



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON ENHANCED COOPERATION
BETWEEN
THE UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
(UNIDO)
AND
THE GLOBAL ACCREDITATION COOPERATION INCORPORATED (Global
ACI)**

WHEREAS UNIDO, as a specialized agency of the United Nations, has the central role in coordinating all activities of the United Nations system in the field of inclusive and sustainable industrial development and promotes industrial development and cooperation on Global, regional, and national as well as sectoral levels within the framework of its four strategic priorities of creating shared prosperity, advancing economic competitiveness, safeguarding the environment, and strengthening knowledge and institutions;

WHEREAS Global ACI has assumed the roles of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC), becoming the single international authority on the accreditation of laboratories, certification bodies, inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers, validation/verification bodies, reference material producers and biobanks, and therefore strengthening international trust through its Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA), which enables the acceptance of accredited conformity assessment results across multiple markets, eliminating the need for repeated testing or certification and facilitating Global trade;

WHEREAS UNIDO and Global ACI (hereinafter each referred to as “Party” and, collectively, as “Parties”) have a long and fruitful history of collaboration and cooperation, through IAF and ILAC, in areas of mutual concern in order to enhance the effectiveness of their respective efforts;

WHEREAS the Parties wish to consolidate and enhance their collaboration and to strengthen their strategic partnership in order to promote sustainable development *inter alia* through participation in their technical events, and exchange of technical information in the fields of accreditation, certification, conformity assessment, inspection, proficiency testing, validation/verification, reference materials, biobanks, and productive capacity building;

WHEREAS the Director General of UNIDO and the Chair of Global ACI have, in accordance with their constitutions and relevant by-laws, agreed that the following Memorandum of Understanding will govern the cooperation between the two organizations and the coordination of their activities in areas where their functions and activities are complementary and mutually supportive;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Parties hereby agree as follows:

Article I

Objectives

1. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to consolidate and enhance the collaboration and to strengthen the strategic partnership between the Parties, in order to promote sustainable industrial development and economic growth, *inter alia* by encouraging the widest use of accredited services and MRAs, and therefore assisting the beneficial integration into the Global economy of developing countries, least developed countries and countries with economies in transition. The following are the objectives of the cooperation between Global ACI and UNIDO:

- (a) To promote communication between UNIDO and Global ACI.
- (b) To promote the use, acceptance and reliance on accredited services, including through MRAs, with a view to facilitating trade, enhancing regulatory confidence, and reducing technical barriers to trade.
- (c) To foster collaboration, coordination and complementarity in activities aimed at strengthening accreditation systems as a core component of Quality Infrastructure at Global, regional, sub-regional and national levels.
- (d) To support the development, strengthening and sustainability of national and regional accreditation bodies, particularly in developing countries, least developed countries and countries with economies in transition.
- (e) To optimize available resources and expertise within Global ACI and UNIDO in relation to accreditation, including for capacity building, training, institutional development, research and knowledge dissemination, through specific programmes and projects identified by and agreed between the Parties from time to time, noting specific initiatives may be covered under separate agreements, as mutually desired.
- (f) To collaborate on accreditation-related activities in emerging, strategic and regulated sectors, including but not limited to automotive, electronics, mining, chemicals, textiles, cosmetics, health, food safety, energy, climate change, environmental protection, digital technologies and sustainability assurance.
- (g) To encourage innovation and digital transformation in accreditation practices, including the use of digital tools, data integrity systems and remote assessment methodologies, where appropriate.
- (h) To undertake joint projects and organise seminars and workshops and other awareness-raising and knowledge sharing activities at the international, regional, sub-regional and national levels, on accreditation related issues.

Article II

Areas of Cooperation

1. With a view to facilitating the effective attainment of the objectives set forth in their respective constituent instruments, UNIDO and Global ACI agree to act in close cooperation with each other and to consult each other, as appropriate, about matters of common interest.

2. The Parties agree to cooperate, subject to their respective mandates, policies and resources, through joint programmes and projects identified by and agreed between the Parties, *inter alia* in the following fields:

- (a) Accreditation of laboratories, certification bodies, inspection bodies, proficiency testing providers, validation/verification bodies, reference material producers and biobanks and the use of Multilateral Recognition Arrangements.
- (b) Quality infrastructure, with a specific focus on accreditation-related capacity development, including training, e-learning and other knowledge transfer mechanisms.
- (c) Research, analysis and knowledge generation related to accreditation, mutual recognition and quality infrastructure.
- (d) Publication, dissemination and exchange of accreditation-related knowledge, guidance documents, best practices and technical materials, including through joint reports, events and digital platforms.

3. The Parties agree that the Memorandum does not confer any exclusivity regarding activities covered by the Memorandum and that they may collaborate on similar activities with other parties.

4. The areas of cooperation may be modified from time to time by written agreement of the Parties.

Article III Modalities of Cooperation

1. The Parties will pursue, either jointly or separately as mutually agreed, the following non-exclusive modalities in order to implement the Memorandum:

- (a) Conducting studies and research;
- (b) Organizing conferences, seminars, workshops, policy forums and expert meetings at the Global, regional, sub-regional and national levels;
- (c) Authoring, editing and publishing journals, articles, reviews, books and other scholarly or technical publications;
- (d) Undertaking programming missions, outreach and fundraising activities;
- (e) Delivering training and capacity-building activities for government officials, project counterparts, national experts and consultants;
- (f) Formulating and implementing pilot, demonstration and joint projects; and
- (g) Exchanging information, research outputs, statistics and other relevant data.

2. To facilitate the implementation of joint activities, direct contacts will be maintained between representatives of each Party.

3. The Parties will normally convene at least one annual meeting to review current programmes and projects under this Memorandum of Understanding and to plan future activities.

4. When developing projects related to accreditation, UNIDO may, where appropriate, inform UNIDO Members about Global ACI services. UNIDO will seek to involve Global ACI at an early and mutually suitable stage, where this contributes to the project's objectives and is consistent with UNIDO's rules and practices. When Global ACI establishes accreditation related projects within its capacity building and developing country activities, Global ACI will undertake to involve UNIDO as soon as practicable and in a manner equally suitable to both Parties.

5. The modalities of joint projects under the present Memorandum of Understanding will be reflected in a project document agreed upon by the Parties.

6. In view of Global ACI's role as the single international accreditation cooperation body, UNIDO may draw its Member States' attention to Global ACI activities that support the development of effective accreditation infrastructure.

7. The Parties will negotiate in good faith the terms of any subsequent agreement(s) that are required to implement their collaboration at the project level. Such agreement(s) will be subject to the terms of the Memorandum and the regulations, rules, instructions, directives and procedures in force in UNIDO.

8. Nothing in the Memorandum may be construed as granting a license or permission to a Party concerning the intellectual property of the other Party. Intellectual property rights arising from or relating to the Parties' cooperation will be the subject of a separate agreement between the Parties.

Article IV

Exchange of information and publications

1. The Parties will keep each other informed about work of mutual interest carried out by each organization, in particular on their technical assistance programmes to developing countries.

2. The Parties will arrange for the furnishing, free of charge, by each organization of a reasonable numbers of copies of its periodicals and other publications which may be of interest to the other.

3. Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding will be so construed as to require either Party to furnish any material, data or information the furnishing of which could, in its judgment, require it to violate its policy regarding the confidentiality of such information.

4. When mutually beneficial, ad hoc arrangements may be made for participation as observers in technical meetings of mutual relevance, including steering committees of UNIDO Projects, in accordance with the respective rules and procedures of each organization. When mutually beneficial, UNIDO may be invited to have a representative on steering committees of Global ACI capacity building and developing country initiatives.

5. To facilitate communication, the UNIDO Secretariat may from time-to-time provide Global ACI Secretariat with updated information and materials regarding its activities on technical cooperation, and on fostering partnerships for knowledge transfer.

6. The following focal points are designated for coordinating all communication between the Parties and facilitating the day-to-day implementation of the Memorandum:

(a) For UNIDO:

Chief of the Division of SME Competitiveness, Quality and Job Creation
Address: Vienna International Centre
Wagramerstr. 5, P.O. Box 300, A-1400 Vienna, Austria

(b) For Global ACI:

Victor Gandy, Secretary
Address: 2200 Wilson Blvd. 102-332
Arlington VA 22201, United States of America

Article V

Public Announcements; Use of Name, Emblem, Official Seal

1. Either Party may issue press releases or make public announcements relating to the Memorandum; however, the Party will first provide a draft of any press releases for review and approval before being issued.

2. Neither Party and its affiliates shall in any manner whatsoever use the name, emblem or official seal of the other Party or its affiliates, or any abbreviation thereof, in connection with its business or otherwise without the express prior written permission of the other Party.

Article VI

Financial Matters

1. The Memorandum does not establish a financial obligation on the part of any Party.

2. The implementation of activities envisaged in this Memorandum of Understanding will depend on the availability of the necessary financial resources and will be made in accordance with the regulations and procedures in force in the two organizations.

Article VII

Privileges and Immunities

Nothing in or relating to the Memorandum will be deemed as a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities of UNIDO.

Article VIII

Governing Law and Settlement of Disputes

1. The present Memorandum will be construed in accordance with general principles of law, to the exclusion of any single national system of law.

2. In the event of a dispute, controversy or claim arising out of or relating to the Memorandum or to any agreement(s) concluded pursuant to the Memorandum, the Parties will use their best efforts to promptly settle such dispute through direct negotiation.

3. In the event of a dispute, controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Memorandum of Understanding, or the breach, termination or invalidity thereof (a "dispute"), the Parties will use their best efforts to settle promptly such dispute through direct negotiation.

Any dispute that is not settled within sixty (60) days from the date either Party has notified the other Party of the nature of the dispute and of the measures that should be taken to rectify it will be resolved through consultation between the Director General of UNIDO and the Chair of Global ACI or their duly authorized representatives. Each Party will give full and sympathetic consideration to any proposal advanced by the other to settle amicably any matter for which no provision has been made or any controversy as to the interpretation or application of this Memorandum of Understanding.

Article IX Final Clauses

1. This Memorandum will enter into force upon signature by the authorized representatives of the Parties.

2. This Memorandum of Understanding may only be changed, modified, amended or supplemented by written agreement of the Parties.

3. The Parties may terminate the Memorandum of Understanding by written agreement. Each Party will have the right to terminate the Memorandum, for any reason and at any time, by giving six months' written notice to the other Party.

4. If the Memorandum of Understanding is terminated by either Party, steps will be taken to ensure that the termination does not affect any prior obligation, project or activity already in progress. Existing projects which are due to be completed within one calendar year from the date of notice of termination will not be affected by such termination unless otherwise provided for.

5. The Parties acknowledge that this Memorandum of Understanding shall not create any agency, partnership, employment relationship or joint venture between the Parties or their employees or other personnel. Neither Global ACI nor UNIDO shall be empowered to act on behalf of or in the name of the other.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, duly authorized representatives of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the Global Accreditation Cooperation Incorporated, respectively, have signed the present Memorandum of Understanding, in English and in two originals, on the date(s) and at the place(s) set forth below:

For the United Nations Industrial
Development Organization:



Mr. Ciyong Zou
Deputy to the Director General
And Managing Director, TCS

Date: May 18, 2026

For the Global Accreditation
Cooperation Incorporated:



Mr. Brahim Houla
Chair

Date: 18/05/2026