European Bank for Reconstruction and Development | UNIDROIT | UNCITRAL | International Law Institute | World Bank Group

9TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE COORDINATION OF SECURED TRANSACTIONS REFORMS

Scaling Access to Finance Through Law, Policy, Digitalisation and Investment

21-22 September 2026

Biographies of participants

Biographies of participants

Alba Bozo

Managing Director, Deputy General Counsel, EBRD

Alba Bozo is Deputy General Counsel at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) where she oversees work on institutional and administrative law, corporate, donor partnerships, legal support for Treasury operations and the EBRD's Legal Transition Programme.

Alba has a breadth of international experience, having previously worked at the legal department of the International Monetary Fund in Washington D.C. and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, as well as in private practice as a corporate lawyer in top-tier international law firms Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer and Fieldfisher.

Day 1

Shona Tatchell

Director of Trade Facilitation Programme, EBRD

Shona Tatchell is the Head of the award-winning Trade Facilitation Programme at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) which supports trade across the Bank's regions through guarantees and short-term financing for partner banks and factoring companies.

Shona is an experienced Trade Financier, having spent over 30 years in the industry, holding senior Trade roles with The Chase Manhattan Bank, HSBC, Barclays.

She was Founder and CEO of Halotrade, an award-winning Fintech spin-out from Barclays, building systems to incentivise a sustainable future for global trade, by directly connecting responsive preferential financing solutions with supply chain sustainability performance data.

Day 1

Ignacio Tirado

Secretary General, UNIDROIT

Professor Ignacio Tirado was appointed Secretary General by the Governing Council at its 97th session with effect on 27 August 2018 and was reappointed at the Governing Council's 102nd session for a second term in 2023.

A national of Spain, Professor Tirado (Commercial, Corporate and Insolvency Law, Universidad Autónoma of Madrid, Spain) holds a PhD from the Universities of Bologna and Autónoma de Madrid and an LLM from the University of London.

Professor Tirado has been a Senior Legal Consultant at the World Bank's Legal Vice-Presidency and Financial Sector Practice for more than nine years, having also consulted for the IMF on insolvency related matters as well as for the Asian Development Bank on commercial legal reform.

Day 1 & Day 2

Biographies of participants

Jae Sung Lee

Principal Legal Officer, UNCITRAL

Jae Sung LEE is the Principal Legal Officer of the International Trade Law Division of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, which functions as the substantive secretariat for UNCITRAL.

Prior to his role as the head of the legislative branch, he served as secretary of working groups on investor-state dispute settlement reform, dispute settlement, secured transactions and electronic commerce. Before joining the United Nations in 2007, Jae Sung served in the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Jae Sung is a graduate of Seoul National University College of Law, holds LL.M. degrees from Seoul National University Graduate School of International Studies and NYU School of Law as well as a Ph.D. in Law from Seoul National University.

Day 1 & Day 2

Milot Ahma

Principal Counsel, Legal Transition Programme, EBRD

Milot Ahma is a Principal Counsel in the EBRD's Legal Transition Team (Financial Law Unit) primarily focused on access to finance, digital trade and fintech matters.

Since joining the EBRD in 2016, Milot has led and supported legal reform efforts in the EBRD economies which aim at facilitating access to finance for SMEs through improved secured transactions frameworks, introduction of alternative means of finance through products such as factoring, leasing and crowdfunding.

Milot is also involved in creating enabling legal and regulatory environments that facilitate digital trade and the uptake of financial technology (Fintech) and related products.

Day 1 & Day 2

Christina Pak

Assistant General Counsel, ADB

Christina Pak is Assistant General Counsel for Law and Policy Reform at the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where she leads the Office of the General Counsel's Law and Policy Reform Program.

She oversees legal and judicial reform initiatives across Asia and the Pacific, advancing private sector development, regional cooperation, green transition, digital transformation, and gender equality.

A specialist in international development finance, law and policy reform, dispute resolution, and ESG standards, Christina has extensive experience designing and implementing complex legal reform and capacity-building programs.

Previously, she served as project counsel at ADB, supporting multi-sector operations across Asia, and as Accountability Mechanism Policy Counsel, advising ADB's Board of Directors and accountability offices.

Day 1 & Day 2

Biographies of participants

Murat Sultanov

Senior Operations Officer, IFC

Murat Sultanov is a Senior Operations Officer in the Financial Institutions Group Advisory at IFC. He serves as the Asset-Based and Supply Chain Finance Lead and is a member of the IFC Global Credit Infrastructure Team, currently based in Istanbul, Türkiye.

Murat's work focuses on supporting asset-based finance reforms and developing ABF products in the MCT region, which includes Central Asia, Turkey, the Middle East, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

His experience includes facilitating the deployment of modern supply chain finance programs, drafting and supporting the enactment of various legislative acts related to leasing, secured transactions, and credit reporting in more than 30 jurisdictions across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Southeast Asia, and Africa.

Day 1 & Day 2

Markus Renfert

Senior Counsel, Banking, EBRD

Markus Renfert is Senior Counsel, Banking, EBRD. Markus studied law in France and Germany, obtaining his doctor juris from the Humboldt University, Berlin. He was admitted to the bars of Paris, Berlin and London. After nine years at a magical circle law firm in Paris, Frankfurt and London, he joined EBRD.

He works on the full range of EBRD products, including private and public equity, equity funds, bonds, project and structured finance across all sectors and jurisdictions. Markus was involved in the design and roll-out of several new products, including, most recently, the supply chain finance programme.

Markus spent five years in EBRD's Istanbul resident office, leading the legal practice there. While in Turkiye, he took an active part in legal reform work. Markus is also a member of the Secretariat of the Enforcement Committee, the EBRD's appellate body in fraud and corruption cases.

Day 1

Irina Tyan

Senior Banker, Trade Facilitation Programme, EBRD

Irina Tyan is Associate Director in the Trade Facilitation Programme at European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. She is a banker and lawyer in the EBRD's Trade Facilitation Programme. She is responsible for the development of trade finance business of partner banks in Easter Europe and the Mediterranean region with a special focus on factoring and supply chain finance.

Irina has a Master of Law in International Banking and Finance Law from the University College of London.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Anna Veneziano

Deputy Secretary General, UNIDROIT

Anna Veneziano is UNIDROIT Deputy Secretary General and Professor of Comparative Law at the University of Teramo, Italy (on leave), with previous positions as Director of the Department of Private Law and tenured part-time Professor of European Property Law at the University of Amsterdam.

Her education includes an LL.M degree from the Yale Law School funded by a Fulbright scholarship and a PhD degree from the University of Florence (Italy). Before joining UNIDROIT, she was a member of the Italian delegation to negotiate the Cape Town Convention on International Interests on Mobile Equipment and its Aircraft and its Space Protocol.

At UNIDROIT she is, inter alia, involved in UNIDROIT's work on contracts and procedural law as well as in the implementation of the Cape Town Convention Protocols

Day 1 & Day 2

William Brydie-Watson

Senior Legal Officer, UNIDROIT

William Brydie-Watson is a Senior Legal Officer at the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT), based in Rome. William specialises in international instruments related to access to credit and secured transactions law.

He has primary responsibility for the development of the UNIDROIT Model Law on Factoring and its Guide to Enactment, as well as the implementation of the Cape Town Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment and its Protocol on mining, agricultural and construction equipment (the 'MAC Protocol').

William is also Co-Director of the UNIDROIT Asian Transnational Law Centre, the manager of the UNIDROIT Scholarship, Internship and Research Programme and an advisor to the UNIDROIT Foundation.

Day 1 & Day 2

Rafael Castillo-Triana

CEO, The Alta Group Latin America

Rafael Castillo-Triana is a leading global expert in asset-based financing and equipment leasing, with more than five decades of legal, regulatory, and market-development experience across Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and emerging markets.

His career includes senior leadership roles in multiple leasing companies, authorship of key leasing laws (including Tanzania and Georgia), and long-term advisory work for the IFC/World Bank Group on leasing frameworks, secured transactions, and industry capacity building.

He has served as consultant to governments from Kenya to Angola and as chairman or speaker at major international leasing conferences for over 20 years. Rafael is also a prolific author of seminal works on leasing law and risk management, including Legal Aspects of Equipment Leasing in Latin America and the UNIDROIT Model Law on Leasing.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Natalia Pagkou

Associate Legal Counsel, Legal Transition Programme, EBRD

Natalia Pagkou is an Associate Legal Counsel in the EBRD's Legal Transition Programme, which supports the development of clear, transparent and predictable legal frameworks that foster investor confidence across the EBRD countries of operations.

Since joining the Bank in 2020, initially as a legal consultant, Natalia has worked on legal reform projects with a focus on insolvency, access to finance and digital trade. Prior to joining the EBRD, she gained professional experience in leading law firms, including White & Case LLP and Carler Avocats in Paris, as well as in-house legal counsel roles based in Luxembourg.

Natalia has academic qualifications from Paris and London. A Greek national, she is a practising lawyer in Greece and Paris and is fluent in French and English.

Day 1

Martin Fleetwood

Consultant, Addleshaw Goddard LLP

Martin Fleetwood is a Consultant at international law firm Addleshaw Goddard LLP where he advises clients on regulatory matters and commercial contracts in the transport sector.

He has some 30 years of experience of advising both public and private clients in the rail industry, including train operators (both passenger and freight), rolling stock lessors, public sector infrastructure managers and government departments. This has included working on innovative and "first in class" rail-based transport projects in the UK and elsewhere.

Martin's long involvement in the rail sector means that he had a very good appreciation of the various issues affecting the different players within the industry, particularly when it comes to financing and managing railway assets.

Day 1

Johan Kip Eideberg

Senior Vice President, Association of Equipment Manufacturers

Johan Kip Eideberg is Senior Vice President Government & Industry Relations at the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM). As Head of the Washington, D.C. Office, he guides strategy for AEM's government relations, public affairs, grassroots advocacy and policy efforts.

Under his leadership, AEM's Government and Public Affairs Team advances pro-manufacturing policies on behalf of more than 1,000 member companies.

Before joining AEM in 2016, Mr. Eideberg was a partner at a leading strategic communications and public affairs firm, where he oversaw the firm's advocacy efforts and worked with trade associations, Fortune 500 companies, and foreign governments on the development and execution of federal and multi-state advocacy campaigns.

Prior to that, Mr. Eideberg held positions with several global public affairs consulting firms, working in Brussels, Ottawa, and Washington, D.C.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell

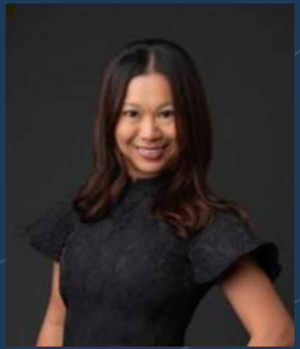
President of the European Law Institute (ELI)

Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell is a Full Professor of Commercial Law at University Carlos III of Madrid, Spain. She is the President of the European Law Institute (ELI). She is the Director of the Research Chair on AI Foundations and Frontiers. She was Sir Roy Goode Scholar at Unidroit in 2021–22 and she has been elected member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

She is a Delegate of the Kingdom of Spain at United Nations (for UNCITRAL) in Working Group VI on secured transactions, WG IV on e-commerce (AI Contracting), and WG I on Warehouse Receipts, and an Expert for UNCITRAL and Unidroit on digital economy projects – including the MLWR.

She is also member of the European Commission Expert Group on Liability and New Technologies, the EU Expert Group for the Observatory on Online Platform Economy, and the EU Expert Group on B2B Data Sharing and Cloud Computing.

Day 1



Gerardine Goh Escolar

Deputy Secretary General, HCCH

Dr Gérardine Goh Escolar is Deputy Secretary General of the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH). Concurrently, she has primary responsibility for the International Commercial, Digital and Financial Law (CODIFI) Division, including the 1985 Trusts and 2006 Securities Conventions, and the 2015 Principles on the Choice of Law in International Commercial Contracts.

The work of the CODIFI Division also comprises three Experts' Groups: on Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), Carbon Markets, and Digital Tokens, as well as the monitoring of developments with respect to the private international law implications of the digital economy, restructuring and insolvency, and intellectual property.

Prior to her appointment as Deputy Secretary General, Dr Goh Escolar was First Secretary at the Permanent Bureau.

Day 1

Theodora Kostoula

Legal Consultant, UNIDROIT

Dr. Theodora Kostoula is a Legal Consultant at the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT), where she is mainly responsible for the UNIDROIT Principles on Digital Assets and Private Law, the Guide on Economic Evaluation of International Commercial Law Reform, and projects on Digital Risks and Civil Liability, Insolvency of Insurance Companies, and Implementation of and Compliance with International Commercial Law Treaties.

Her research and publications focus on the impact of technological developments, including DLT and AI, on private and commercial law, with a particular interest in insolvency law and the proprietary aspects of digital assets.

She holds a PhD from the European University Institute and has held teaching and research positions at the Florence School of Banking and Finance, Copenhagen Business School, and UNIDROIT.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Monica Canafoglia

Legal Officer, UNCITRAL

Monica Canafoglia is a Legal Officer at the International Trade Law Division (ITLD) of the UN Office of Legal Affairs, which serves as the substantive secretariat for the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

She has served as secretary to UNCITRAL Working Group I on Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, contributing to the development of legal texts that support the formation and operation of small businesses.

She also contributes to capacity-building efforts and legislative assistance for Member States adopting UNCITRAL texts and supports outreach and cooperation with other international organizations active in trade law.

Before joining the Office of Legal Affairs, Monica held various roles across the UN system, with a focus on international labour rights, human rights-based approaches to programming, and staff training.

Day 1

Megumi Hara

Professor of Law at Chuo University, Tokyo

Megumi Hara is Professor of Law at Chuo University, Tokyo, where she teaches property, contract, secured transactions, and trust law. Her research, published in Japanese and English, concerns secured transactions, property law, digital assets, and asset-based finance. Professor Hara has contributed to legislative and regulatory reform in Japan across several ministries.

She was appointed by the Ministry of Justice as researcher on property law reform. She served on a Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry research group on secured transactions reform, and on the Financial Services Agency's Financial System Council Working Group on Regional Financial Institutions. She is a public interest member of Japan's Central Labour Relations Commission.

Day 1

Monica Sah

Partner, Clifford Chance UK

Monica Sah is a partner in Clifford Chance's London Financial Regulation Group, specialising in financial markets and Fintech regulation. Prior to joining the firm, she was a Managing Director at Morgan Stanley and Head of Legal for International Wealth Management. She advises global financial institutions, blockchain and cryptoasset businesses, market infrastructure providers and issuers on a broad range of legal and regulatory matters. Her experience includes regulatory reform and implementation, including MiCA and other cryptoasset regimes, FSMA, EMIR and MiFID II/R, financial product structuring, custody, platform expansion, governance, initial margin product development, and FIG and Fintech M&A. Monica is ranked as a leading individual by Chambers UK and Legal 500 for Financial Services Regulatory, is 'Highly Regarded' by IFLR1000, and is recognised as an IFLR1000 Women Leader and a Who's Who Legal Thought Leader and Global Leader for Banking Regulatory.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Yanying Li

Legal Officer, UNCITRAL

Yanying Li is a legal officer at the International Trade Law Division (ITLD), Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations, which serves as the secretariat to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

Since 2019, Yanying has been involved in the exploratory and preparatory work for the development of a legal instrument on negotiable cargo documents, a project assigned to UNCITRAL Working Group VI in 2022. Yanying has served as the Secretary of UNCITRAL Working Group VI (Negotiable Cargo Documents).

She is also responsible for the organization of the annual sessions of UNCITRAL as well as UNCITRAL matters related to the UN General Assembly. Before joining the ITLD, she worked in the field of banking and international arbitration at the Asian Development Bank (Manila), Clifford Chance LLP (London) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (the Hague).

Day 1

Jun Xu

Vice Chair, ICC Global Banking Commission

Jun Xu, Director Level Senior Manager of Global Transaction Banking Department, Bank of China, Jiangsu Branch, with over 33 years of experience in trade finance.

She is Vice Chair of ICC Global Banking Commission Steering Committee; UNCITRAL Working Group VI (Negotiable Cargo Documents) ICC Observer, UNIDROIT Factoring Model Law and UNIDROIT Factoring Model Law Enactment Guide Drafting Group ICC Observer.

She is also a member of: ICC Banking Commission Guarantee Task Force, Global Supply Chain Finance Forum, ICC DOCDEX expert, Bank of International Settlement Cross-border Payment Interoperability and Extension Taskforce, ICC China Banking Committee Translation Expert Team.

She was previously a member of: ICC Banking Commission Executive Committee, WTO High Level Expert Group on Trade Finance, ICC China Banking Committee Forfaiting and Factoring Expert Team and LC Expert Team.

She is an invited speaker in events sponsored by ICC, UNCITRAL, UNCTAD, UNIDROIT, ADB, APEC, FCI etc.

Day 1

James Hookham

Secretary General and a Director of the Global Shippers Forum (GSF)

James Hookham is Secretary General and a Director of the Global Shippers Forum (GSF), the voice of cargo owners in international supply chains, based in London. He is a graduate in Environmental Science from the University of Bradford and completed a master's degree in the safe transport of dangerous goods at the University of Manchester.

James early career was spent with Exis Technologies (now part of National Cargo Bureau) developing the world's first remotely accessible computerised dangerous goods database. He later served as deputy editor of Hazardous Cargo Bulletin.

Until 2020 James was also Deputy Chief Executive of the Freight Transport Association (now Logistics UK) serving the needs of transport users and providers in the United Kingdom and served on numerous UK, EU and global transport and logistics advisory bodies.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Luca Castellani

Senior Digital Trade Specialist, EBRD

Luca Castellani is a digital trade law expert with extensive experience in drafting and implementing legislation on electronic transactions and electronic signatures. He is also active in the field of paperless trade facilitation and electronic transport documents.

In his previous capacity at the UNCITRAL secretariat, he oversaw the preparation of the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (2017), of the UNCITRAL Model Law on the Use and Cross-Border Recognition of Identity Management and Trust Services (2022), and of the UNCITRAL – Unidroit Model Law on Warehouse Receipts (2024) as well as of guidance documents such as the Guide on legal issues relating to the use of distributed ledger technology in trade (2025).

Day 1

Andrea Tang

Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, FIATA

Andrea Tang is the Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs at FIATA (International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations), the global representative organisation for the freight forwarding and logistics industry, representing more than 40,000 freight forwarding and logistics companies across over 150 territories worldwide. She oversees FIATA's work across legal and regulatory affairs, customs, multimodal transport, trade facilitation, and the legal and policy frameworks underpinning the digitalisation of international trade, while representing the interests of the global freight forwarding industry in international policy, advocacy, and standard-setting.

Andrea leads FIATA's work on the legal and practical implementation of electronic transport documents, including the FIATA electronic Bill of Lading (eFBL), a leading example of a negotiable cargo document already in widespread operational use across international supply chains.

Prior to joining FIATA, she held legal and regulatory roles in the commodity trading and insurance sectors, advising businesses on international trade law and policy, and digital transformation initiatives.

Day 1

Biographies of participants

Gian Piero Cigna

Head of Financial Law Unit, EBRD

Gian Piero Cigna, an Italian attorney, leads the Financial Law Unit within the Legal Transition Programme at the EBRD in London. The team works on legal reform related to access to finance, corporate governance, digital trade, fintech, insolvency, and debt restructuring.

Previously, Gian Piero worked for the European Commission and the Italian Ministry of Economy and practised law in Italy, Albania, and Romania. In Albania, Gian Piero served as an adviser on the privatisation of strategic state-owned enterprises. In the Czech Republic, Gian Piero was an EU Pre-Accession Adviser, supporting the alignment of local legislation with EU standards.

Gian Piero holds a law degree from Italy and pursued further studies in the Netherlands and the United States, focusing on European and international business law. Gian Piero has published essays on corporate governance, capital markets, and banking law in emerging markets.

Day 2

Marek Dubovec

Director of Law Reform Programmes, ILI

Dr. Marek Dubovec is the Director of Law Reform Programs at the International Law Institute (ILI). For over 15 years, Marek has worked with UNCITRAL and UNIDROIT to develop international standards.

He has assisted with implementing these standards in projects funded by the World Bank Group, the EBRD, the ADB, FSD-Kenya, and others in Africa (e.g., Kenya), Asia (e.g., the Philippines), Eastern Europe (e.g., Ukraine), the Middle East (e.g., the UAE), and Latin America (e.g., Colombia) to modernize secured transactions, factoring, warehouse receipts, and related legislation.

Marek has authored numerous articles and books, including the Secured Transactions Law Reform in Africa, as well as policy reports such as the Knowledge Guide on Crop Receipts Finance.

Day 2

Giuliano Castellano

Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong

Prof. Giuliano G. Castellano is an Associate Professor and the Director of the Asian Institute of International Financial Law (AIIFL), Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong (HKU).

Giuliano has over 15 years of experience in international and comparative financial law, with a focus on digital technologies, financial regulation, and law reforms aimed at promoting access to credit. He led several research projects supported by public competitive grant schemes, and his research has been published in leading peer-reviewed journals.

Giuliano has contributed to drafting key international instruments supporting access to credit, including the UNCITRAL Model Law on Secured Transactions (2016) and the UNIDROIT Model Law on Factoring (2023).

Day 2

Biographies of participants

Betül Kurtulus

Deputy Secretary General, FCI

Ms. Betül Kurtuluş began her career at Anderson Consulting and entered the factoring industry in 1992. She brings over 30+ years of extensive experience in the factoring sector. Prior to joining FCI in 2018, she served as a member of the FCI SCF Committee and FCI Marketing Committee. Her previous role was General Manager (since 2014) and Board Member at Strateji Faktoring in Turkey, where she oversaw all operational areas.

Before Strateji Faktoring, Betül held positions at Toprak Banking Group. She also served as a Board Member of the Association of Financial Institutions of Turkey. Betül holds a BA degree in Business and Economics from the University of Marmara, Turkey.

Ms. Kurtuluş is the Deputy Secretary General at FCI. She previously held the positions of Director of Strategic Marketing & Business Development, and Regional Director CEE, SEE & Middle East within FCI.

Day 2

Duarte Pedreira

Chair, Trade Finance Coalition of Partes (TFCOP)

Duarte Pedreira is Global Head of Lending at Crown Agents Bank, where he leads the bank's lending, structured finance, syndication, and distribution activities across emerging markets. Prior to joining Crown Agents Bank, he held senior roles at AIG and Standard Bank, building extensive experience across trade finance, working capital and international banking.

Duarte is the founder and Chair of the TF COP Task Force, a global coalition of banks, development finance institutions, insurers, industry associations, and technology providers working to close the SME trade finance gap. Under his leadership, TF COP has become the largest coalition of its kind in the global trade finance industry.

Day 2

Peter Hopkins

CEO, Drum Advisory

Peter Hopkins is the CEO of DRUM Advisory, a risk management consultancy focused on physical inventory, collateral control and asset-based finance risk mitigation. Over the past two decades, he has helped control over $52bn worth of commodities, managed more than 2,500 projects, and overseen the only legally tested floating-to-fixed charge conversion.

He was pivotal in advising on and servicing the first ever non-bank borrowing base facility. Peter previously served as an advisor to British American Tobacco and as an operations & security consultant for Cadbury World, in Russia.

After attending the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, he held multiple positions within the Coldstream Guards, leaving the army in 1994 having served as the assistant equerry to HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Day 2

Biographies of participants

Katherine Meighan

Chief Legal and Governance Officer & General Counsel, IFAD

Katherine (Katie) Meighan is the Chief Legal & Governance Officer of the International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD) heading both the legal department and the Board secretariat. As part of the IFAD senior management team since 2017, Katie sets IFAD's strategy to double impact for the rural poor while scaling up climate adaptation, private sector lending, and IT for development.

She leads complex initiatives including amending IFAD's Articles to enable private sector lending and in attaining IFAD's historic AA+ credit rating (as the first UN fund to be rated). In addition to her legal and governance role, Katie served as the Fund's acting Chief Financial Officer (2022 – 2023) and acting Associate VP for External Relations and Governance (2024).

During this time, IFAD issued its inaugural bonds and achieved the highest replenishment in its history.

Day 2

Walter Ludwig Seitz

Senior Investment Officer, IFC

Walter Ludwig Seitz is a Senior Investment Officer in IFC's Financial Institution Group and focuses on private credit as well as innovative risk transfer and securitization solutions in CEE.

Before joining IFC, Walter advised clients in Europe and Japan on strategy, M&A, and private market financing, founded an asset structuring / management boutique in Japan, and worked for UBS in Zurich, Hong Kong, and Tokyo. He started his professional career with the Boston Consulting Group. Walter holds a M.S. in Computer Science and a Ph.D. in Information System Science.

He is a Swiss and German national and speaks German, English, Italian, and Japanese.

Day 2

Catherine Bridge Zoller

Senior Counsel, EBRD

Catherine Bridge Zoller is a Senior Counsel in the EBRD's Legal Transition Team, which promotes investor-friendly, transparent and predictable legal frameworks across the Bank's countries of operation.

Since joining the EBRD in 2012, she has led legal and regulatory reform projects across Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean and Sub-Saharan Africa. Her work focuses on insolvency and business restructuring, enforcement, digital trade and wider commercial law reforms that support investment, trade and access to finance.

She has played a leading role in the Bank's insolvency and non-performing loan resolution initiatives, including support for insolvency and restructuring reforms in Ukraine.

Day 2

Biographies of participants

Ubong Awah

Senior Credit Infrastructure Specialist, IFC

Ubong Awah is a senior credit infrastructure specialist with IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group. He brings more than a decade of World Bank Group experience advising on credit infrastructure reforms, with a focus on secured transactions and collateral registry systems across more than a dozen countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

His work supports governments, regulators, financial institutions, and development partners to modernize movable asset-based lending frameworks, strengthen creditor confidence, and expand access to finance for MSMEs, women-owned businesses, and underserved enterprises.

A lawyer by training, Ubong combines legal, regulatory, and private sector expertise with hands-on reform implementation experience.

Day 2

Iyare Otabor-Olubor

Senior Lecturer in Commercial Law at Aston University

Dr Iyare Otabor-Olubor is a Senior Lecturer in Commercial Law at Aston University, Birmingham, UK. He is an expert in transnational commercial law, with a particular focus on the reform and modernisation of secured transactions law. His research engages deeply with questions of access to finance in emerging economies, fintech and digital assets law.

Iyare is a Senior Fellow of Advance HE, reflecting his sustained commitment to excellence in teaching and learning. Iyare holds an LLB degree, an LLM in Commercial Law, and a PhD in secured transactions law, and he has been called to the Nigerian Bar. He actively supervises doctoral researchers in commercial law.

He also collaborates with scholars and intergovernmental organisations on projects related to commercial law reform and access to finance.

Day 2

Dennis Okyere

Senior Leader, Bsystems Limited

Dennis Okyere is a technology and business executive with over 20 years of experience leading digital infrastructure and financial-sector technology programmes across Africa.

As a senior leader at Bsystems Limited, he has directed the design and deployment of national collateral and movable property registry systems across twelve African countries, working with central banks, ministries, and registration agencies on World Bank- and IFC-supported initiatives.

His experience spans the full reform lifecycle, from regulatory alignment and solution architecture to implementation, testing, capacity building, and institutional adoption, providing practical insight into the factors that enable secured transactions reforms to expand access to finance.

Day 2

Biographies of participants

Enga Kameni

Head, Banking Legal Services, Intra-African Trade & Export Development

Enga Kameni is Head, Banking Legal Services (Intra African Trade and Corporate Finance), a director level position at the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), Cairo, Egypt. As Head of Banking Legal Services, he manages a team of lawyers as well as negotiates, structures and documents loans and transactions where the Bank is a lender, co-lender or borrower.

To date, he has assisted the Bank in negotiating, structuring and documenting loan transactions of over US$40 billion and has also assisted Afreximbank in negotiating and raising over US$30 billion from multinational banks and capital markets.

He was part of the team that worked on the negotiations and procurement of Covid-19 Vaccines for African Union member countries and some Caribbean countries under the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) initiative.

Day 2

Michel Nussbaumer

Director Legal Transition Programme, EBRD

Michel Nussbaumer - Director, Legal Transition Programme at the European Bank for Reconstruction. Before becoming Director of the Legal Transition Programme, which is the EBRD's initiative to help its countries of operations upgrade their legal framework for business, Michel worked for almost three years as counsel in the banking operations section.

There he was responsible for legal aspects of various investments of the Bank, with a particular focus on SME financing. Michel has practiced as a commercial lawyer in Geneva, Moscow and London. While in private practice, Michel acted as Swiss correspondent for various legal publications and has also published a number of articles on Swiss and Russian legal matters.

Michel, who is a Swiss national, received his Masters Degree in Law from the University of California at Berkeley and also was a visiting scholar at Moscow State University.

Day 2

Bob Trojan

Senior Advisor, International Law Institute

Bob Trojan is an international consumer and commercial finance and advanced technology expert, thought leader, capacity builder, speaker and advisor to the international community.

He is Founder and CEO of Token Insights and Financial Services Insights, his advisory firms that specialize in global strategy, FinTech, RegTech, and regulatory compliance, especially around Financial Inclusion.

From 2012-2017, Mr. Trojan was the CEO of the Commercial Finance Association (CFA) now SFNet, the global trade organization representing 250+ banks and finance companies in the asset-based lending, supply chain finance, trade finance, and factoring business. CFA members represented over $600 Billion in this type of financing each year.

Day 2