



OUAGADOUGOU DECLARATION

on

Strengthening the Voice of Business to Support Democratic Governance

We, participants of the Conference on “Governance, Democracy and Business”, held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on January 16 -17, 2018

Under the patronage of **H.E. Roch Marc Christian Kabore**, President of Burkina Faso,
And in the presence of:

- **H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou**, President of the Republic of Niger
- **H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta**, President of the Republic of Mali

We the undersigned, attest that people have the right to freely determine their own destiny. We declare our strong support for promoting democratic governance and encourage that government, business, labor, and civil society collaborate to ensure that citizens’ enjoy freedom in all aspects of life.

We recognize that it is the role of governments, business, labor, and civil society to promote just, peaceful, and inclusive societies. A sound democratic system is the best guarantor of individual freedom, which is essential to long-term economic and social development. Good democratic governance provides for economic growth, political stability, and security. Strong democratic governance is characterized by accountability, transparency, open dialogue, strong market institutions, efficient regulation, and effective rule of law.

We encourage development of strong market economies to provide for sustainable economic growth. Market economies contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of complement democratic governance by ensuring economic freedom, competition, fair laws and regulations, and mobilize societies to combat corruption. Market economies help to build institutions that ensure property rights, secure contracts, encourage entrepreneurship, provides equal access to information, and strengthens the rule of law.

We underline the importance of enhancing closer collaboration among governments, civil society, labor, media, and business to promote democratic good governance. Each group plays a unique, but complementary role in building the rubric that helps to reduce poverty and inequality, defend human rights, support ethical behavior, increase social integration, create economic opportunity, implement corporate social responsibility, and protect the environment.

We call for a more comprehensive approach to strengthening democratic governance by encouraging greater participation, dialogue, inclusion, mutual understanding, collective action, and multi-stakeholder collaboration and involvement between government, business, labor, and civil society.

Adopted on 17 January 2018