**Presentation of the World Trade Report 2020 in partnership with IMF's Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF), Kuwait**

**Date:** late August or early September 2021

**Platform:** Zoom with interpretation

**Format:** The presentation will be opened by a senior officer of CEF. The speakers will then present the main messages of the report. The presentation can be followed by a discussant's intervention and Q&A with the participants.

**Summary of World Trade Report 2020:   
Government policies to promote innovation in the digital age**

In the decade since the global financial crisis, government intervention in the economy has come back into fashion. Over 100 countries have articulated “new industrial policies”, “Industry 4.0”, “digital transformation” plans. While policies have always offered a mix of support to mature industries and rising sectors, an overriding theme in this new wave of measures is the goal of encouraging technological upgrading, digitalized production and digital innovation (whether new in the world or new in the country). Countries at all levels of development have policies geared to support innovation and the digital transition.

The World Trade Report 2020 looks at how the specific characteristics of the digital economy leads to a re-thinking of government policies, notably in their design and the tools they use to spur innovation. It reviews the economic rationale for innovation policies as well as the determinants of innovation. It discusses the role of trade in supporting and diffusing innovation. It shows that there is a significant role for international cooperation, including in the WTO, to make the pursuit of digital development and technological innovation more effective, while limiting negative spill-overs from national policies.

**Short biography of the Speakers:**

Marc Auboin is the counsellor at the WTO responsible for the institution's trade and finance agenda, and WTO’s relations with the IMF and World Bank. He coordinated the 2020 World Trade Report along with Ankai Xu. Marc holds a PhD in economics from Sciences-Po Paris and previous to the WTO worked for the IMF and the European Commission.

Ankai Xu is a research economist at the World Trade Organization. In this capacity, she conducts economic analysis to inform policymakers on issues related to sustainable development and the digital economy. Ankai holds a PhD and a master’s degree in international economics from the Graduate Institute in International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.