been GATT/WTO Secretariat (20 years), with eight years as Deputy Director General, WTO; Economic Adviser (4 years) and then Secretary, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (4 years). Dr Singh has also been Member/Chair of High-Level Policy Groups/Committees in India and abroad on trade and competition policies; Chairman, Governing Body of the Agricultural Economics Research Center; University of Delhi; Chairperson, GATT/WTO Dispute Settlement Panels; Executive Director of Brookings India; Senior Fellow at Think Tanks (India, USA, Switzerland, Canada); and taught at Universities in India, US and China.

James J. Nedumpara

James J. Nedumpara is Professor and Head, Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL), established by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. He advises the Government of India on matters relating to international trade, investment, and dispute settlement. James has several years of experience in international economic law, having worked with leading law firms, UNCTAD's India programme and in academia. He has published several books and journal articles in the field of economic law. His recently publication is the book "India's Bilateral Investment Treaties 2.0: Perceptions, Emerging Trends, and Possible Architecture", reflecting his continued engagement with investment policy reforms in the Indian context.

Joel Richards

Joel K. Richards, Director, External Trade, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat; formerly Counsellor/Senior Technical Specialist (Trade), Permanent Delegation of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to the UN and other International Organisations in Geneva, including the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Karl Sauvant

Karl P. Sauvant introduced the idea of an International Support Program for Sustainable Investment Facilitation in the E15 Task Force on Investment Policy in 2015. From there, the proposal was taken forward in the WTO. He has written extensively on this subject and currently assists ITC on a project on investment facilitation for development. He retired in 2005 as Director of UNCTAD's Investment Division and established, in 2006, what is now the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI). He stepped down as the Center's Executive Director in 2012, to focus his work on teaching, research and writing.

Matthew Stephenson

Matthew Stephenson is Head of Investment and Services at the World Economic Forum. Previously he worked at the IFC where he led the workstream on outward FDI. He has also worked at the OECD on Africa and on investment and was a diplomat for the United States on economic matters focusing on private sector development in emerging markets and reconstruction. He is a member of the T20, co-chair of the Investment Facilitation Commentary Group that advises the WTO, and part of APEC's Investment Expert Group. He has a PhD from the Geneva Graduate Institute on Chinese investment policy, a Masters from the Harvard Kennedy School, and a Bachelors from the University of Oxford.

Priyanka Kher

Priyanka Kher is a Senior Private Sector Specialist in the Global Investment Climate Unit of the World Bank Group. She leads advisory and research projects on policy, legal and regulatory reforms to help countries attract, retain and benefit from investment. Her country level engagements have been focused on Asia, Africa and the Middle East. She has published widely on domestic investment policy and facilitation frameworks, mega-regional trade and investment agreements, regional integration, regulatory risks, investor-State disputes and business environment reforms. Prior to joining the World Bank Group, she worked at law firms in India and Singapore advising private sector clients on domestic and cross border investment transactions. She has also served as consultant to UNCTAD and Commonwealth Secretariat on investment policy, international trade and investment law. She holds a master's degree from Harvard Law School and is a dual qualified attorney admitted to practice in New York and India.

Quan Zhao

Quan Zhao is the Senior Programme Manager (Trade Policy), Division for Market Development, International Trade Centre (ITC). His main portfolio at the ITC includes policy research and project management in the areas of trade in services, e-commerce, digital economy and cross-border investment; he also advises the management on G20 matters. Prior to joining the ITC, Zhao served as a trade negotiator and diplomat at the Permanent Mission of China to the WTO (2009-2014) and the Ministry of Commerce of China (2003-2009). He has served as the Chair for WTO's Committee on Trade in Financial Services, and as the lead services negotiator in China-Peru, China-Costa Rica and China-Pakistan FTAs.

Sumanta Chaudhuri

Sumanta Chaudhuri is a retired IAS officer. He has vast administrative experience in a number of areas, notably, trade and industry with two decades of dealing in multilateral and bilateral trade issues. He was Joint Secretary as well as Director in the Department of Commerce, Government of India and handled Trade Policy Division dealing with WTO issues and negotiated several FTA's.

He also served as Counselor, Permanent Mission of India to the WTO and was India's main negotiator on Services in the Doha Round. Mr. Chaudhuri also served as Secretary Coal, Government of India. Currently he is working as Principal Adviser-International Trade Policy in Confederation of Indian Industry.

V. Anantha Nageswaran

V. Anantha Nageswaran is the 18th Chief Economic Advisor to the Government of India. Before being appointed CEA, he was a writer, author, teacher and consultant. He wrote a weekly column in Mint on Tuesdays from 2007 until 2022. He has co-authored books on Derivatives, Global Finance and the Indian economy. He earned his doctoral degree from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in 1994 for his work on exchange rate behaviour. In 1985, he received a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He worked in macroeconomic and financial markets research for international financial institutions in Switzerland and Singapore from 1994 to 2011.

References

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- [Sauvant, Karl P., “Send Signal to Investors”, op. ed., The Economic Times, 25 April 2024.](#)
- [Sauvant, Karl P., Matthew Stephenson and Yardenne Kagan, “ An Inventory of Concrete Measures to Facilitate the Flow of Sustainable FDI: What? Why? How? ”, third edition, 2022.](#)
- [ITC-IDOS project on Investment Facilitation for Development.](#)
- [Matthew Stephenson, Ali Alwaleed Al-Thani, Markus Thill, Matthew Stephenson, “Investment Facilitations Trillion Dollar Promise”, World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, 21 January 2024.](#)
- [Ahmed Omic and Matthew Stephenson, “ What Can Governments Do to Facilitate Investment?, technical paper prepared as an input to the WTO Structured Discussions on Investment Facilitation for Development, presented at a workshop at the WTO.](#)



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