

PRESS RELEASE

Paris, June 1, 2021

First edition of the “Ambition Latin America” forum

The first edition of the “Ambition Latin America” forum organized by Business France, under the high patronage of the President of the Republic, Emmanuel Macron, and supported by the Ministry for the Economy, Finance and the Recovery, as well as the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, held its plenary session in virtual format on May 31 and June 1, 2021.

This first forum, which brought together more than 1,100 participants from both sides of the Atlantic, aimed to highlight the strong economic links and partnerships established between France and the countries that make up Latin America. It was structured around themes responding to current global challenges: the development of urbanization and sustainable cities, the fight against climate change, the transformation of energy mixes, the development of innovative and responsible agriculture, and access to healthcare services.

Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, highlighted the density of human, cultural and economic ties uniting France and Latin America today, along with the joint work to build a sustainable, inclusive and job-creating recovery, which respects the environment.

The minister presented the economic overhaul measures driven by the French government's €100 billion recovery plan, the priority of which is to strengthen the competitiveness, sustainability, and digitalization of the French economy, as well as the economic attractiveness of France. He also focused on supporting French businesses in international markets and investments.

France is among the top ten investors in Latin America, with more than €41 billion invested; it is one of the main foreign employers and the fourth European host country for Latin American investments.

Sustainable cities, healthcare, renewable energies, innovation, along with agri-ecology, are at the heart of the debates. With around sixty cities with more than one million inhabitants and an almost 90% urbanization rate, the needs for urban mobility, water and sanitation management, as well as public lighting are immense. The healthcare sector continues to dominate “bilateral” trade with France. With more than 330 million hectares of agricultural land, but a considerable number of production losses, French businesses can meet the needs for innovation, environmental preservation and productivity of local farmers.

Franck Riester, Minister Delegate to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, with responsibility for Foreign Trade and Economic Attractiveness, highlighted in his speech that the “Ambition Latin America” forum invites stakeholders to think about building a sustainable and more resilient global economy. The themes chosen for this edition perfectly respond to the major challenges of our time. The Minister Delegate also stressed that international trade,

and maintaining close links between the French and Latin American economies, will be crucial in responding together to these global challenges. The Covid-19 crisis has in no way altered this ambition: on the contrary, it has only strengthened it. He also recalled that the first edition of this forum and the organization of numerous B2B meetings represented an opportunity to contribute to the development of new forms of solidarity.

Ms. Agnès Pannier-Runacher, Minister Delegate to the Minister for the Economy, Finance and the Recovery, with responsibility for Industry, concluded by recalling the need for a transition towards a more resilient economy. The Minister underlined that industry is at the heart of the digital and ecological transitions, and that the recovery plan dedicates €35 billion to it out of a total budget of €100 billion.

The Minister also welcomed the massive investments of French industrial firms in Latin America, particularly in the energy, pharmaceutical, automotive and construction sectors. She welcomed the numerous partnerships that could be concluded during this forum, as well as the organization on June 2, 2021 of a session dedicated to the economic attractiveness of France for Latin American businesses. Their investments in France have doubled in five years, in particular thanks to government measures to make life simpler for businesses and to improve the attractiveness of our country.

The “Ambition Latin America” forum will continue on June 2 and June 3, 2021, with targeted business meetings in 100% digital B2B format between French and Latin American firms. These will ensure initial contact with buyers, distributors and partners, with participants also to receive advice from experts.

About Business France

Business France is the national agency supporting the international development of the French economy, responsible for fostering export growth by French businesses, as well as promoting and facilitating international investment in France.

It promotes France’s companies, business image and nationwide attractiveness as an investment location, and also runs the VIE international internship program.

Business France has nearly 1,500 personnel, both in France and in 55 countries around the world, who work with a network of partners.

Since January 2019, as part of the reform of the state support system for exports, Business France has given private-sector partners responsibility for supporting French SMES and mid-size companies in the following markets: Belgium, Hungary, Morocco, Norway, the Philippines and Singapore.

For more information, visit: www.businessfrance.fr @businessfrance

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