

# Governments, businesses ‘walk the talk’ for investment in sustainable development: UN forum

Business and government leaders from around the world have gathered at a major United Nations conference in Geneva, in search of innovative and strategic solutions to complex investment and development challenges.

The [2018 World Investment Forum](#), organized by [UNCTAD](#), the primary UN agency on trade and development, comes against the backdrop of declining investment flows around the world and concern over how that is affecting sustainable development, according to the agency.

It is now time “to walk the talk” and scale up private investments in the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) said UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi, welcoming over 6,000 [participants](#) from more than 160 countries, to the Forum.

“The remarkable turnout at this year’s Forum bears witness to the critical need for this global platform to tackle investment in sustainable development.”

In his remarks, Mr. Kituyi also underscored that continued engagement between governments is vital for refining international economic policies, especially when the support for multilateralism “is not always evident.”

Mutual solutions to shared problems, must “supersede” narrow interests, he stressed, calling on governments, the private sector, and all other stakeholders, to help ensure that good ideas and policies can be turned into action on the ground.

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Also speaking at the opening of the Forum, María Fernanda Espinosa, the President of the 73rd session of the General Assembly underscored the importance of partnership with the private sector, urging them to make “responsible investments” that respect human rights, environmental regulations and fiscal regulations.

“By fulfilling its moral and legal imperative, the sector can have a positive impact on the socio-economic conditions of a country; boost employment,

productive investments, and knowledge and technology transfer,” she said.

Held from 22-26 October, at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, the 2018 edition of the biennial World Investment Forum features [several high-profile events](#), including an investment summit, a global “sustainable stock exchanges” dialogue, a conference on investment agreements, thematic discussions, and other side events.

The opening day of the Forum also saw agencies from Bahrain, India, Lesotho and South Africa win top laurels at the UN Investment Promotion Awards for excellence in advancing investments in critical socio-economic sectors.

According to an UNCTAD [news release](#), the Bahrain Economic Development Board, Invest India, Lesotho National Development Corporation, and InvestSA from South Africa won awards for boosting technology education, promoting renewable energy, employment, and waste-to-nutrient recycling, respectively.