25th Anniversary

National Convention

Decarbonizing for Viksit Bharat: Business Action for a Just and Green Transition

17 December 2026 | **New Delhi**

CONCEPT NOTE *Draft for internal review*

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

For 25 years, the UN Global Compact Network India (UNGCNI), the Local Network of the United Nations Global Compact in India, has worked to advance responsible business practices by supporting companies in aligning their strategies and operations with the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 25th Anniversary National Convention marks a significant institutional milestone. It will provide an opportunity to reflect on the Network's journey, acknowledge the contributions of its members and partners, and reaffirm the role of business as a catalyst for India's sustainable and inclusive development.

The anniversary also provides an occasion to look ahead, considering UNGCNI's strategic priorities for 2026–2030 and its longer-term vision, while renewing collaboration among business leaders, policymakers, experts and other stakeholders committed to advancing sustainable development.

CONVENTION THEME AND RATIONALE

The theme, **"Decarbonizing for Viksit Bharat: Business Action for a Just and Green Transition"**, places decarbonization at the heart of India's development journey towards Viksit Bharat 2047. It underscores the need to translate ambition into measurable action through credible targets, sustained investment, technology deployment and cross-sector collaboration. The Convention will examine pathways to accelerate decarbonization across hard-to-abate industries, including steel, cement, power and chemicals, as well as the maritime sector, where business leadership, innovation and access to finance will be critical to reducing emissions.

At the same time, the transition must be just and inclusive. Expanding access to decent work, strengthening skills and supporting reskilling, and creating greater opportunities for women and young people will be essential. The needs of workers and communities affected by the transition must also be recognized and addressed to ensure that the shift to a low-carbon economy is equitable, resilient and sustainable.

OBJECTIVES

- Mark UNGCNI's 25-year journey by reflecting on its milestones, contributions and impact.
- Convene business leaders, policymakers, technical experts and thought leaders to exchange perspectives and identify opportunities to accelerate decarbonization.
- Examine the policy frameworks, technologies and financing mechanisms required to advance a just and green transition in India.
- Highlight approaches that promote decent work, skills development and expanded opportunities for women and young people.
- Showcase the sustainability journeys of member companies and the value of engaging with the UN Global Compact.
- Reflect on UNGCNI's strategic priorities for 2026–2030 and its vision for the next 25 years.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The one-day Convention will comprise an inaugural session, two high-level panel discussions, a showcase of member-company case studies and a valedictory session. The formal proceedings will be followed Gala Dinner.

TIME	SESSION
DAYTIME PROGRAMME	
09:30 – 10:00	*Registration and tea*
10:00 – 11:00	**Inaugural Session** Welcome and inaugural addresses; reflections on UNGCNI's 25-year journey; release of the commemorative coffee-table book; and screening of leadership testimonial videos.
11:00 – 11:15	*Tea break*
11:15 – 12:45	**High-level Panel I – Decarbonization: Policy, Technology and Finance** Business perspectives on enabling policy frameworks, emerging technologies, alternative fuels and financing solutions, with a focus on the maritime sector and hard-to-abate industries.
12:45 – 13:45	*Networking lunch*
13:45 – 15:00	**High-level Panel II – Leaving No One Behind: Jobs and Opportunities for Women and Youth** Discussion on skilling and reskilling, women's leadership and workforce participation, youth employment and entrepreneurship.
15:00 – 15:30	**Case Study Showcase** Sustainability journeys and practical insights from five UNGCNI member companies.
15:30 – 15:45	*Tea break*
15:45 – 17:00	**Valedictory Session** Reflections from current and former Governing Council members; key takeaways and the way forward.
EVENING	
19:00 – 22:00	**Gala Dinner and evening programme** Including a cultural performance, launch of the UNGCNI CEO Council and presentation of the Sustainability Ratna (by invitation).

The programme and timings above are indicative and may be refined in the final schedule.

KEY DISCUSSION AREAS

Decarbonization pathways

Policy direction, emerging and scalable technologies, alternative fuels, and mobilization of finance and investment.

Sectoral action

Opportunities, challenges and business-led solutions across the maritime, steel, cement, power and chemicals sectors.

A just transition

Future skills, decent work, inclusion of women and young people, and support for workers and communities affected by economic and technological change.

Business leadership

Lessons from corporate sustainability journeys and opportunities for collaboration, innovation and collective action across sectors.

COMMEMORATING 25 YEARS OF UNGCNI

The Convention will commemorate UNGCNI's 25-year journey through a coffee-table book documenting key milestones and institutional contributions, leadership testimonial videos, and interviews with selected members, clients and beneficiaries. Together, these initiatives will capture the Network's evolution and highlight examples of its work and impact.

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The Convention is intended to generate actionable insights, encourage peer learning and strengthen collaboration across India's sustainable business ecosystem. A post-conference publication will document key reflections, recommendations and takeaways emerging from the discussions and contributions of participating experts. UNGCNI is exploring a knowledge partnership with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and/or Grant Thornton Bharat LLP.

The Convention will also feature five case studies showcasing the sustainability journeys of UNGCNI member companies, provide a platform for leadership engagement through the launch of the UNGCNI CEO Council, recognize sustainability leadership through the Sustainability Ratna, and inform the Network's strategic direction for 2026–2030 and beyond.

PARTICIPATION

The Convention will bring together chief executive officers and senior representatives of UNGCNI member companies; current and former members of the Governing Council; policymakers; representatives of the United Nations system; technical experts; academic and research institutions; and other stakeholders working to advance sustainable business and climate action. The daytime programme is expected to convene approximately 200 delegates. Participation in the Gala Dinner will be by invitation.

DATE
17 December 2026

VENUE
New Delhi

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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