



World SME Update

(A Global Update On SME News, Events, Policies & Programs)

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ARGENTINA



Boosts Production By The INTI Industries 4.0 To Enhance The Argentine Companies

The convergence of technologies such as robotics, Big Data, 3D printing, nanotechnology or internet of things, among others, revolutionizes production processes and business models of any company, encouraging the creation of new and better jobs.

All sectors and industry activities, whether traditional or emerging, large and SME companies can improve dramatically their productivity and competitiveness by incorporating these new technologies.

With a focus on the impact the Fourth Industrial Revolution may have for the creation of quality work, the Secretariat of the Ministry of Productive Transformation Production of the Nation conducted by the INTI a day to boost incorporation of technology to productive processes and business models Argentine companies.

Transforming the productive fabric requires work on several axes: promoting innovation and the incorporation of technology; prepare the world work for emerging occupations in the industrial model of the century XXI; and improve coordination between scientific and academic sector with productive sectors. The Ministry of Production and INTI have been working in a joint agenda to implement active policies in this address.

"Contrary to the myth that assumes that technology will leave no work at people, what happens to the acceleration of technological change is that new occupations arise. It is a great opportunity for talent Argentine "said Mr. Lucio Castro, Secretary of Productive Transformation. He added: "For Argentine companies grow, generate new businesses are competitive, attract investment and create jobs have that incorporate technology. That is why this government is committed as great innovation, which is one of the pillars of Production Plan National".

In this sense, the president of INTI, Mr. Javier Ibáñez, said that *"to be at the height of the markets opening, the challenge we have from the industry is rethinking the supply of goods and services according to new consumer demands. "* For its part, the director of the Center

INTI Industrial Design, Ms. Raquel Ariza, stressed that *"the new model organization of production is geared towards a circular economy. "* During the day, concerning the

scientific world and representatives of Argentine companies presented concepts, technologies, success stories and challenges of business models and associated production processes to 4.0 industries.

This event closes the cycle of Tables Executive 2016 Transformation Production, a comprehensive work process between the state and the sector Private to develop a collective diagnosis of each sector and define instruments and long-term policies to boost their development. Along of the year, the Ministry of Productive Transformation carried on Tables Executive with biotechnology, franchising, software, vehicles electrical, textiles (clothing, camelids, cotton, fashion design) aerospace medical technology, computers, aviation and footwear and leather goods, robotics and 3D printing.

About industries 4.0: Industry 4.0 The concept refers to the interconnection of resources technology sharing and exchange information in real time forming the so-called 'smart Factories' (Smart Factories). The industry 4.0 is the gateway to customized production and low demand depending on the needs of customers, creating opportunities for thousands of Argentine SMEs that can differentiate their production through brand, design and quality.

AUSTRIA



Mr. Mitterlehner: Trade regulation is modernized and further developed

For companies it is easier and cheaper - all business registrations are free, ancillary rights extended - Faster and easier procedures in the operating system right.

"We want to modernize the trade regulations in a practical manner and facilitate our business operations, making it easier and more cost-effective for our companies," says Minister of the Economy Mr. Reinhold Mitterlehner on the cornerstones of today's (November 2, 2016) reform of the trade regulation. An important focus is the clearing of the plant equipment right. *"This makes it easier for us to deal with everyday business and eliminate many bureaucratic hurdles,"* says Mr. Mitterlehner, who will be reviewing this week.

All business applications are free of charge and are exempt from federal fees and charges. Due to the last 80,000 registrations a year, the companies save over ten million euros. The free trade will be expanded by abolishing the partial trade regulation: 19 of 21 previously regulated sub-trades will be released.

The scope of business for the subsidiary rights is to be significantly expanded - for regulated trades to 15 per cent, for free trades to 30 per cent. Thus, a carpenter could also undertake work such as tile laying with up to 15 percent of his entire commercial activity. The graphic artist, who also creates homepages or other free trades without registration, could do this up to 30 percent. *"In practice, this will bring relief and more legal certainty, and more work will be done from one customer,"* says Mr. Mitterlehner.

Reform of investment law accelerates and simplifies procedures

The operating plant law is extensively reformed. The amendment enshrines a one-stop shop principle according to the motto of a procedure, a decision: construction, nature protection, water and commercial authorization are to be carried out from a single source. "This avoids contradictory conditions and reduces the length of the procedure," says Mr. Mitterlehner.

In addition, district management teams are to be able to approve operating systems with a low risk potential more quickly. This helps, for example, coffee and hospitality houses, confectioneries, ice cream parlors, snack bars or small hotel companies. Mere temporary activities should no longer fall under the right of investment. Especially in the catering industry, this leads to relief, for instance in tent festivals.

Several submission documents are also to be reduced. The submission of the list of neighbors is omitted, which saves entrepreneurs 60,000 land surveys a year. In addition, certain information duties should be deleted from authorities, for example, when exchanging from an old to a similar new machine. In addition, there is an option for appointing experts in the commercial authorization procedure.

The decision-making times for authorities are shortened by law to speed up the procedures. Notifications should be issued no later than four months (instead of six) after receipt of the attachment. The decision-making period in the so-called simplified approval procedure is shortened from three to two months.

Another part of the reform is a revaluation of vocational education and training - for example, domestic master's and proficiency examinations should be classified higher in the international comparative framework. This also facilitates the permeability in the education system and the higher qualification.

BOTSWANA



Africa, Asia-Pacific DFIs forge stronger working ties

Development finance institutions (DFIs) in Africa and Asia-Pacific have forged closer working ties as a way of sharing ideas and solving common problems.

Mr. Arjun Rishya Fernando, Chairman of the World Federation of Development Finance Institutions (WFDI) and the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP); revealed yesterday (November 3, 2016) that the ADFIAP has forged closer working ties with the African Association of Development Finance institutions (AADFI). The Africa and Asia-Pacific DFIs started their own biennial CEO Forum in 2012, which was first held in Johannesburg South Africa and later Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

"The Africa Asia-Pacific cooperation has further strengthened and advanced the role of DFIs in both continents and resulted in joint study missions, training programs, and information exchanges," said Mr. Fernando.

He added that Asia-Pacific countries share common problems and challenges with their African counterparts, such that cooperation between the two will foster development. For his part, AADFI Chairman Mr. Patrick Dlamini said the Association recognizes the need to work together with other partners in promoting development. *"Lessons learnt from our colleagues in Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Europe and indeed Africa will be useful in moving our various economies forward,"* he said.

He further revealed that Latin America and Asia have moved with great speed in achieving their millennium development goals as they adopted the right models for funding small micro and medium enterprises as well as youth and women owned enterprises.

"They have created jobs just from financing SMEs. We can learn a lot from them as Africa. I am confident that over the next few days we will learn from them in terms of SME development. You see, DFIs are all about changing the arc of history for the betterment of humanity," he said.

As a practical example of cooperation between African and Asia-Pacific DFIs, Sri Lanka is exploring possibilities of financing power projects in Tanzania and Uganda. For his part, CEDA CEO Mr. Thabo Thamane said DFIs are different in terms of capacity and age, such that smaller ones like CEDA can learn from their bigger counterparts. *"As CEDA, we are exploring opportunities for shared mapping and strengthening cross border development financing,"* he said.

BRAZIL



SEBRAE and UNDP have signed an agreement to promote inclusive business

Over two thousand owners of micro and small companies in the country will benefit from the project implementation include - Building Inclusive and Social Business in Brazil from 2017. cooperation agreement to this effect was signed on Tuesday (November 8, 2016) between the SEBRAE and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to promote social and environmental impact of business.

The director-technical SEBRAE, Ms. Heloisa Menezes, said that the agreement between the two institutions will enter in the SEBRAE system directory, and entrepreneurs across the country, actions related to sustainability and the need to develop projects that help the population in the resolution of social problems. *"Sustainability is a crosscutting theme that integrates all our projects, have added this theme to inclusive business generation in Brazil means raising the Brazilian entrepreneurial level."*

According to the Country Director of UNDP, Mr. Didier Trebucq, the small business entrepreneurs are the focus of Brazil's economic dynamism, which often face

difficulties to innovate and have access to credit. "The project will include building important bridges to facilitate the productive chain of small businesses and encourage the adoption of innovative proposals that promote the social and economic development," he said.

The joint initiative SEBRAE -UNDP will identify existing initiatives in the country and disseminate it in a specific event on the topic. For those interested in undertaking, the project will open a public call for the purpose of encouraging new inclusive business. Those selected will participate in training events and may make technical visits in global centers of excellence.

CAMBODIA



Kandal Gets First SME Business Park

The first business park for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will be constructed in Kandal province early next year, following the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Industry and Handicraft and developer WorldBridge International (Cambodia) on Friday (November 11, 2016).

Last month the ministry announced that it planned to build SME parks in every province in an effort to assist domestic manufacturing and to boost hygiene and environmental standards. The announcement would see the Kandal provincial "SME Eco Park" in S'ang district act as the pilot, explained WorldBridge International (Cambodia) chairman Sear Rithy.

"We will release [figures for] the investment capital and the number of small and medium enterprises in our park after we do a feasibility study and the master plan for this project," Mr. Rithy said.

"As to how many SMEs will be in our park, it will depend on the feasibility study, and the reason we chose S'ang district for our pilot project is because there are a lot of vegetables and fruit [farms] which will provide the raw materials for our processing factories," he said.

Construction is due to begin in early 2017 on the four-hectare site, he said, with the focus being on food and beverage processing for export and local markets.

Mr. Rithy said his company was now working with the Ministry of Industry and the Federation of Associations for SMEs of Cambodia to determine the optimal number of enterprises that can be accommodated in the business park.

Industry Minister Mr. Cham Prasidh told attendees at the signing ceremony that the success of the pilot would increase domestic production of value-added products, as well as increase employment and technical abilities. *"We believe that the MoU with WorldBridge International will push Cambodian products into regional and global markets,"* he said.

He stated that this would largely come from adding value to the country's rich agricultural materials, but that this must be done in line with international food standards. *"It is the responsibility of the Industry Ministry to help facilitate and seek incentives from relevant ministries for this investment and help facilitate any assistance from development partners to boost this SME Eco Park,"* Mr. Prasadh added.

According to the Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts, there are 530,000 SMEs in Cambodia, 97 percent of which are classified as micro establishments – having fewer than 10 staff – and a third have only existed for less than three years.

CHINA



UK, China industrial cooperation touted

China and the UK have a lot to offer each other in industry and advanced manufacturing in terms of developing staff members with expertise, matching investments and commercialization of research and academic findings, regional leaders of both said at the Second UK-China Business Leaders' Summit in Shanghai recently.

Companies and regional leaders in China and UK may introduce opportunities for cooperation in the sectors with the help of exchanges of educational and training systems at deeper levels, such as an employer-led curriculum and more frequent dialogue between the two sides, said one senior UK businessman.

The remarks were made by Sir John Peace, Chair of Midlands Engine – an English collaboration between local governments and the UK national government, local business and universities – together with a plan to generate an additional 34 billion pounds (\$42.8 billion) for the economy over the next 15 years and to create 300,000 jobs.

"Regional leaders in both China and UK will continue to encourage the public and private sectors to an economic and culture exchange between the two countries, and will make efforts to build up a key projects catalogue and a key enterprise catalogue for regional cooperation projects," said Mr. Li Xiaolin, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

Collaboration between companies and universities with the support of governments will help to build an infrastructure that creates great prosperity and opportunity, said Sir Keith Burnett, vice-chancellor of the University of Sheffield in an earlier interview. *"The Made in China 2025 initiative is vitally important ... and we want to be a part of it",* he said.

In the areas of aerospace, nuclear manufacturing research and other disciplines, the University of Sheffield has been working with partners in China on new technologies, he added



EGYPT

Trade, Industry Minister attends Signing Three Protocols of Cooperation with NBE and ECHEM to provide Feasible Funding Packages and Technical Support Services for SMEs in Roubiki and Merghem Cities

Minister of Trade and Industry Mr. Tarek Kabil attended the signing of three protocols of cooperation between the Ministries of Trade, Industry and Petroleum and the National Bank of Egypt. The protocols are to provide feasible funding packages and raw materials for micro, small as well as medium-sized enterprises in Roubiki Leather City and Merghem City of Plastics

"The protocols are signed under the Trade Ministry's plan to develop small and medium enterprises with the purpose of boosting the national economy and increasing exports," Mr. Kabil said.

Furthermore, the minister declared that two protocols were signed with the National Bank of Egypt. The first one is between the bank and the Cairo Development & Investment Co. S.A.E, and aims at providing funding services for small and medium factories' owners. The second is between the bank and the Industrial and Mining Projects Council, and aims at providing feasible funding packages for new investors in micro and small enterprises in Merghem City of Plastics.

Mr. Kabil pointed out that the two protocols state that a steering committee of representatives of the two parties and a number of experts would be set up in order to follow up the implementation of the signed protocols and tackle any problems that may occur.

As for the third protocol, Mr. Tarek Kabil indicated that it was signed between the Industrial and Mining Projects Council and the Egyptian Petrochemicals Holding Company (ECHEM). It aims at providing the raw materials used in the plastics industry and establishing warehouses for those materials with the aim of supporting young manufacturers and helping them get competitive pricing in the market.



GHANA

MP supports the growth of SMEs

The Member of Parliament (MP) for Subin, Mr. Isaac Osei, has made available tools and equipment costing about GHS120,000.00 to support the growth of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in the constituency.

These included spraying and compressor machines, stitching and industrial sewing machines, deep freezers, curling and tonging machines, tricycle, desk top and laptop computers.

A total of 38 enterprises benefitted and he said it was in response to requests made to him by operators of those enterprises. Handing over the items at a ceremony, the MP also presented a cheque for GHS52, 000.00 to pay for the education of 72 students in the area.

Mr. Osei said he was eager to see local businesses flourish to create jobs for the people and to get more young people to live their academic dreams. He rallied supporters of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) to work hard and with passion to bring the party back to power.

They should reach out to every voter, knock their doors, to get them out to vote in next month's presidential and parliamentary polls. He gave the assurance that the nation's economy would be restored to the path of real growth under the party's government led by Nana Addo-Dankwa Akufo-Addo to end the widespread suffering.

Mr. Francis Boamah, the constituency chairman, urged a united front to assure the party of resounding election victory. Ms. Nana Serwaah Asiribour on behalf of the beneficiaries, thanked the MP for his tremendous assistance.

GERMANY



Start-up for "Initiative cultural integration"

On the occasion of today's (November 3, 2016) talk of Chancellor Angela Merkel with representatives of associations and social groups involved in the reception and integration of refugees, Minister of State Ms. Monika Grütters, Federal Minister of the Interior Mr. Thomas de Maizièrè, Federal Minister of Labor Ms. Andrea Nahles and Minister of State Aydan Özoğuz, German Culture Council launched the "Initiative cultural integration".

Within the framework of this initiative, representatives from the state, culture and civil society will discuss and tackle current challenges for cultural integration and social cohesion. The diverse cultures of our society and the cultures of the people who come to us should be on the same level. It is planned for the results UNESCO - Welttag cultural diversity in May 2017 public imagine.

The Minister of State for Culture and Media, Ms. Monika Grütters, said: *This initiative is my heart's desire. Cultural integration plays a key role in social integration. Culture can open up worlds when civil society and the state cooperate in partnership. The state is primarily responsible for a reasonable framework. These alone, however, do little if they are not developed together with a committed civil society. Let us trust in the great integrative potential of culture and the arts.*

Interior Minister Mr. Thomas de Maizièrè said: *What holds our society together, is for me a fundamental aspect of our lives together. It is not just about the foundation of values in a plural society. Here, cultural integration - especially in the current refugee situation - can*

make a significant contribution. I expect the initiative to provide important impetus for the discussion.

Federal Labor and -sozialministerin Nahles underlined: work is the key to successful integration - not only in terms of financial independence, language learning and professional qualifications. Work is much more: it is an essential part of a culture. On the other hand, cultural assumptions also affect the working world and the cooperation of people at their workplaces. This is all the more important for cultural exchange. I am, therefore, pleased with the initiative, which can make an important contribution to this.

The Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration, Minister Mr. Aydan Özoğuz said: *I welcome the initiative very. It should contribute to raising the hidden wealth of our cultural diversity. This should also be reflected in the participation of migrant organizations.*

The President of the German Cultural Council, Christian Hoepfner stressed: *Cultural policy is social policy, this credo, the German Cultural Council is committed. For us, cultural diversity is not a hint of living it and making it fruitful for social cohesion is a central motive for us. I am, therefore, very much looking forward to the discussions taking place within the framework of the "Initiative for Cultural Integration" in the coming months.*

Ms Monika Grütters, Minister of State for Culture and Media, is responsible for the "Cultural Integration Initiative" within the Federal Government. The German Cultural Council will help shape the process moderately.

INDIA

India & UK Sign MoU on IPRS

India and UK today (November 7, 2016) signed an MoU to establish bilateral cooperation activities in the field of Intellectual Property. The MoU is between the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) and the Intellectual Property Office of the United Kingdom (UKIPO). It is intended to promote innovation, creativity and economic growth in both countries.

The MoU was exchanged in the presence of the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi and the British Prime Minister Ms. Theresa May on 7th November, 2016 in New Delhi.

It establishes a broad and flexible framework through which both countries can exchange best practices and work together on training programs and technical exchanges to raise awareness on IPRs and better protect intellectual property rights.

The priority initiatives under the MoU include:

a) Exchange of best practices, experiences and knowledge on IP awareness among the public, businesses and educational institutions of both countries;



- b) Collaboration in training programs, exchange of experts, technical exchanges and outreach activities;
- c) Exchange and dissemination of best practices, experiences and knowledge on IP with the industry, universities, R & D organizations and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) through participation in programs and events;
- d) Exchange of information and best practices on processes for disposal of applications for patents, trademarks, industrial designs and Geographical Indications, as also the protection, enforcement and use of IP rights;
- e) Cooperation in the development of automation and implementation of modernization projects, new documentation and information systems in IP and procedures for management of IP;
- f) Cooperation to understand how Traditional Knowledge is protected; and the exchange of best practices, including traditional knowledge related databases and awareness raising of existing IP systems

IRELAND



Mr. Pat Breen T.D, Minister for Employment and Small Business leads Trade Mission to India

Three-city visit supports Enterprise Ireland client companies to grow exports to India to €100M by 2020 as part of post-Brexit strategy

The Minister for Employment and Small Business, Mr Pat Breen T.D, begins a five-day Enterprise Ireland trade mission today (15th November 2016) to further develop trade, political, economic & commercial links between Ireland and India.

The Enterprise Ireland led mission will promote Ireland as a source of innovative technology to support increased exports by Irish companies to India and promote foreign direct investment into Ireland by Indian companies. It is part of the intensified programme of Ministerial-led missions and events to support Irish exporters to diversify into new markets in response to the challenges posed by Brexit.

The official programme of 14 high-level meetings and events will commence with the Minister ringing the official bell at the start of trading on the Bombay Stock Exchange in Mumbai tomorrow (Wednesday 16th November).

13 Irish companies from the aviation, financial services, pharmaceuticals and health, ICT and education sectors are participating in the mission which takes in three cities - Mumbai, Bengaluru and New Delhi.

Speaking on his arrival in India, Minister Mr. Breen said; *“India-Ireland bilateral ties are important to both countries and it’s an honour to be part of this shared ambition and*

future. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and there is huge potential for innovative Irish companies in the Indian market, particularly in key sectors such as aviation, ICT and education”.

The Minister continued: *“Brexit will likely pose a number of challenges for our exporters. That is why, through Enterprise Ireland, we are working to find new customers for Irish companies overseas. The Indian economy is the seventh-largest economy in the world in terms of GDP and has a growing population. We see opportunities to grow Irish exports to India, to position Ireland as an ideal location for FDI and for Indian students to come to Ireland to study English”.*

Minister Breen’s last day will include travel to New Delhi where the focus will be on the exchange of information and growing trade in the aviation sector. Meetings with senior aviation industry executives including the CEO of Air India as well as India’s Civil Aviation Minister will be on the agenda.

Mr. Brendan Flood, Enterprise Ireland’s Director of Sales and Partnering who is accompanying Minister Breen on the trade mission said *“Trade Missions like this multi-sectoral one to India, play a vital role in promoting Ireland’s world-class goods and services in international markets and enable the global ambition of Irish companies. Minister Breen’s visit to India is a welcome boost to achieving Enterprise Ireland’s strategic goal of increasing exports by our client companies to India from €50 million in 2014 to €100 million in 2020”.*

“This trade mission is part of Enterprise Ireland’s drive to increase the export market penetration and diversification of Irish companies post-Brexit. The aim is to deliver increased export sales to the region, in this case India, which support job creation in Ireland”, said Mr. Flood.

The Minister will end his India trip by visiting the Irish education student fair in New Delhi where 14 Irish Institutes will present their offer to Indian students considering international study options. The Education in Ireland fair will travel to four cities in India namely New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai. It will give potential students and their parents an opportunity to meet the Irish institutes face to face and get valuable information about courses and admission procedures

JAMAICA



JPC Embarks on Productivity-Awareness Drive

The Jamaica Productivity Centre (JPC) has embarked on a public-education programme in order to build a culture of productivity and to motivate persons to recognise the value of production to national development.

Speaking at a Jamaica Information Service (JIS) Think Tank held Wednesday, (November 9, 2016), Executive Director of the JPC, Dr. Charles Douglas, said students are being targeted in the drive through a programme dubbed ‘Be Productive’.

He said the initiative, which is under way in secondary-level institutions, has been going very well. "If we get young people to understand the importance of productivity and inculcate in them that productivity sense, then when they get into the working world they can help to convert others who are not as productive-minded," he reasoned.

Dr. Douglas said the education programme is necessary to improve some of the productivity indicators. *"We do productivity measurement at the national level, at the industry level and at the firm level. At the national level, we know that some of the productivity indicators have been declining,"* he said.

He pointed out that Total Factor Productivity (TFP), while showing some improvement, continues to be negative. *"It has been becoming less negative but it is still negative... it means that we are not using our resources as efficiently as we should,"* he said, noting that the public-education campaign is designed to reverse the trend.

TFP is the measure of the efficiency of all inputs to a production process. Increase in TFP usually results from technological innovations or improvements in labour quality and skills, best practices, physical and social infrastructure.

Dr. Douglas told JIS News that the JPC has also been hosting workshops to expose participants to key productivity concepts, tools and techniques for measuring productivity and strategies to improve business goals.

"What we try to do is to expose young recruits to the techniques and the thinking, the philosophy behind what we do, so we have this in-house training and where possible we even bring persons from outside to assist with that training," he informed.

He said that sessions are also customised for public- and private-sector businesses. *"When we have firm-level training, we find that we can customise the training for that particular firm and be more effective than having 100 firms coming together for the same training,"* he pointed out. The JPC is the national organisation responsible for promoting and facilitating productivity improvement in Jamaica.

MYANMAR



IFC Promotes Moveable Assets-Based Lending to Expand Access to Finance in Myanmar

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is helping Myanmar's government to develop a secured-transactions framework that will allow businesses, especially micro, small, and medium enterprises, to access finance by offering movable assets as collateral. This will unlock significant financing for MSMEs, for whom lack of access to finance is a key obstacle to doing business, preventing them from growing, creating jobs, and contributing more to Myanmar's economy.

Today (November 5, 2016), access to formal financial services in Myanmar is among the lowest in the world, standing at only 20 percent. According to a World Bank

Group survey of 1,000 Myanmar companies, around 92 percent of businesses relied on their own funds for business operations. Businesses in Myanmar can currently raise funds basically only by pledging immovable assets such as land and buildings as security.

"Financial-infrastructure reform is an indispensable aspect of financial inclusion in Myanmar," said Ms. Than Than Swe, Director General of the Central Bank of Myanmar. *"Access to finance is very difficult if MSMEs can borrow based only on immovable assets. Myanmar needs a modern system to allow business borrowers to use movable assets such as accounts receivables, inventories, equipment, title documents, and intellectual property as collateral."*

About 80 bankers, donor representatives, and government officials from several ministries concerned – such as the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the Ministry of Industry, and the Union Attorney General's Office – attended a symposium on secured-transactions reform in Nay Pyi Taw earlier this week. Organized by the Central Bank of Myanmar and IFC, the event is one of a series of activities to promote knowledge and debate on secured-transactions reform in Myanmar.

"A secured-transactions system is critical financial infrastructure for any economy. For Myanmar, this will be the foundation to enable more financing for SMEs, farmers, traders, and infrastructure operators," said Mr. Vikram Kumar, IFC Country Manager in Myanmar. *"We are pleased to support the Central Bank of Myanmar and other stakeholders to build up a modern secured-transactions system, leveraging our deep technical knowledge and rich experience from supporting around 50 countries in this field."*

IFC has promoted the concept of movable-assets finance in Myanmar for several years. An ongoing advisory project, funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, will support preparation and approval of a secured-transactions law, creation of an Internet-based central collateral registry, and initial capacity-building of lenders in structuring and monitoring movable-asset loans

NETHERLANDS



Proportion of women in trade missions rises to 25%

Over the past 6 months the proportion of women participating in trade missions has risen sharply, from 10% to 25%. This is now the same as the proportion of Dutch women entrepreneurs working abroad. The increase is due to an extra focus on female entrepreneurship, including a temporary discount incentive introduced by Trade Minister Ms. Lilianne Ploumen.

Last week Ms Ploumen headed a trade delegation to Australia, in which 32 of the 125 entrepreneurs (26%) were women. *'I've headed almost 40 trade missions so far, and this one is really different from all the others,'* she said. *'I always used to be one of the few women present. The plain fact is that women were severely under-represented. But thanks to the focus over the past few months, more and more female entrepreneurs are now getting involved in*

trade missions. So they too can benefit from the opportunities and contacts that these missions generate.'

Earlier this year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a meeting for businesswomen to find out why so few were participating in trade missions. Ms Ploumen explained, *'It turned out that many of them knew nothing at all about trade missions or what can be achieved through them. The women also said it was more difficult for them to take a few days off to go abroad, for instance because of children at home. We tried to remove these obstacles through a targeted information campaign and by involving businesswomen in setting up the programme. In other words, through a made-to-measure approach.'*

When recruiting participants for the missions, the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) directly approached women and women's networks in a variety of ways. The Minister also wrote to a number of companies that had been sending few female representatives on missions. These efforts proved successful: the number of women participating in the past 7 trade missions has doubled. On the mission to South Korea, the percentage of women was a record 36%. The discount incentive turned out not to be a key factor in increasing women's participation, although it did make a difference for small firms, which are often run by women.

The discount and information campaign will continue for another 6 months. Ms Ploumen hopes the measures will have a lasting effect. *'Women contribute new ideas, experience and expertise that can help to position Dutch companies more effectively on the international market,' she explained. 'This also promotes female entrepreneurship in the countries we visit. So we are continuing to approach women, for example through our regional business services. And we'll go on using the made-to-measure approach to ensure that the trade missions tie in with the wishes of entrepreneurs – men and women.'*

PHILIPPINES



BOI Drafts 2017 IPP, Supports Inclusion Of Inclusive Business As One Of Preferred Activities

The Philippine Board of Investments (BOI), the lead investment promotion agency in the country, is currently drafting the 2017 Investments Priorities Plan (IPP) which is geared towards providing fiscal support to inclusive business (IB) projects that benefit the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The said IPP, which will be a rolling three-year plan, will be submitted to President Mr. Rodrigo Duterte for approval by the end of the year.

The IPP is a list of priority investment activities that may be given incentives. Formulated through a participative, analytical, and multi-sector process, the list is aligned with the goals, priorities and strategies under the President's 10-point Socio-economic agenda and the framework on the Comprehensive National Industrial Strategy (CNIS).

Trade and Industry Secretary and BOI Chairman Ramon Lopez said the target date of submission is considered as milestone undertaking for the agency, with the list already with the President before the end of the year.

Based on the sectoral consultations and meetings conducted, the preferred activities for 2017 may include manufacturing, agribusiness, and services as major areas for investments, supported by research and development, technological innovations, infrastructure and logistics. IB projects and environment or climate change-related projects are also proposed to be included.

“The inclusion of IB in the proposed 2017 IPP augurs well with the government’s thrust to reduce poverty, generate more jobs, and sustain inclusive growth,” Secretary Ms. Lopez said.

As early as March 2016, the BOI has started the review of the proposed IPP where an IPP Technical Working Group (TWG) represented by all the BOI Services worked on the policy directions, priorities and timelines.

Upon clearance by the BOI Board, the draft IPP will be presented in eight multi-sectoral consultations in Metro Manila, La Union, Laguna, Cebu, Iloilo, Zamboanga, Davao, and Cagayan de Oro to gather comments and feedback from stakeholders. All comments and inputs gathered will be processed and presented to the Board for decision and finalization of the IPP list for endorsement by the Trade Secretary to the President.

RUSSIA



The problem of multiple certification of the products of SMEs in the procurement of state-owned companies will be solved

SME Corporation, Reliance Russia and experts of "Business Russia" found in representatives of state-owned companies, is justified if the repeated process of passing the accreditation and certification of products for small and medium-sized businesses with the participation in the procurement according to 223-FZ.

In order for SMEs to become a supplier of state-owned companies, it is necessary to overcome a lot of difficulties: to confirm their affiliation to SMEs, provide an application for participation guarantee or cash collateral, in the case of innovative products, to provide all the certificates of conformity specified in the Russian Federation. In addition to the general requirements of each of the state-owned companies makes additional, own queries. One costly in terms of money, personnel and time aspect is the accreditation process for SMEs, as well as additional product certification. The paradox lies in the fact that working in a single industry, and purchasing sometimes the same products state companies require completion of all procedures, only in their own certification centers.

Mandatory product certification, installed large customers for the goods produced by the business, of course, necessary, but to obtain the necessary certification requires significant costs, especially for SMEs. In response to the request of Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Igor Shuvalov in connection with numerous appeals of entrepreneurs Ministry of Economic Development has prepared a report to the Government. The main leitmotif of the document is to bring together SMEs and Corporations Rosstandart regarding simplification of passing certification procedures for SMEs, who have decided to participate in the procurement. Nevertheless, it is state-owned companies should pay particular attention to the solution of this problem and to make suggestions, - says Mr. Sergey Fakhretdinov, head of the Committee of "Business Russia" on development of cooperation between business and state-owned companies.

Rosatom spokesman said that state-owned companies do not trust the government centers accreditation. A high security requirements of state-owned companies encouraged each time to conduct additional expertise procedures for the purchased products.

As a result of the round table, it was decided to consolidate the proposals from state-owned companies, experts of "Business Russia", "Support of Russia" and ONF in a single document. At the suggestion of Sergei Fakhretdinova document regulating products certification procedures of SMEs in the future may become a program of partnerships created with state-owned companies. Prescription specifications for companies and products, compliance and regulatory requirements of the certificates will simplify the whole system of certification.

RWANDA



BRD, private sector body sign deal to support local exporters

A deal that could help turn around the fortunes of Rwanda's export sector has been signed between Development Bank of Rwanda (BRD) and the Private Sector Federation (PSF).

The over Rwf22 million funding deal will help set up facilities to revitalise the Exporters' Forum, which was set up close to three years ago to lobby for policies that promote exports and export-related business. It was also expected to work with banks so that they fund export-oriented initiatives to increase product quality and sector productivity.

Speaking during the signing of memorandum of understanding (MoU) in Kigali, yesterday(November 14, 2106), Mr. Benjamin Gasamagera, the PSF chairman, said some of the money will be used to institute a team of two experts for communication and business facilitation to co-ordinate the work of the forum. The experts will

market Rwandan exports across the world during a 12-month period, the PSF chairman added.

"We want to use all possible ways to facilitate exporters in all ways. Therefore, through the revitalised Exporters' Forum, we hope to enhance export volumes and help the country reduce trade imbalance," Mr. Gasamagera said. He encouraged exporters to take advantage of BRD facilitation to explore new markets.

Mr. Alex Kanyankole, the BRD chief executive officer, said the main purpose of the funding is to enable local businesses to maximise the potential of the Exporters' Forum and to venture into new markets.

Under the deal, there will be creation of exporters networking platforms, sharing of trade and export market information, as well as facilitation of exporters to penetrate new international markets.

Mr. Kanyankole said the Export Growth Facility Fund, launched by the government last year, was part of the strategy to realise these objectives. *"The idea was to channel some Rwf1 billion through the Development Bank of Rwanda (BRD) to facilitate exporters, especially small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs),"* he said.

Rwanda's total exports dropped in value by 2.4 per cent in the first half of the year to about \$268.6 million, from over \$275.1 million, due to poor receipts recorded by the mining sector, tea and coffee. The mining sector dropped by 36.6 per cent, tea exports went down 5.7 per cent, while coffee shed 9.2 in export revenue over the period, according to central bank figures.

PSF chief executive officer Mr. Stephen Ruzibiza challenged the business community to get more organised and work with the forum to benefit from the BRD facility.

Commenting on the deal, Mr. Deo Munyantore, a Kigali-based exporter, said the funding will help Rwandan exporters to get more access to crucial market information, including prices. *"Through this forum, we will be able to get more partnerships that can help us penetrate bigger markets,"* Munyantore said.

VIETNAM



Vietnamese, South Korean funds cooperate for SME development

Việt Nam's Small and Medium Enterprise Development Fund (SMEDF) will partner with Korea's Small & Medium Business Corporation (SBC) to promote development of SMEs. Their co-operation will also help the SMEs seek partners in both countries.

Under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding signed in Hà Nội on Tuesday (November 8, 2016), SMEDF and SBC will also exchange information about business

supporting policies and assist each other in conducting surveys in their respective nations.

SMEDF Director Mr. Hoàng Thị Hồng said South Korea is now the largest foreign investor in Việt Nam, with a large sum of investment poured into the electronics, energy and manufacturing sectors.

The flow of Korean investment into Việt Nam has given a boost to the development of local SMEs and enabled them to join the global supply chain and get access to advanced technologies, she added.

Meanwhile, SBC Vice President for Global Marketing Mr. Yong Seung Lee said SBC has accompanied South Korea's SMEs by assisting them in export marketing and setting up a centre for SME development in Hà Nội in 2014.

Established in 1979, SBC is a non-profit, government-funded organisation. It is tasked with implementing government policies and programmes for the sound growth and development of South Korean SMEs as well as providing them with financial support.

Total capital that SBC poured into SMEs or start-up firms this year amounted to 4.5 trillion won.

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