19-22 OCTOBER 2026 UfM ECONOMIC FORUM CAIRO, EGYPT

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Concept Note

UfM Economic Forum

Promoting Investment Facilitation as Enabler of Inclusive and Sustainable Growth

The Euro-Mediterranean region stands at a critical juncture. While the potential for deeper economic integration is significant, persistent regulatory fragmentation, limited cross-border investment, and insufficient infrastructure continue to constrain growth. Strategic sectors such as energy, and digital trade remain underdeveloped despite their central role in enabling regional value chains.

Under Pillar II of the Pact for the Mediterranean (Stronger, more sustainable and integrated economies) and Pillar III of the UfM Vision Statement (Connecting Economies), a clear mandate exists to advance regional integration through investment, trade facilitation, and cross-border cooperation. In this context, increasing emphasis is placed on translating policy discussions into concrete actions and accelerating the implementation of investment facilitation reforms that can unlock tangible projects and investment flows.

One of the key policy recommendations emanating from the 2nd UfM Progress Report on Regional Integration is that *"Governments should enhance the investment climate and reduce regulatory restrictions to foreign direct investment (FDI), especially in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, in key sectors for regional integration such as transport and energy connectivity."* It also points out to the need to "increase investments to develop high-quality transport and energy infrastructure."

Anchored to these refence documents, the UfM Secretariat will organize the **UfM Economic Forum** on **19-22 October 2026 in Cairo, Egypt**, building on the experience from 7 editions of its UfM Trade and Investment Forum that were hold over the last 7 years. The Forum in its new format takes dialogue to a new level that further recognizes the pivotal role the Private Sector plays as a key driver of sustainable economic development and growth in the region. This year's edition will comprise a full day of dialogue and concrete actions on **investment facilitation with a focus on sustainable energy investment** and connectivity followed back-to-back over two days by two workshops and capacity building formats on **digital trade** and the **Pan Euro-Mediterranean (PEM) Convention (Rules of Origin)**.

The Conference is held in partnership with the **German Development Cooperation (GIZ/BMZ)** and the **European Commission (DG TRADE and DG TAXUD)**. It will bring together partners and stakeholders from both shores of the Euro-Mediterranean region to exchange experiences, best practices, and forge meaningful partnerships to address the current opportunities and challenges with respect to unleashing the full potential of investment flows in the region.