

Italy-Somalia Business Forum

Mogadishu,

10th – 11th December 2019

Background

Following more than two decades of civil war, Somalia has made important progress in recent years with the establishment of permanent political, economic and security institutions. In combination with *“the winds of hope and peace that now blow in the Horn of Africa”*, as affirmed by the President Farmaajo, the produced stabilizing thrust today points towards a future in which Somalia may stand among the international community as a healthy, democratic and peaceful state concerned, above all, with the wellbeing of its citizens.

As showcased by the 2017 approval of the first Somalia National Development Plan (SNDP) in over thirty years, Somalia is once again in the position to fully convey both its human capital and financial resources towards the construction of a more prosperous and resilient future. Conceived to identify the investment and commercial opportunities that may recover, modernize and innovate the Somali productive infrastructure, the programmatic route traced in the SNDP shows the Federal Government of Somalia’s (FGS) degree of commitment to the values, objectives and requirements proper to both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (iPRSP), a global poverty eradication scheme that partially satisfies the global debt forgiveness program, which the FGS is aggressively pursuing in collaboration with the IMF.

It is therefore promising to note that even though the 75% of the Somali GDP is constituted by informal economic relations centered on the commerce of livestock and agricultural products - categories by definition exposed to environmental negative shocks

- in the 2015-2018 period the Somali economy has outperformed the average of the sub-Saharan Africa zone, growing at an average of 4% per year (World Bank). Moreover, it is all the more encouraging that against the excessive weight of imports on the Somali balance of payments, the inflow of fiscal revenues, of remittances relative to the diaspora, of humanitarian aid and of FDI are increasing, substantially aiding the medium and long term prospected sustainability of the FGS' budgetary and fiscal position.

In this context, the “Agro-technology development for economic growth in South and Central Somalia” project, implemented by UNIDO, seeks to contribute by focusing on education, economic recovery and job creation as means to stimulate the productivity and competitiveness of the Somali manufacturing sector. Funded by the Italian Agency of Development Cooperation and lasting for 30 months starting from January 2019, the UNIDO project envisages, among others, the organization of economic and business forums to support the Somali SMEs in discussing investment and commercial opportunities with international partners.

Within this framework, and following the Roundtable Somalia held in Rome on the 11th of October, the Italy-Somalia Business Forum will take place in Mogadishu on the 10th and 11th of December 2019. It will be a useful opportunity for the Somali and Italian companies to discuss in a dedicated BtoB session potential commercial partnerships.

Objectives

Following the programmatic route traced by the Somali authorities in collaboration with the involved international institutions and partners, the business sectors represented in the Italy-Somalia Business Forum in Mogadishu are: agro-industry; renewable energies, fishery, and social housing. Beyond the immediate goal of promoting Italian-Somali relationships and partnerships, it is key to stress that the technological, capital and know-how transfers that will occur shall constitute the means to achieve the UNIDO project's overall objective of improving the Somali resilience.



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The forum will be organized with the aim of promoting Somalia as destination for business to the Italian private sector with the goal of establishing relationships and partnerships between the private sectors of both the nations which may mutually benefit the parties and satisfy the identified technological know-how demand for Somalian private sector as well as offer business opportunities for the Italian counterparts.

Primarily, the organization of the forum can be categorized into two parts, the first part or the day will be focused on highlighting the existing opportunities in Somalia and the need of the local private sector. In the same day, a window will be available for the Italian participants to show-case their strength and need through defined thematic panels.

The second part on the day two will be completely devoted to one to one business sessions (B 2 B sessions) between the private sectors of both the countries to develop mutual areas of interest and cooperation.

Agenda

10th December, Mogadishu

09:30	<i>Welcome Coffee</i>		
10.00	Opening Remarks		
	Representative of the Federal Government of Somalia		
	Representative of UNIDO		
	Representative of the Italian Government		
10.30	Keynote Presentations		
	Representative of the Federal Government of Somalia - Ministry of Commerce and Industry		
	Representative of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation		
11.15	<i>Coffee Break</i>		
11.30	Technical Session		
	Presentation of the UNIDO project “ Agro Technology Development for Economic Growth in South and Central Somalia ”		
	Presentation held by the Somalia Chamber of Commerce		
12.30	<i>Networking Lunch</i>		
14.00	Thematic Panels <i>(The Italian companies can present their products through a 10 minutes pitch)</i>		
	Agro-Industry	Social Housing	Renewable Energies
			Fishery
16.30	Closing of the first day		



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11th December, Mogadishu

09:00	Welcome coffee
09.30	B to B session with Somali companies
13.00	<i>Networking Lunch</i>
15:00	Closing of the Forum

During the two-days Forum an exhibition area will be open. Both the Italian and the Somali companies can exhibit their products or promotional material.