

Development Investment and Sustainable Change in Ethiopia

A Conference organized by the Center for Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability (CCRS) at the University of Zurich

Date: November 27, 2015

Venue: Building RAA, Room G-01, UZH, Rämistrasse 59, 8006 Zürich

Background

Catch-up growth in developing countries is taking place at an accelerated rate once certain essential economic reforms are implemented. This is currently the case in Ethiopia, a country at the horn of Africa that managed to maintain political stability and attract investment mainly from China and Turkey over the past two decades. The Ethiopian government aims at attracting investment that ensures long-term growth and thus enables the country to create the desperately needed jobs for its youth, fight poverty effectively and improve the overall sustainability of the country's economic development.

The call has been heard by many Swiss companies, which are not driven by motives of charity but economic opportunities.

Ethiopia's process of economic empowerment may go through similar phases of structural change like earlier in China. But Ethiopia has also the advantage of avoiding China's mistakes and of attracting a more diverse set of investors.

This workshop aims at promoting a shift in perception of countries like Ethiopia from risk to opportunity, not just in Swiss business but also at Swiss universities and among the Ethiopian Diaspora in Switzerland. Ethiopia is a country rich in culture and history, and Switzerland is fondly remembered by the Ethiopians as a country that helped its venerated emperor Menelik II in the 19th century to remain independent from Italy. It was the engineer Alfred Ilg from Winterthur who gave the emperor not just wise political advice but also helped initiate a phase of Ethiopian modernization. For example, he contributed to the construction of the first railway line from Addis to Djibouti with Swiss know-how and technology. 100 years after Alfred Ilg, Switzerland might embark again on a strong economic collaboration and contribute to Ethiopia's objective to become a middle-income country by 2025.

Programme

- 8:30** Registration and Coffee
- 9:00** Welcome address by **Prof. Dr. Michael Hengartner**
President of the University of Zurich
- 9:05** **Philipp Aerni** - Director, CCRS, University of Zurich
- 9:15** **Roundtable on Development and Reforms in Ethiopia**
Chair: **Thorsten Vogl** - Swiss-Africa Chamber of Commerce, with representatives from
- The Swiss government:* **Paula Oberli** - Bilateral Economic Relations, SECO
- Private Equity Investment:* **David Mülchi** - Global Network Solutions Africa
- The Business Perspective:* **Kileken ole-MoiYoi** - Novartis, Basel
Erwin Kälin - Geberit, Rapperswil
Nicole Thonnard Voillat - Bata, Lausanne
Frank Löffler - Roche, Basel
- The Diaspora Perspective :* **Dawit Tesfaye** - Siemens
Dr. Wondwossen Aysheshim - ABB
Dr. Zerihun Tadele - University of Bern
- 10:45** Coffee Break
- 11:00** **Panel: Swiss Companies involved in Ethiopia Infrastructure Projects**
Chair: **Oliver Bertschinger** - Regional Director Europe & Africa, Switzerland Global Enterprise
Michele Molinari - CEO / Chairman of the Board, Molinari Rails, Winterthur
Verena Utzinger - SERV (Swiss Export Risk Insurance), Zurich
Yves Peeters - Head of Sales and the ABB Africa Initiative, Baden
Charles Gooderham - Regional Head Sustainability Affairs EMEA Credit Suisse, Zurich
- 12:30** Lunch Break
- 13:45** Keynote Lecture by **Dr. Eleni Zaude Gabre-Madhin**
Ethiopian economist and Chief Executive Officer of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX)
- 14:30** **Roundtable on the Challenges and Opportunities of Swiss Investment in Frontier Markets**
Chair: **Walter Fust** - Africa Innovation Foundation, Zurich
Lars Willi - CEO of WECONNEX Ltd, St. Gallen
Prof. Ernst Hafen - President of the Biotechnology Park Zürich-Schlieren, University of Zurich
Fiorina Mugione - Enterprise Development Branch, UNCTAD, Geneva
- Discussants:* **Oliver Karius** - Partner at LGT Venture Philanthropy, Zurich
Christian Etzensperger - ResponsAbility Investment AG, Zürich
Jens Soth, Senior Advisor - Helvetas, Zürich
- 17:00** Final Remark by **Hon. Negash Kebret Botora**,
Permanent Representative of Ethiopia, Geneva
- 17:30** **Apéro**
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