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Geneva ambassadors round table for investing in the Sustainable Development Goals,

11. November 2019

Introductory remarks

- Mr. James Zhan, Director, Division on Investment and Enterprise (DIAE), UNCTAD

Keynote address

- Mr. Mark Schneider, Chief Executive Officer, Nestlé

At the outset let me start by thanking UNCTAD and particularly the Investment Division for organizing this meeting. I would also thank Mr. Zhan for his comprehensive introductory remarks and Mr. Schneider from Nestlé for his inspiring keynote addresses to which I listened with great interest.

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Germany has studied carefully the recent UNCTAD publication on the SDG Investment Trends Monitor and commends the Secretariat for the timeliness and high quality of this publication.

UNCTAD's SDG Investment Trends Monitor paints a bleak picture in terms of investment and financing trends for the most critical SDG sectors.

Across the 10 SDG-investment sectors identified by the report, investment growth falls short of requirements. Investment is either stagnant, declin-

ing or not of the order of magnitude that would make a significant impact on estimated investment gaps. And this bleak picture holds especially true for developing countries and the least developed among them.

As such, the report is a timely reminder that our words have to be followed by deeds, and that time is running out with only 10 years to go to fulfill the 2030 agenda. In order to close this financing gap we need more transformative initiatives and to scale up what is working in nascent proportions.

UNCTAD's Action Plan for Investment in the SDGs that was published in 2014 put forward six sets of ideas aimed at creating a Big Push for investment in sustainable development. Many of these ideas are worth pursuing and we look forward to the secretariat revisiting its Action Plan and updating it for our scrutiny and support.

In our perspective the combination of public and private funds needs more attention. Germany therefore supports more in-depth research and policy analysis, technical assistance and capacity-building, as well as consensus-building on best practices and lessons learned on the interface between public and private actors in the SDG investment sphere, be this in the realm of Public-Private-Partnerships or the Special Economic

Zones (SEZ) area, as it was explored in this year's World Investment Report (WIR).

A number of German development programmes support investment in SDGs, including the following:

1. AfricaConnect is a new financing solution that facilitates investment in Africa. European companies can receive long-term loans from the German Investment Corporation in order to create skilled jobs. A total of EUR 400 million is available under this programme, which relates to SDGs 8 and 9.
2. AfricaGrow-Fund supports African small and medium sized enterprises and startups through private equity and venture capital. This programme contributes to SDGs 8 and 9 and has also a financial volume of EUR 400 million in total.
3. develoPPP.de-Program is a public-private partnership that supports German and European companies seeking to operate in developing countries and conduct their business in a sustainable manner. The programme provides matching grants of up to EUR 200.000

for PPPs and pursues SDGs 8, 9 and 12. Up to the end of 2018, a total of EUR 1,1 billion has been made available under this programme. In addition, there is a limited number of grants for larger PPPs (strategic partnerships).

4. Africa Business Network

The Africa Business Network provides advisory and support services for German SMEs in regard to exports or investments in African markets. Companies receive information about business opportunities and are afforded support throughout the individual stages of product development.

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In closing, allow me to welcome again the initiative of setting up a permanent discussion forum for Geneva's Permanent Representatives to pursue SDGs-related investment issues through interaction with the private sector and the various Geneva-based international organizations.

Thank you.