

UN forum to bring together governments and entrepreneurs for sustainable development

30 October 2017 – More than one thousand business leaders, government officials and academics will converge at a United Nations forum Tuesday in Bahrain to strengthen global partnerships, entrepreneurship and investment for the implementation of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

“As our world gets more interconnected, no one country or region can meet development challenges on its own,” the President of the General Assembly, Miroslav Lajčák, who will be attending the World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum, told *UN News*.

“The Forum offers a unique opportunity to promote entrepreneurship and innovation, both of which can help us build momentum to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),” he added.

Being organized from 31 October to 2 November by the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in partnership with the Government of Bahrain, the World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum has the overarching theme of *achieving the SDGs through promoting entrepreneurship and innovation*.

At this time of global economic uncertainty, enhanced international development cooperation is more important than ever [...] world leaders need to deliver on their promise to lift people from poverty, ensure sustainability and make sure that no one is left behind
President of the General Assembly Miroslav Lajčák

The three day Forum also includes a number of key events on the Maritime-Continental Silk Road; investing for global impact; women in industry; private sector engagement for implementing SDGs; promoting inclusive investment in Africa; and forging partnerships between entrepreneurs.

Highlighting, in particular, the focus on the role of female entrepreneurs and the challenges they face in industry, Hashim Hussein, the Head of UNIDO Investment, Technology and Promotion Office in Bahrain ([ITPO-Bahrain](#)) said that the percentage of women holding senior positions below 10 per cent worldwide and challenges relating to issues such as maternity leave and working hours are indicative of the challenges they face at work.

The Forum will, therefore, discuss addressing these challenges and explore opportunities for women to be more active in the industrial arena and promote women entrepreneurship, including through access to finance and new technologies, building support networks, and managerial skills.

It will focus on the role of female entrepreneurs, partnerships for

development, and the implications for achieving the 2030 Agenda, in particular [SDG 9](#) on industry, innovation and infrastructure.

It will also recognize the contributions made by prominent women entrepreneurs from different parts of the world.

Linked to the World Forum, UNIDO organized a training on understanding links between gender equality and industrial development, and designing programmes and policies that promote women's economic empowerment.

Concluding later today, key issues and challenges identified at the training will feed into one of the Forum's plenary sessions, informed Mr. Hussein.

Also on the agenda for the Forum is the inauguration of the Bahrain Entrepreneurs Exhibition, launch of the Maritime-Continental Silk Road Entrepreneurs Alliance and Action Plan, and the unveiling of the Coding for Girls joint initiative between the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), UNIDO ITPO-Bahrain, Microsoft and the Bahrain Supreme Council for Women.

UN News is on location in Manama, Bahrain, covering the Forum and its associated events. Follow @UN_News_Centre and @UNNewsArabic to stay updated on news and highlights from WEIF 2017.