UNITAR, TSINGHUA UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA TO JOIN FORCES TO SET GLOBAL STANDARDS FOR SDG EDUCATION AND OPEN INNOVATION

27 May 2021, Geneva, Switzerland and Beijing, China - The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Geneva School of Economics and Management of the University of Geneva and the School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set global standards for SDG Education and Open Innovation.

The three documents were virtually signed by **United Nations Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director of UNITAR, Mr. Nikhil Seth**, the **Dean of the Geneva School of Economics and Management of the University of Geneva, Dr. Marcelo Olarreaga** and the **Dean of the School of Economics and Management, Dr. BAI Chong-En**, on 27 May 2021.
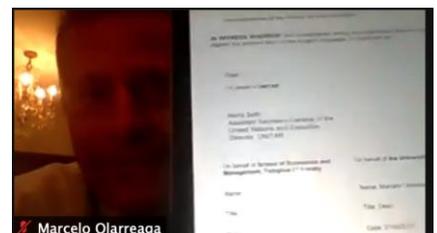
The Agreement formalises and enhances the ongoing collaboration between the signatory parties towards promoting the education and practice of open innovation for the SDGs and developing relevant standardisation and governance models for the Global Goals and the Agenda 2030.

"We are delighted to sign this MoU with the School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University and of the University of Geneva, marking the next steps of our actionable support to SDG education and open innovation, by developing and setting cross-cutting global standards, as key contributors to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda," said Mr. Nikhil Seth.

On the occasion, Dean Olarreaga stated: "This agreement builds on several years of collaboration between Geneva and Beijing in designing joint educational programmes that build on novel open innovation practices to foster sustainable development. Thanks to the support of

the Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency, we are now introducing these practices more widely throughout South-East Asia."

Bai Chong-En

"The School of Economics and Management of Tsinghua University placed a great emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals. We're fully committed to raise the awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals among our young students and educate them to be capable of contributing to these Goals. Our collaboration between UNITAR and School of Economics and Management of the University of Geneva has been a very important first step of our efforts," said Dean BAI during the signing ceremony.

The Signatory Parties have established a track record of designing and running open innovation practices that involve multiple stakeholders as well as participatory and student-driven approaches.

Through implementation of the MoU Tripartite Agreement, SDG education and open innovation practices co-organised by the Signatory Parties will be globally established and standardized through performance measurements. The parties will study how open innovation in universities fosters the SDGs, They will assess performance of affiliated open innovation programmes and issue joint certifications of participation and accomplishment to beneficiaries, among other forms of cooperation.

International beneficiaries of the partnership's events and activities, including students, professionals and social entrepreneurs, will participate in online and in-person expert overviews covering different aspects of SDG-related innovation: tech trends, business and investment environments, startup market conditions, key players, regulations and standards.

The signed MoU Agreement will create opportunities for new synergies and partnerships between academia and the UN, through the joint hosting of hands-on open innovation activities, such as hackathons.

About UNITAR

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) is a principal training arm of the United Nations, working in every region of the world. We empower individuals, governments and organizations through knowledge and learning to effectively overcome contemporary global challenges. UNITAR was established in 1965 as an autonomous body within the United Nations with the mandate of enhancing the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations and its Member States. Every year UNITAR's reach extends to some 80,000 beneficiaries through face-to-face seminars and workshops, e-learning or other training-related events. (www.unitar.org)

About Tsinghua x-lab

Tsinghua's x-lab is a university-based education platform designed to foster student creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. The platform was established in April 2013 under the auspices of the School of Economics and Management. Tsinghua x-lab offers support and resources to the entire Tsinghua community- students, faculty and alumni, all across 15 schools and departments. Through our educational efforts we've reached out to over 50,000 people at Tsinghua and the Beijing community.(http://www.x-lab.tsinghua.edu.cn/)