



## 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum 2007

### Business Engagement for Governance

Date: 8 to 10 October 2007

Venue: Preston Auditorium

World Bank, Washington D.C.

"Growth and responsibility" are the central themes of this year's G8-presidency. While the G8-process is an inter-governmental affair, it is also fundamental to acknowledge the crucial role that business can play in reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development:

*"Companies should not look to the poor merely to exploit their untapped purchasing power or dip into low-cost labor pools. [...] To succeed in serving this market, companies must strike a delicate balance, keeping in mind both their legal obligations to return profits to their investors, as well as their social responsibilities."*

V. Kasturi Rangan, Harvard Business School

Achieving the MDGs requires the engagement of a vital private sector, together with its stakeholders, for shaping sound and stable global governance structures:

*"Business is increasingly aware of this symbiotic relationship with society, and of the role that responsible business practices can play in fostering the very stability that business needs to prosper."*

Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General United Nations



## Business Engagement for Governance

### Why should businesses contribute to a viable global governance structure?

Recent research has shown that through sustained *and* sustainable investment, the private sector can play a significant role in the achievement of the MDGs. A precondition for this progress, however, is that businesses encounter a stable and conducive environment to operate in. However, global standards are still a matter of fierce debate - from issues of human rights to corporate governance to carbon emissions. The overall global governance architecture remains "under construction". Nevertheless, business actors increasingly determine the policy results of global discussions on the emerging global governance system.

### What is the Focus of the IBF?

The 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum will showcase how the private sector, together with its stakeholders, can shape a sound and stable business environment. Participants will discuss and disseminate innovative approaches to Business Engagement for Governance, such as the example of forward looking companies which are joining forces to establish new frameworks for emissions trading. Other private initiatives are aiming at providing a set of values for good business practices by adopting principles against bribery. In this regard it is of great relevance for companies to demonstrate that their engagement in governance shaping efforts is profitable.

The 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum will focus on the theme of private governance initiatives that build up a country's climate for sustainable investment, more specifically addressing: business ethics and business engagement in climate & energy policies. Key questions to be addressed include

- How can the private sector constructively contribute to improved global governance frameworks?
- What can we learn from business action in combating corruption?
- What can we learn from business engagement on climate and energy issues?
- What could be done to strengthen the capacity of private sector actors to contribute more and for other stakeholders to engage more effectively with business on these crucial issues?

In addition to the main topics, the 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum 2007 will include a "Net-Making" session, which will offer participants the opportunity to leverage the conference's networking potential.

### Who is participating?

The 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum 2007 brings together representatives from businesses and business-driven organizations. It connects opinion leaders with those who want to follow suit. Participants originate from industrialized countries, anchor countries and other emerging market economies as well as from developing countries. The discussions are reflected and enriched by contributors from the public sector, academia, civil society and international organizations. The official conference language is English.

### Business and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum 2007 is part of the continued cooperation on the theme of "Business and the Millennium Development Goals" between InWEnt and the World Bank Institute. It builds upon the outcomes of both, the 10<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum and the 11<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum. The reports of these fora, "Fighting Poverty: A Business Opportunity" and "The Business Challenge Africa", may be downloaded on the webpage [www.businessandmdgs.net](http://www.businessandmdgs.net).

Since 1995 the Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft (CDG) which is now InWEnt - Capacity Building International has organized annual conferences addressing issues of sustainable development with particular relevance to the private sector.

Since its inception, the International Business Forum has served as a launch pad for new initiatives and strategies to be absorbed by development agencies and practitioners. The Fora have resulted not only in the formation of new partnerships for economic and development cooperation but also in the successful implementation of objectives spelled out in internationally agreed upon policies, such as the United Nation's Agenda 21. In doing so, private sector agents put particular emphasis on developing a business-specific perspective on sustainable development, to give consideration to the real sense of the term *Sustainable Business Development*.



## Past International Business Fora

- 2006 Bonn: Business and MDGs - The Business Challenge Africa
- 2005 New York: Business and MDGs - An active Role for Globally Responsible Companies
- 2004 Feldafing: Regional Trade and Sustainable Development
- 2003 Johannesburg, Hanoi, San Jose: Regional Trade and Sustainable Development
- 2002 Johannesburg: From Rio to Johannesburg - A Business Perspective
- 2001 Berlin: Investment, Environment and Corporate Social Responsibility
- 2000 Hannover: Sustainable Business and Social Responsibility as a Dialogue: Future Works - Labor, Sustainable Business and Social Responsibility
- 1999 Berlin: Sustainable Consumption and Production: Creating Opportunities in a Changing World
- 1998 Berlin: Greening the Financial Sector
- 1997 New York: The International Business Forum on Agenda 21, 5 Years after Rio
- 1995 Berlin: Sustainable Germany, Implications for the South

InWEnt - Internationale Weiterbildung und Entwicklung gGmbH  
Capacity Building International, Germany

InWEnt stands for the development of human resources and organisations within the framework of international co-operation. InWEnt's services cater to skilled and managerial staff as well as to decision makers from business, politics, administration and civil societies worldwide. InWEnt co-operates equally with partners from developing, transition and industrialised countries. Each year some 55,000 persons participate in our measures.

## Contact

If you are interested in participating in the 12<sup>th</sup> International Business Forum and for inquiries please do not hesitate to contact:

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More information on participation as well as the registration form is available on the webpage  
[www.businessandmdgs.net](http://www.businessandmdgs.net)