



# United Nations Industrial Development Organization

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## Industrial Development Board

### Forty-fourth session

Vienna, 22-24 November 2016

Item 13 of the provisional agenda

**Matters related to intergovernmental, non-governmental,  
governmental and other organizations**

## **Application from a non-governmental organization for consultative status**

### **Note by the Director General**

The present document provides information on the World Free Zones Organization (World FZO), a further non-governmental organization applying for consultative status with UNIDO.

The application of the World Free Zones Organization (World FZO) was received by the Secretariat on 5 October 2016. The legal framework for the review of applications from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) by the Bureau of the Board is outlined in document IDB.44/18. Information on World FZO is circulated to the members of the Board in the annex to the present document. More detailed information on the NGO is available with the Secretariat.

For reasons of economy, this document has not been printed. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

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## Annex

### **World Free Zones Organization (World FZO)**

#### **Historical background**

World FZO was officially launched on 19 May 2014 in Dubai by its 14 founding members under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates. In November 2014, the World FZO Observatory was launched, a research division created to build a comprehensive knowledge database and atlas of the estimated 3,500 free zones in the world. Registered in Geneva and headquartered in Dubai, World FZO is the first organization that brings together free zones to promote the exchange of views, best practice, experience and knowledge and ensure the sustainability and ongoing success of the free zone model.

#### **Statutes**

Available.

#### **Structure of governing bodies and administration**

- General Assembly;
- Board of Directors.

#### **Activities related to the work of UNIDO**

World FZO is committed to support the management and continuous development of free zones and offer a range of support services to its members. These include training and development programmes as well as research and analysis on free zones and wider trade and investment trends.

World FZO's cooperation with UNIDO will focus inter alia on the following areas:

- Sharing knowledge with developing countries, countries with economies in transition, and free zone professionals concerning ideas, trends and implementation of best practices in international trade, industrial development, free zones and free zone administration;
- Facilitating networking and the exchange of experience, knowledge and best practices through research, data and networking events;
- Providing technical support, guidance and educational training in international trade, industrial development and free zones, to developing countries, countries with economies in transition, and free zone authorities, operators and users;
- Supporting research and analysis in the areas of international trade, industrial development and free zones;
- Promoting domestic investment for leveraging foreign direct investment (enterprise creation and growth programmes), in particular through the UNIDO Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion Programme; and

- Enhancing the contribution of free zones to inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

**Relations with the United Nations, other IGOs and NGOs**

World FZO signed memorandums of understanding with the International Chamber of Commerce Business Action to Stop Counterfeiting and Piracy (BASCAP) and UNIDO, and a letter of intent with the International Trade Centre (ITC).

**Membership**

In March 2015, World FZO had 155 member free zones from 40 different countries.

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