



## Convention

First year

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### **Declaration of Cooperation in Sustainability Standards Ecosystem between National Platforms**

#### **India National Platform on Private Sustainability Standards**

International Convention on Sustainable Trade and Standards  
17-18 September 2018, New Delhi, India

#### **Declaration of Cooperation in Sustainability Standards Ecosystem Amongst National Platforms**

### **LINKING NATIONAL PLATFORMS ON VOLUNTARY SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS TO HELP IMPLEMENT THE 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

1. The launch of United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS)<sup>1</sup> Second Flagship Report on Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) at Geneva on 21st September 2016, and subsequent stakeholder launch in Berlin has brought several developing economies together to share experience and collaboratively explore ways to tackle issues related to VSS, improve competitiveness for SMEs, and develop efficient mechanisms to address Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is also reflected in the UNFSS Third Flagship Report on VSS, Trade and Sustainable Development that reemphasizes the need for greater cooperation and multilateral governance of VSS, launched at the International Convention on Sustainable Trade and Standards on 17 September 2018 at New Delhi.
2. Declarants agree that Voluntary Sustainability Standards are important for promoting SDGs.
3. Co-ordinated efforts and inclusive, informed approaches are essential for effective implementation of national efforts to tackle VSS nationally, regionally and globally.

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<sup>1</sup> UNFSS is a platform created to analyze voluntary sustainability standards (VSS) and disseminate information about them and is coordinated by a steering committee consisting of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

4. National Platforms on VSS are a major initiative with a high potential for effective understanding and improved implementation of addressing issues related to VSS for national benefit.
5. SDGs are a shared global agenda, and the potential benefits of national platforms for achieving SDGs can be considerably enhanced by linking national platforms and learning from each other's experience. This would enable developing economies to improve their progress towards fulfilling their economic and social aspirations by aligning their national efforts and sharing their experience to reach a win-win result.
6. India, Brazil, China, and Mexico have launched their National Platforms on Private/Voluntary Sustainability Standards over the last three years.
7. Declarants have observed that participants from national initiatives across UNFSS meetings have fostered a common emphasis in sharing the experience and developing a "Platform of Platforms". Each country has its own valuable experience in this space, sharing which would strengthen the understanding and efforts of each other to efficiently tackle issues around VSS and move more effectively towards successful achievement of SDGs.
8. Collaboration and sharing of experience amongst national platform initiatives and agencies that implement these platforms in each country will improve the possibility of more substantive achievement of our objectives towards achieving SDGs.
9. In view of the large benefits that would flow from collaboration amongst national platforms and sharing of experiences, the developing economies at this International Convention on Sustainable Trade and Standards at New Delhi, India, agree to collaborate amongst themselves for achieving the following objectives:
  - (a) Helping in setting up of a national platform in countries that do not have national platforms, and share the common agenda;
  - (b) Ensuring deeper cooperation among national platforms;
  - (c) Creating mechanisms for sharing and seeking inputs for exchange of ideas and case studies;
  - (d) Agreeing to participate in meetings that are held under the auspices of the UNFSS and identifying steps that would be of use for each country that is part of the "Platform of Platforms".

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, SIGNED AND DECLARED THIS EIGHTEENTH DAY OF SEPTEMBER IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND AND EIGHTEEN AT THE CITY OF NEW DELHI IN THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA.

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IN WITNESS OF:

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UNCTAD

SANTIAGO FERNANDEZ DE CORDOBA  
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