



Joint Statement

by **Emanuele Riva**, IAF Chair, and **Etty Feller**, ILAC Chair



World Accreditation Day 2023

Accreditation: Supporting the Future of Global Trade

The global accreditation organizations IAF and ILAC once again come together on 9 June to celebrate World Accreditation Day. The 2023 theme is "Accreditation: Supporting the Future of Global Trade" and aims to draw attention to how accreditation and conformity assessment are adapting to advances in technology, changes in consumer behaviours and regulatory environment, new trust mechanisms, and changing business models.



The founding ethos of IAF and ILAC 30 years ago was to support global trade. That ethos has driven the two organisations over these three decades and still acts as one of the primary motivators for all they do.

In a constantly changing world, it is remarkable that accreditation supporting world trade is as relevant for today as it was 30 years ago and this relevance only seems to grow stronger. Estimates by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United States Department of Commerce are that standards and related conformity assessment have an impact on 80% of the world's trade.

The Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) estimates that standards contribute GBR 6.1 billion to exports in the United Kingdom per year, while independent research carried out by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research reported that accreditation delivers a NZD 4.5 billion export premium in exports.

Accreditation and trade are bound together by trust – trust is the essential component of trading relationships, whether they are conducted within national borders or with other economies. Economies around the world have long relied on an integrated system of standards, regulations, metrology and accredited conformity assessment to create a quality infrastructure. This integrated system has generated the necessary trust to support trade by ensuring that consumers, businesses and regulators procuring goods and services get what they expect.

One of the primary roles accreditation plays in supporting global trade is in the removal of technical barriers to trade (TBTs). By demonstrating confidence and the TBTs, quality infrastructures have provided businesses with access to a wider international marketplace, whilst simultaneously improving the quality and safety of imports from those economies.

So many of the key factors affecting global trade are exactly the issues to which accreditation has solutions:

- Supply chains are becoming more complex, and there is evidence of growing regulatory divergence
- Geopolitical factors such as armed conflicts and the global pandemic have impacted the sourcing of raw materials and disrupted established methods of quality assurance
- Growing concerns related to cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, data protection, fraud and product authenticity
- Consumer consciousness about sustainability, provenance, health and ethics is on the rise, forcing brands to improve their understanding and oversight of their supply network.

Supporting regulators, business and consumers in meeting their diverse needs, whether technical product safety, good governance, climate change, energy, fair markets and public confidence is how accreditation supports world trade. In turn, this is seen by organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the OECD who suggest that greater adoption of international standards in national frameworks, and compliance with them, could promote regulatory convergence globally.



Adapting to a changing world is a cornerstone of how IAF and ILAC develop solutions to support global trade. The adoption of new technologies is increasing at an unseen rate, bringing new threats and governance challenges. Accredited conformity assessment is already delivering confidence in the quality assurance of goods and services in many of the areas where blockchain technology and AI are being applied.

While standards and accreditation have had a positive impact on trade both within and across borders, there is a need for continued evolution to meet changing industry requirements and to support future trading systems; IAF and ILAC will continuously strive to achieve this. In turn, this also plays a key role in supporting the SDG targets that relate to trade.

Supporting the future of global trade for World Accreditation Day 2023 demonstrates how national and global quality infrastructures are adapting to advances in technology, changes in consumer behaviours and the regulatory environment, new trust mechanisms, and changing business models. As vital today as it was 30 years ago and will be in the future, accreditation will continue to support world trade for consumers, businesses and governments & regulators alike.

World Accreditation Day 2023 enables the International Accreditation Forum (www.iaf.nu), the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (www.ilac.org) and their members to highlight how accreditation is Supporting the Future of Global Trade. IAF and ILAC provide a range of information to explain accreditation's role in supporting the Future of global trade, including further illustrations of its use: [Trade–Public Sector Assurance](#) and [Business Benefits](#)

