

BUSINESS LEADERS CALL FOR COLLABORATIVE SDG EFFORT

Paris, 29 September 2015

Business leaders representing companies with operations in over 190 countries have thrown their weight behind the new UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs — launched at a major summit in New York last week — set out a new vision for a brighter, safer and more prosperous world for all. In a letter to the Financial Times the business leaders wrote: “Many businesses are already playing a leading role in promoting sustainable development, but with the right support and incentives from government we can do much more. A collaborative effort is also required to enable the transformation of business practices towards sustainability more broadly — including within the small business sector.”

Commenting on the release of the letter, ICC Secretary General John Danilovich said: “This is a clear and visible demonstration of the business community’s commitment to the new Global Goals. We call on governments to work constructively with the private sector to deliver fully on the promise of the SDGs”.

The full text of the letter is below and can also be found on the Financial Times website.

Sir, We represent more than 20 of the world’s leading businesses. We are writing at the initiative of the International Chamber of Commerce in advance of the formal adoption this week of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — the UN’s new agenda for people, planet and prosperity.

The SDGs represent, without doubt, the most ambitious development agenda ever forged at the international level. They set out an essential road map to address some of the world’s most pressing and intractable problems, from extreme poverty through to climate change. Simply put, we all — as global citizens — have an interest in making the SDGs an unprecedented and unmitigated success.

The international development agenda is sometimes narrowly construed as a matter for governments alone, but it is clear that effective implementation of the SDGs will require widespread business support. To take one angle: official estimates place the annual investment gap in sustainable development in developing markets at up to \$2.5tn annually. It is anticipated that much of this shortfall will need to be filled by private capital. In other areas, business expertise and innovation will be key if we are to limit greenhouse gas emissions, create new jobs and promote sustainable consumption cycles.

That’s why we are calling on world leaders gathering in New York this week to commit to working actively and constructively with the private sector to deliver on the promise of the new “Global Goals”. Many businesses are already playing a leading role in promoting sustainable development,

but with the right support and incentives from government we can do much more. A collaborative effort is also required to enable the transformation of business practices towards sustainability more broadly — including within the small business sector.

While the SDGs address many complex issues, our message is simple: let us work together to seize this once in a generation opportunity to deliver a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

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