

## **TICAD 7 Plenary 3 Session: Public–Private Business Dialogue**

Yokohama, Japan | August 29, 2019

Your Excellency Co-Chairs, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, all protocol observed, good morning. I'll be speaking on behalf of Philippe Le Houérou, IFC CEO and Head of the World Bank Group delegation. I am Sérgio Pimenta, Vice President of Africa and Middle East for the IFC. I would like to start by thanking the Japanese authorities and people for their warm hospitality around the TICAD7. On behalf of the World Bank Group, it is my privilege to join this session and I found today's discussion very constructive, and it reassured me that we are on the right path.

The private sector has played a pivotal role in accelerating Africa's development. But there is no question that many obstacles remain to unleash the full potential of the private sector, especially in the most challenging markets or regions on the continent.

We understand that it can be a challenge to do business in Africa. According to the *2019 World Bank Doing Business* report, the average Doing Business rating in sub-Saharan Africa is less than 40, compared to 73 in OECD countries.

At the same time, African governments are making significant progress. One-third of all regulatory reforms recorded in *Doing Business 2019* took place in sub-Saharan Africa.

Our goal at the World Bank Group is to pave the way for more companies to invest in Africa. It's essential to achieving our twin goals of reducing poverty and fostering shared prosperity, which align with the Sustainable Development Goals. To make the SDGs happen, we need to foster stronger partnerships between the public and private sectors.

At IFC, we're focusing on creating markets and opportunities. That means that we're working at earlier stages—what we call upstream. We're not waiting for projects to come to us. We're proactively looking for bankable projects, leveraging our advisory work to help us find new opportunities. We're offering de-risking and other financial tools to help challenging projects become reality. We're looking to scale up private sector investment in a big way—not just country by country, but across entire regions and sectors.

Thanks to last year's capital increase, IFC plans to triple its investments in Africa to \$10 billion annually by 2030. Over the next decade, we expect to invest more than \$10 billion in Africa's infrastructure alone, and to

mobilize commercial capital in excess of \$25 billion. More broadly, the World Bank Group has pledged \$25 billion to achieve our digital moonshot: the goal of digitally connecting every individual, business and government in Africa.

The World Bank Group also believes in leading from the front. Earlier this year, we brought together some of the world's most influential investors to sign our Operating Principles for Impact Management. These Principles are a new set of standards that will bring much-needed discipline, transparency, and credibility to the impact investing market. And I am pleased to announce that just two days ago, JICA became the 69th signatory to the Principles, and the first from Japan. I am convinced that more will follow.

We understand that investing in new markets can be daunting. Red tape makes it hard to get things done and deliver returns. But the immense potential of doing business in Africa is undeniable. At the World Bank Group, we look forward to partnering with you to realize that potential.

Thank you for your attention.