

2024 CIFTIS Thematic Forum  
“Building Smart City in a Changing World & Release of 2024  
League of Arab States (LAS) Smart City Ranking”  
To be held at China National Convention Center on September 16

The “Building Smart City in a Changing World & Release of 2024 League of Arab States (LAS) Smart City Ranking”, a thematic forum of the 2024 CIFTIS, will be held at China National Convention Center on the afternoon of September 16. The forum will be co-hosted by the Institute for Global Cooperation and Understanding (iGCU) at Peking University and the Institute for Urban Internationalization Studies at Zhejiang International Studies University, supported by Harbor Overseas, the Center for Science & Technology Development and Governance of Tsinghua University, and the Shenzhen Finance Institute. The CIFTIS co-organized by the Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China and the People’s Government of Beijing Municipality is the world’s largest comprehensive exhibition for trade in service.

**Global experts and scholars discuss core challenges to global development.**

Xi Chen, distinguished Professor at Zhejiang International Studies University, Professor Dong Wang, Executive Director of iGCU of Peking University, and Professor Xufeng Zhu, Dean of School of Public Policy & Management at Tsinghua University will separately chair the sessions themed “Smart City and Regional Integration”, “International Relations and Regional Integration”, and “Global Governance, International Finance and Regional Integration”. The three topics basically constitute the core challenges amidst global changes.

This forum is highly internationalized. Forty-eight senior diplomats and government officials from 31 economies and international organizations across Asia, Africa, and Europe will attend in person to engage in thematic discussions, accounting for approximately 60% of all attendees. There are 20 diplomats such as the UN Resident Coordinator in China, the Ambassador of Cyprus to China, the Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of Nigeria in China, the Minister of the Embassy of Tunisia in China, and Vice Director of the League of Arab League at Beijing, along with 28 senior incumbent officials from various countries.

This forum is highly professional. All keynote speakers and panelists are prestigious and influential representatives in the fields of smart cities, international relations, and global governance, which include chief scientists from major national scientific research plan (973 plan), renowned professors from Peking University specializing in area studies, the Chief Economist of the United Nations Development Programme, member of the Expert Group of the Chief Executive’s Policy Unit of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, senior expert from the Financial Research Institute of the People’s Bank of China, and officials from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the People’s Republic of China and the Beijing Municipal Commerce Bureau.

**Enriching Chinese modernization by securing a greater international discourse power in smart city development**

During the forum, Harbor Overseas, iGCU of Peking University, Center for Science & Technology Development and Governance of Tsinghua University, Shenzhen Finance Institute, and Institute for Urban Internationalization Studies at Zhejiang International Studies University will jointly release the “2024 League of Arab States (LAS) Smart City Ranking”. Later, they will also be invited to release the “2024 BRICS Smart City Index” at a thematic forum of the BRICS Summit to be held in Moscow on September 19. These core products able to give us more discourse power in this field will guide smart city development and regional integration worldwide.

The report “2024 League of Arab States (LAS) Smart City Ranking”, which took three months to complete, conducts a systematic evaluation of 62 cities in the LAS region. Eighteen global policymakers and top-tier experts assigned weights to eleven indicators across three domains: traditional infrastructure, digital infrastructure, and institutional infrastructure, all oriented towards regional integration. The thousands of items of source data used in the report, mostly based on Arabic and English, are verified.

The release of the “2024 League of Arab States (LAS) Smart City Ranking” will provide not only a systematic and actionable roadmap for the development of smart cities in the LAS region, but also a new theoretical framework and policy guidance for integrated regional development across the world, including for the LAS and the BRICS nations.