TPO Network World Conference and Awards 2016

MEGATRENDS OF A COMPLEX, UNCERTAIN AND CHANGING WORLD

24 NOVEMBER 2016

Speakers

Mr. Pedro Beirute, General Manager, Foreign Trade Corporation of Costa Rica
Mr. Mohamed Benayad, Secretary-General, Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Trade
Ms. Priscilla Pilime, Chief Executive Officer, National Trade Development and Promotion Organization of Zimbabwe
Mr. Max Timmerman, Managing Director, Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries
Mr. Chen Zhou, Vice-Chairman, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade

Moderator

Mr. James Zhan, Director of Trade and Investment Division, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

CONCLUSIONS

- Long-term change is shaping the business environment, and trade and investment promotion organizations need to acknowledge these trends and design plans to adapt.
- Digital transformation, instability in global financial markets and political regimes, anti-globalization and free trade, slow recovery for the 2008 crisis, increased awareness and importance of recycling, and growth of the middle class, will continue shaping the trade and business landscape.
- Response to these changes requires diverse thinking. Collecting many points of view and centralizing them, can help governments prepare adapted responses.
- Country cooperation is needed, as well as synergies between trade and investment promotion agencies.

QUOTES

Chen Zhou, Vice-Chairman, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade:

- The global economy is not ideal for international investment, as the 2008 crisis is not solved.
- China is active in international investment cooperation, and is working with other Silk Road countries in investment cooperation.

Pedro Beirute, General Manager, Foreign Trade Corporation of Costa Rica:

- Early adaptation to megatrends is important to our country. Forty years ago we realized that protecting the environment is vital for the future. Today, 90% of all energy is generated by renewable sources.
- We hired experts on e-trade to support companies and adapted our processes to leverage technology for our clients.
• We are developing partnerships with more than 40 countries and have more than 70 delegations abroad with a commercial function.

Mohamed Benayad, Secretary General, Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Trade

• We have increased awareness of the need to promote green and sustainable growth. This has implications on trade because recycling requires local networks, not international flows. Trends point to a reduction of international trade, protectionism and anti-globalization. TIPOS need to develop services and strategies catering these trends.
• Digitalisation creates huge opportunities.
• TIPOS’ work is more difficult as the increase of e-trade reduces intermediaries and promotes industrial production such as 3D printing, data flows, etc.

SUMMARY

Population growth in Zimbabwe, particularly of the middle class, provides opportunities to produce and export food. As anti-globalization occurs, regional collaboration is vital. The country promotes investment in several, mostly from its regional partners.

Facing megatrends in the Netherlands implies being involved with each important actor to facilitate planning and coordination of actions.

Costa Rica has invested heavily on a Project Management Office that implements projects to ensure a quick response to marketplace requests and developments.