

Session title: Industrial Policy in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Organizer: South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal

Date and Time: Thursday, December 2, 2021, from 10:30-11:45 AM (CET)

Session Plan

Session timing: 1 hour 15 minutes (10:30-11:45 AM)

Description

South Asia was, at least until the Covid-19 pandemic, the fastest-growing region in the world. Despite heterogeneity among its economies, their governments agree on the need to preserve policy space in WTO negotiations. They see the industrial policy as a powerful means to effect growth-enhancing structural economic transformation. Instruments such as tariffs and subsidies have regained prominence in the wake of the pandemic that exposed the vulnerability of global supply chains. More and more industries are being deemed "strategic". What tools are optimal to nurture the digital industry and economy and benefit from digitalization are emerging as important industrial policy questions, especially with the boost received by digitalization amid the pandemic. Add to this the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) that is fast underway with a lot of imponderables, further necessitating a rethink of industrial policy. This session will present South Asian perspectives on industrial policy in the context of the 4IR.

Programme

Moderator: Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Chairperson, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Kathmandu

Panelists:

- Professor Nagesh Kumar, Director and Chief Executive, Institute for Studies in Industrial Development (IISD), New Delhi
- Dr. Fahmida Khatun, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue(CPD), Dhaka

- Dr. Sajid Amin Javed, Senior Research Fellow, Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Islamabad
- Dr. Asanka Wijesinghe, Research Economist, Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Colombo

Floor discussion

Concluding remarks by Moderator

Note: Moderator will speak for five minutes to set the scene, then ask the panelists to speak, one by one, for 10 minutes each. 45 minutes so far. Questions from the audience will be taken, in batches or individually (depending on the volume), and the panelists will answer them, with the moderator facilitating the discussion. This will be for 20 minutes. In the last 10 minutes, the moderator will sum up the session.