



JOINT STATEMENT

World Accreditation Day 2025

Accreditation: Empowering Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

by Emanuele Riva, IAF Chair, and Ety Feller, ILAC Chair



IAF and ILAC celebrate World Accreditation Day (WAD) together on 9 June 2025. This year's theme spotlights the role that accreditation and conformity assessment play in empowering SMEs (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises) in driving economic growth, innovation and employment. SMEs represent 95% of businesses worldwide, account for 60-70% of employment and contribute up to 40% of national income in emerging markets. However, despite their importance to global prosperity, SMEs face challenges in accessing markets, competing on a level playing field and demonstrating regulatory compliance, as well as financial constraints that hinder their ability to grow and compete effectively.

Given their major contribution to job creation and global economic development, SMEs are an important part of achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular to 'promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all' (goal 8) and to 'build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation' (goal 9). Accreditation is a proven tool that enables SMEs to deliver this sustainable growth and innovation. This year's focus on SMEs aims to share examples of how accreditation supports SME growth, with the aim of encouraging wider adoption of accreditation by SMEs across the global economy.

WAD focuses on how accreditation, supported by global mutual recognition arrangements established by ILAC and IAF, helps SMEs to compete with larger, more established businesses. It demonstrates that they meet the requirements of regulators to open up new market opportunities, signifies credibility and instils confidence with potential customers. Accreditation also helps drive internal efficiencies and improved company culture. This is evidenced through independent research data and case studies of SMEs that have benefited from the adoption of accredited conformity assessment.

Etty Feller, ILAC Chair, said: *"World Accreditation Day 2025 highlights the critical role of accreditation and conformity assessment in empowering SMEs, strengthening their ability to compete, innovate, and expand in both domestic and international markets. Conformity assessment—through testing, inspection, certification, validation, verification and calibration—ensures that products, services, and management systems meet recognized standards and regulatory requirements. It therefore provides a trusted and globally accepted framework for SMEs to thrive".*

Emanuele Riva, IAF Chair said: *"Accreditation is a flexible tool that operates across virtually every sector. It is therefore an essential tool for SMEs to drive sustainable growth, business resilience, and innovation. By reducing business risks and enhancing governance, accredited certifications provide SMEs with the operational guidance they need to thrive. We are proud to maintain close strategic partnerships with organisations such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), as they both recognise the important role that accreditation plays in the achievement of the sustainable development agenda and its impact on SME growth, employment opportunities, and industrial development".*

World Accreditation Day will be celebrated in over 100 economies, and we encourage you to participate to promote accreditation in your economy or sector. Please feel free to use the materials that are published on the ILAC and IAF websites, as well as resources such as business-benefits.org and publicsectorassurance.org to support events, press and television coverage, and workshops or seminars.