

UN General Assembly grants Observer Status to International Chamber of Commerce in historic decision

New York, 13 December 2016

- United Nations General Assembly adopts resolution granting Observer Status to world's largest business association
- New role for the International Chamber of Commerce first time business given official role in General Assembly in the 71-year history of the UN
- Landmark move will enhance business engagement on global governance issues—including implementation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In an unprecedented move, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly has today granted Observer Status to the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)—the world's largest business organisation representing more than six million members in over 100 countries.

The decision—taken by 193 members of the UN General Assembly during its on-going 71st session in New York—is the first time that a business organisation has been admitted as an Observer at the UN General Assembly. The list of UN observers is highly restricted and features principally intergovernmental organisations.

The new role for ICC means that business will for the first time have direct voice in the UN system. The decision paves the way for ICC to contribute directly to the work of the General Assembly and reflects the vital role the private sector will play in implementing the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

ICC Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal said: “**This is huge recognition of the role that business can play in contributing to a better and peaceful world. There is only one route to meeting the many challenges that face our society—from climate change to mass migration—and that is for governments and civil society to work hand-in-hand with the private sector.**

“Granting Observer Status to ICC sends a powerful signal that the UN recognizes business as a vital partner. We stand ready to ensure that the private sector plays a full role in meeting the ambition of the 2030 agenda.”

The resolution to grant observer status to ICC was submitted by France—ICC's host country—and was supported by 22 other Member States. ICC already works with a wide array of UN specialised agencies and organisations around the world providing business input and expertise on issues from commercial standards through to climate change. ICC was designated as the official business representative in the processes that lead to the

creation of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—a key factor in the General Assembly's decision.

ICC Secretary General John Danilovich said: "**It's a great honour for ICC to be granted Observer Status at the UN General Assembly. ICC has a long tradition of close cooperation with the United Nations and today's decision reflects our sustained efforts to strengthen the relationship between the UN and the private sector.**

"Given the complexity of today's global challenges, it's vital that business has a clear voice in UN decision making. We look forward to using this unique platform to deploy fully the resources, expertise and knowledge of world business in the work of the General Assembly."

Following today's UN General Assembly resolution, ICC will take up its position as observer to the General Assembly on 1 January 2017.

THE INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND THE UNITED NATIONS OVER 70 YEARS OF COOPERATION

1945	ICC only private sector organization granted accreditation to the Conference on International Organization (UNCIO), a convention resulting in the creation of the UN Charter
1953	ECOSOC reviews ICC proposals for a new international convention that would remove local law limitation and create a truly international arbitral enforcement regime which today applies in close to 150 territories
1969	ICC and UN establish the GATT Economic Consultative Committee to address common problems with heads of 8 UN Economic Organizations and the GATT
1955	Newly formed UN Economic Commission for the Far East encourages ICC's Commission for Asia and Far East Affairs to establish national committees in the regions
1946	ICC granted top-level consultative status with the United Nations (UN)
1972	UN invites ICC to participate in nomination of a preparatory panel of experts to report to the 1st UN Conference on the Human Environment
1979	ICC report details over 80 issues being worked on in conjunction with IGOs of the UN system
1991	ICC launches Business Charter for Sustainable Development, one year ahead of the UN Rio "Earth Summit"
1984	ICC and UNEP stage first World Industry Conference on Environmental Management (WICEM)
1992	UN endorses ICC Incoterms Rules
1998	High-level representatives from UN agencies participate in the ICC Geneva Business Dialogue
1999	ICC instrumental in creation of UN Global Compact
2001	ICC and UNCTAD establish the Investment Advisory Council at the 3rd UN Conference on LDCs
2003	ICC becomes signatory of UN Global Compact
2009	UN endorses ICC Documentary Credit Rules
2015	ICC leads business delegation of over 800 to Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa
2016	ICC GRANTED OBSERVER STATUS AT UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
2007	ICC hosts first business day on the sidelines of COP 13
	ICC is the business "focal point" for UN climate talks and the landmark Paris Climate Conference (COP21)
	ICC CEO letter in <i>Financial Times</i> calls on world leaders for a collaborative effort towards attainment of UN Global Goals