



DTL/TLB/MISC/2013/2
(13/162gd)

NOTIFICATION

Multi-year Expert Meeting on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation

First session: Transport and logistics innovation towards the review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014

Geneva, 22–24 October 2013

The Trade and Development Board approved the terms of reference for a Multi-year Expert Meeting on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation. The multi-year expert meeting addresses, over four sessions, trade logistics issues in developing countries. The findings and recommendations of this expert meeting will be reported to the next session of the Trade and Development Commission to be held in 2014.

The first session of the multi-year expert meeting is entitled “Transport and logistics innovation towards the review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014” and will be held from 22 to 24 October 2013 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, in room XXVI. The meeting will commence at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 22 October 2013.

Background and purpose of the meeting

The Multi-year Expert Meeting on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation will address some emerging and persistent issues that developing countries are facing and which need to be dealt with as a matter of priority. In accordance with the relevant paragraphs of the Doha Mandate, the expert meeting will address trade logistics issues in developing countries, including those with special needs, namely the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and some countries with economies in transition. Drawing from UNCTAD’s three pillars of work, discussions will consider all relevant aspects, namely technical assistance and capacity-building, research and analytical work, and consensus building.

The first session will offer an opportunity for experts to explore in greater depth transport and logistics innovation and review the recent progress made in matters related to improvements in transit transport systems operation for overseas trade to and from landlocked countries, including new methods that have been developed to measure transit logistics efficiency in corridors. Other developments which have occurred in the transport sector may also have important bearings on the way transit operations have evolved. Among them, some of the most relevant include recent progress in managerial and technological aspects of port logistics, improvement in intermodal transport, the increasing use of information and communications technology business sectors to manage operations and public administrations to oversee traffic at border points.

In accordance with the approved terms of reference, the first session on “Transport and logistics innovation towards the review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014” will deal with the following issues:

- (a) LLDCs usually pay the highest transport and transit costs, as recognized in the Doha Mandate and in the Almaty Programme of Action.

- (b) Transit developing countries increasingly realize that transit traffic to and from LLDCs brings the economic advantage of having additional trade to better utilize existing transport capacity.
- (c) LLDCs and transit countries have a common interest in identifying opportunities which can benefit from increased economies of scale and the improvement of land transport systems and seaports.
- (d) This session will examine how LLDCs can identify transport and logistics opportunities to create win-win solutions with neighbouring transit developing countries.
- (e) Experts will also review and evaluate the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries – with emphasis on transit and logistics innovation. Lessons from regional, institutional and operational differences in transit corridor management and development will be examined.
- (f) Challenges and best practices for the management and development of transit corridors will be highlighted. As a result of technological advances, better regional collaboration and a higher priority attached to trade facilitation, improved transit trade solutions have been found. As technological advances become more accessible for developing countries, experts will assess possibilities to further improve the use of technologies in areas such as Customs automation, port community systems, cargo tracking, or advance information processing.

Participation

Member States of UNCTAD are requested to nominate experts in the areas of transport infrastructure and services, border-crossing issues, trade facilitation and logistics, and related information and communication technologies at an early date and no later than **27 September 2013**.

Experts who will participate in the meeting in a personal capacity are expected to have proven expertise in the subject and may be selected from government and non-governmental organizations, the private sector or academia. Specialized agencies and intergovernmental bodies wishing to participate in the meeting, as well as non-governmental organizations in the general category and those in the special category wishing to participate as observers, are requested to inform the UNCTAD secretariat of the names of their representatives by **8 October 2013**.

Financial assistance

Depending on the availability at the time of funding in the trust fund for financing the participation of experts, funds may be made available to finance the participation of a limited number of officially nominated experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Governments requiring funding are invited to explicitly request financing in their letters of nomination. It should be understood that funds currently available in the dedicated trust fund are very limited (up to a total of three experts) and nominations shall be considered based on that availability. The decision as to which experts should receive financing will be based on the direct involvement and expertise of the nominated experts, on the principle of equitable geographical representation and on the needs of beneficiaries, in particular, least developed countries. Changes in the experts nominated will be considered as new nominations.

Nominations with requests for financing should be received no later than **10 September 2013** and should be accompanied by the following information about the nominee:

- (a) Curriculum vitae;
- (b) Mailing address;
- (c) Telephone and fax number;
- (d) E-mail address;
- (e) Name of a contact person in the permanent mission in Geneva.

Once the list of experts to be financed has been finalized, all travel arrangements will be made in accordance with United Nations rules and regulations – that is, the use of the least costly fare will be applied.

Background documents and contributed papers

The provisional agenda for the meeting, together with the secretariat's annotations thereto, will be circulated as document TD/B/C.I/MEM.7/1. To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a background note entitled "Transport and logistics innovation towards the review of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014", which will be circulated as TD/B/C.I/MEM.7/2.

Experts are encouraged to prepare and submit brief papers related to their studies, findings and/or their country's experience. These papers will be made available to the meeting in the form and language in which they are received.

Papers should be submitted by **27 September 2013** and addressed to Ms. Virginia Bregger, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; fax: +41 22 917 0050; e-mail: virginia.bregger@unctad.org.

Logistics

Upon arrival, participants are requested, before entering the Palais des Nations, to collect their badges at the United Nations Security Service, Pregny Gate entrance, 14 avenue de la Paix. The Security Service is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Because of the security measures in force, participants are strongly advised to arrive before 9 a.m. in order to complete entry procedures in good time and proceed to the meeting in the E Building (Batiment E) of the Palais. Participants are requested to carry a passport or similar national identity card with them. Taxis are not allowed to enter the grounds of the Palais des Nations and visitors will therefore be dropped off at the requested entrance gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security Service grants special clearance.

Nominations and enquiries

Nominations and related communications concerning representation at the meeting should be sent to the UNCTAD secretariat, Intergovernmental Support Service, Palais des Nations, CH 1211 Geneva 10; fax: +41 22 917 0214; e-mail: meetings@unctad.org.

All other enquiries concerning substantive issues should be addressed to the coordinators in the substantive division (contact Mr. Vincent Valentine; tel: +4122 917 2041; fax: +4122 917 0050; e-mail: vincent.valentine@unctad.org).

(p.p. signed)

Supachai Panitchpakdi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

26 August 2013