



WAIFC Webinar Economic Recovery from the Pandemic – Focus on SMEs

Tuesday, 02 March 2021, 17:00-18:00 ALMT
(07:00 EDT / 11:00 GMT / 12:00 CET WEST / 13:00 CAT / 14:00 MSK / 14:00 AST / 15:00 GST / 15:00 MUT / 19:00 HKT / 20:00 JST / 20:00 KST)

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold across the world in 2020, we began to see the scale of the impact it would have on SME development and SME finance availability. The inevitable economic downturn placed severe strain on SMEs globally and demanded a national and international response.

The World Alliance of International Financial Centers (WAIFC), promoting the benefits of sharing best practices and new financial and regulatory initiatives, commissioned a survey of its members on the ways that financial centers globally, alongside national governments, central banks, regulators, and the supnationals are responding to the economic crisis, specifically asking for information on how urgently needed support to SMEs is being developed, directed and delivered.

This webinar, launching the WAIFC SME Economic Recovery Report, will review the measures taken by policymakers and financial institutions to mitigate the global pandemic's economic effects and the potential for a renaissance in SME growth.

Tuesday 2 March 2020 – Schedule (CET):		
12:00 – 12:05	Welcome	Jennifer Reynolds, WAIFC & TFI
12:05 – 12:25	Presentation of the SME Finance report	Akshu Campbell-Holt, AIFC Business Connect
12:25 – 12:55	Discussion of the results	Frédéric de Laminne, Belgian Finance Center Mirzo Iskandar Gulamov, Asian Development Bank Moderator: Dr. Jochen Biedermann, WAIFC
12:55 – 13:00	Closing	James Martin, AIFC Business Connect

Registration is free of charge. Please register here for the webinar:
https://aifc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_W3t2kqZcSYeWp-W-y4bTIQ

About the speakers:



[Jennifer Reynolds](#) is the President of the WAIFC. Furthermore, she is President & CEO of Toronto Finance International (TFI), a public-private partnership whose mission is to promote and develop Toronto's financial services sector and establish its prominence as a leading global financial center. Jennifer is a Director on the Board of Citibank Canada, Director on the Board of BF&M Ltd, Director on the Board of the Canada Development Investment Corporation, and a Director on the Board of Women's College Hospital Foundation. Jennifer is the Co-Chair of the UN convened Financial Center for Sustainability (FC4S) network and serves on the Advisory Council for the Institute of Sustainable Finance. In 2015 and 2017, she was named a Women's Executive Network (WXN) Canada's Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Award Winner. Jennifer is a graduate of the Harvard Business School Women's Leadership Program. She received her MBA from McGill University and a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in Economics and Political Science from McGill University.



[Akshu Campbell-Holt](#) is Managing Director at AIFC Business Connect. She has fifteen years of experience working in the financial services, e-commerce, and technology industries in the Middle East, Central Asia, and India. She specializes in sustainability, strategy formulation, market research, and business infrastructure development at international financial centers in emerging and frontier markets. Since 2017 she has advised on sustainability, strategy formulation and implementation, and commercial solutions across various AIFC entities. Previously, she worked for ten years in Qatar, including at the financial regulator of the Qatar Financial Centre (QFC) – the QFC Regulatory Authority. She has an MBA from Edinburgh Business School and a Bachelor in Engineering from India. She has a Certificate of Corporate Finance and Funding (CertCFF) from the Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT), UK, and is an affiliate member of the ACT.



[Frédéric de Laminne](#) is the Secretary-General of the Belgian Finance Center, a non-profit organization for promoting the Belgian financial sector. He also serves as treasurer and member of the Board of the WAIFC. He has previously worked at Euronext for ten years as Director of Issuers Relations & Listing. He also managed a venture capital fund and spent 15 years at Generale Bank in Belgium, mainly in investment banking. A member of the Working Group of the Lippens Commission that drafted the Belgian Code of Corporate Governance, he was also a guest lecturer in Corporate Governance for the Free University of Brussels. A civil engineer from the University of Liège, he also holds an MBA from Cornell University (NY).



[James Martin](#) is the CEO of AIFC Business Connect. James Martin is the CEO of AIFC Business Connect, based in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. AIFC Business Connect drives business development and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) creation within the Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC), the regional financial hub for Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and neighboring regions – the Middle East and China. AIFC's jurisdiction is based on the principles, norms, and precedents of England and Wales's law and standards applied by the world's leading financial centers. Mr. Martin joined AIFC as Deputy CEO in June 2019. He previously worked at Nasdaq for over 15 years, based in Europe and the Middle East, focusing on business development, sales, and consultancy. Before this, he worked in the finance sector in London and the US on asset management, securities lending, and custody banking.



[Mirzo Iskandar Gulamov](#) is currently the Country Specialist and Programming Team Leader in Asian Development Bank's Kazakhstan Resident Mission, based in Nur-Sultan, where he oversees all country programming and thematic work. In this capacity, he coordinates the bank's work on new financing modalities and products, including non-sovereign assistance to the country's public sector. Before his posting to Kazakhstan, Mr. Gulamov worked for more than ten years in ADB's Uzbekistan Resident Mission, where he led strategy formulation, programming, economic, and liaison work and contributed to substantial expansion of ADB operations in Uzbekistan. Mr. Gulamov also worked in the Strategy and Policy Department in ADB headquarters at Manila, Philippines, where he was involved in the review and subsequent reforms of country partnership strategy business processes. Before joining ADB, Mr. Gulamov had more than nine years of experience in both private and public sectors. More recently, Mr. Gulamov was a partner at Dundee Capital Partners, a Central Asia-focused investment management company based in Austria. Previously, he was head of the state budget revenue department of the Ministry of Finance of Uzbekistan. Mr. Gulamov is a recipient of research grants from Global Development Network, Economic Education and Research Consortium, and USAID. He is a member of the Institute of International Finance.



[Dr. Jochen Biedermann](#) serves as Managing Director of the WAIFC. Also, Jochen is the CEO of Blockchain Asia Limited in Hong Kong. He serves as an expert to the Sino-German Center for Finance and Economics in Frankfurt, backed by the central banks, government institutions, and leading universities in China and Germany. He is also a Fellow of the Think Tank of the Asian Financial Cooperation Association, based in Beijing. Furthermore, Jochen serves as the FinTech coordinator for the EU Financial Centre Roundtable. He is a member of the Advisory Council on FinTech of Astana International Financial Centre and a mentor at Accelerator Frankfurt, Plug and Play Tech Center, and the Qatar FinTech Hub. Jochen holds a diploma in mathematics & computer science from the University of Göttingen and a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Cottbus, Germany.

About the WAIFC: The World Alliance of International Financial Centers (WAIFC) is a non-profit association registered in Belgium, representing 18 leading international financial centers of four continents. WAIFC members are city governments, associations, and similar institutions developing and promoting their financial centers.

In an era of breakthrough technologies and rapid social change, financial centers are crucial to sustaining economic growth. Thus, the objective of the WAIFC is to create a transparent network that facilitates cooperation and sharing of best practices to further the understanding of the importance of international financial centers for national and global economies as well as social development.

WAIFC thanks the Astana International Financial Centre for hosting this webinar.