

UNCTAD

Trade Logistics Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics

Transport Newsletter



No. 48
Fourth Quarter 2010



NOTE

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

UNCTAD/WEB/DTL/TLB/2010/5

Published by the
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
Trade Logistics Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics
Palais des Nations
Geneva
<http://www.unctad.org>

Subscriptions

For past issues and to subscribe or unsubscribe to the UNCTAD Transport Newsletter, please use the online form at <http://www.unctad.org/transportnews>.

Editorial

Against a background of reviving trade and growing demands on international transport, UNCTAD's 2010 *Expert Meeting on Transport and Trade Facilitation* (see page 4) provided an excellent forum for discussion and expert policy debate with a view to improving the understanding of various emerging challenges and recent developments affecting transportation and trade facilitation.

In this year's fourth issue of the Transport Newsletter we report on several events and initiatives that focus on trade facilitation at the multilateral, regional and national level. Two new UNCTAD documents *Reflections on a Future Trade Facilitation Agreement* and *Technical Notes on Trade Facilitation Measures* look at the multilateral angle (see pages 7 & 8); the recent *Asia Trade Facilitation Week* (see page 6) and the upcoming UNCTAD Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on *Trade Facilitation and Regional Trade Agreements* (page 9) focus on regional perspectives.

As regards shipping, UNCTAD's 2010 annual *Review of Maritime Transport* reports on how the maritime industry responded to the financial and economic crisis (page 4), and we present a short *Maritime Country Profile* to illustrate countries' market shares in different maritime sectors. Finally, we report on selected new documents and initiatives by various partner organizations.

Feedback, as well as comments and suggestions for our next *Transport Newsletter*, are welcome until March 2011. Please contact jan.hoffmann@unctad.org.

The Trade Logistics Branch Team, Geneva, December 2010

Contents

Expert Meeting on Transport and Trade Facilitation	4
UNCTAD's Review of Maritime Transport 2010	4
GFP: Leveraging Trade Facilitation Reforms through Sustainable Partnerships	5
Asia Trade Facilitation Week	6
Reflections on a Future Trade Facilitation Agreement	6
Technical Notes on Trade Facilitation Measures	7
Trade Facilitation and Regional Trade Agreements	8
A Maritime Country Profile of Malaysia	10
Landlocked Developing Countries: Highly Vulnerable to External Shocks	11
World Customs Journal	12
World Road Statistics	12
Europe-Asia Transport Links	12
ECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport	13
Port Cities	13
COCATRAM	13
Shipping services in the Caribbean	13
Supply Chain Security	13
International Ocean Institute	13
PICARD conference	13
OECD Expert Meeting on Trade in Transport Services	14
Vessel energy efficiency	14
ESCWA meeting on Trade Facilitation and Single Window	14
New contracting parties to international maritime conventions adopted under the auspices of UNCTAD	15

Expert Meeting on Transport and Trade Facilitation

Geneva, 8-10 December 2010

Against a background of growing demands on transport and trade brought about by globalisation and with the world economy currently at a critical juncture, the three-day Expert Meeting provided a forum for discussion and expert policy debate with a view to improving the understanding of various emerging challenges and recent developments affecting transportation and trade facilitation.

Topics were diverse and included:

- recent developments in trade facilitation, including the WTO trade facilitation negotiations and relevant regional and national initiatives;
- some key issues at the interface of the energy and climate change debate and their implications for transport costs and trade: fossil fuel supplies, the impact of oil prices on transport costs and the costs of climate change adaptation in transportation;
- recent developments in the field of environmental regulation and labour standards namely (i) liability for ship-source pollution under the 1996 HNS Convention and the 1992 IOPC Fund Convention regimes, with emphasis on latest developments, (ii) the 2009 Hong Kong International Convention for the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships, and (iii) the 2006 Maritime Labour Convention; and
- the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in logistics, trade facilitation and supply-chain security.

For further information and to download the presentations made at the meeting, visit www.unctad.org/Templates/meeting.asp?intItemID=1942&lang=1&m=20190 or contact Mr. Vincent Valentine, vincent.valentine@unctad.org, Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD.

UNCTAD's Review of Maritime Transport 2010

The UNCTAD *Review of Maritime Transport 2010* reports: numerous uncertainties and fragile global economic conditions could still hinder the hard pressed shipping industry

International seaborne trade contracted by 4.5% in 2009 to fall below 2007 levels from the all-time high attained in 2008. Estimates put total seaborne trade during 2009 at 7.84 billion tons. Although a global recovery is currently underway, it is uneven, slower compared to recoveries observed in the context of previous recent recessions, and challenged by numerous uncertainties and fragile global economic conditions. Signs already show that for 2010 the shipping industry and seaborne trade are recovering but still likely to take until 2011 and beyond to return to 2009 levels, UNCTAD's *Review of Maritime Transport 2010* reports.

Trade in dry bulk commodities - such as iron ore, grain, coal, bauxite/alumina and phosphate - which represent around one quarter of seaborne trade, actually grew by an estimated 1.4%. However this figure masked fluctuations by commodity type. Bauxite and alumina, where are key components into aluminium production - used primarily in the transport and construction industries - suffered a 23.2% decline. Phosphate rock - used as a fertilizer by the agriculture industry - declined 38.7%. Iron ore shipments rose to an estimated 907 million tons in 2009, an increase of 7.8% over the previous year. China accounted for much of the increase in iron ore trade with imports growing by 38.9% over the previous year while Japan's imports declined 24.8% and Western Europe's imports decreased 38.2%.

The supply of new vessel showed no sign of abating. At the beginning of 2010, the world merchant fleet reached 1,276 million deadweight tonnes, an increase of 84 million dwt over 2009. This growth resulted from a record in new deliveries of 117 million dwt against demolitions and other withdrawals from the market of approximately 33 million dwt. Precipitating the economic crisis throughout 2009, new deliveries grew by 42 per cent over 2008 as a consequence of ships ordered prior to the downturn in demand. The resulting oversupply of tonnage then led to a surge in demolitions of older tonnage by more than 300 per cent.



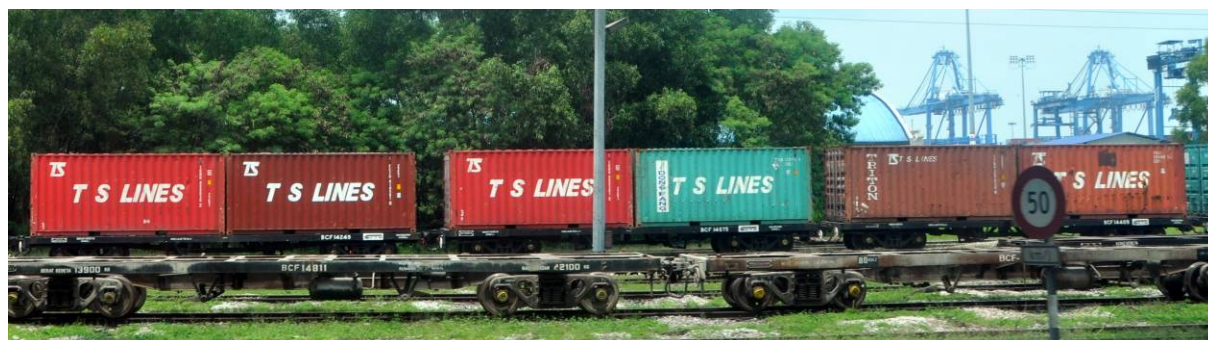
World container port throughput declined by an estimated 9.7 per cent to 465.7 million TEUs in 2009. UNCTAD's Liner Shipping Connectivity Index revealed that the average ranking of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in 2010 was 111, compared to an average ranking of 78 for other developing countries and 64 for developed countries. Between 2004 and 2010, the ranking of LDCs improved just 1 point.

The RMT also details recent developments pertaining to maritime legislation such as those at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) regarding the scope and content of an international regime to control greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from international shipping. In April 2010 a Protocol on the 1996 HNS Convention was adopted which aims to facilitate the Convention to fruition.

Every year, the RMT reviews transport developments in a particular region. The focus in 2010 is on developments in Asia since 2007, when UNCTAD last reported on the region. Gross domestic product (GDP) of Asia-Pacific decelerated to 4 per cent in 2009, its lowest level in 8 years. In tandem with the economic situation, growth in international merchandise trade in the region decelerated in 2008 and contracted in 2009 with merchandise exports falling at the double digit rate of about 12 per cent. By mid-2010, economic indicators are showing a recovery in the regions' economic growth and trade, with some economies already displaying signs of a return to pre-crisis growth and export levels. However, the recovery remains fragile and is subject to downside risks.

Maritime transport is the single most important transport mode accounting for around 80% of the market share for the international movement of goods. For many developing countries this figure is much higher.

For further information contact Mr. Vincent Valentine, vincent.valentine@unctad.org, Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD. www.unctad.org/rmt2010



GFP:

Leveraging Trade Facilitation Reforms through Sustainable Partnerships

The Global Facilitation Partnership for Transportation and Trade (GFP) met in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 7-8 of October, 2010. The meeting was jointly organized in partnership with the UNESCAP and the Asian Development Bank, and was held back-to-back with various other trade facilitation events including the Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum (APTFF) 2010.

Under the theme "Leveraging Trade Facilitation Reforms through Sustainable Partnerships" participants exchanged views and experiences on recent international developments and emerging practices in the area of trade and transport facilitation. The meeting provided an opportunity to interact with experts from different organizations and discuss trade and transport facilitation issues as well as the role of private sector. Available tools and possible assistance from the GFP's International Governmental Organizations core partners were also presented. Mr. Tom Wheelwright, DHL Vice President, Public Affairs for Asia Pacific delivered the keynote address on the express industry's perspective of trade facilitation. Finally, the meeting included round table discussions on the experience so far in setting up National Trade Facilitation and Logistics Councils and related observatories, with practical examples showcased by country participants.

The presentations have now been posted on the GFP web site www.gfptt.org.

Direct link to presentations:

<http://www.gfptt.org/Entities/EventProfile.aspx?id=2633ae5e-3f6c-4892-8da9-b16c573054a3>

Asia Trade Facilitation Week

Kuala Lumpur, 5-6 October

The Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum aimed to promote trade facilitation as an important component of a comprehensive strategy for national and regional development. The Forum, now held annually at the request of participants to the first event, provides an open regional platform to exchange information, experiences and practices for trade facilitation in Asia-Pacific, identify priority areas for regional cooperation and integration, and learn about new tools and services which can increase the efficiency of cross-border transactions that will ultimately improve the competitiveness of firms in the region. The Forum also strengthened regional cooperation and coordination of Aid for Trade and related technical assistance and capacity building in trade facilitation. Participants to the Forum included government officials, traders and public and private service providers from Central Asia, South, Southeast and East Asia as well as the South Pacific.

The theme of this year's Forum was "Trade Facilitation for Regional Connectivity: Advancing Paperless Trade". Taking into account the varying stages at which countries of the greater Asia-Pacific region stand in their trade facilitation initiatives, subregional sessions have now been included, which were organized with the support of relevant subregional organizations and partners.

The presentations made at the Forum are now available on-line:

http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum10_presentation.asp

Reflections on a Future Trade Facilitation Agreement

New UNCTAD study: Implementation of WTO Obligations - A Comparison of Existing WTO Provisions

The WTO negotiations on trade facilitation are part of the Doha Development Agenda, which grants central importance to developing countries objectives and implementation concerns. In the view of many, multilateral rules on trade facilitation may yield real benefits for developing and landlocked countries, if these countries are provided with an effective capacity to implement their commitments.

The text setting the modalities of negotiations on trade facilitation, the Annex D of the so-called July Package 2004, clearly states that the negotiated outcome will take full consideration of the principle of special and differential treatment and that it should go beyond traditional approaches to S&DT. Members' aim at crafting legal provisions which are more effective than the existing ones in addressing implementation concerns of developing countries.

UNCTAD provides technical assistance and capacity building to developing countries during the negotiations to support their effective participation. Advisory services to delegations of developing countries are part of this endeavour. This study contributes to the objectives of UNCTAD's technical assistance. It provides a review of selected provisions of WTO agreements as they relate to S&DT, the review and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of agreements, and the role of the supervisory bodies of the agreements. When examining these provisions and mechanisms, clarification is provided on their legal and operational effects keeping in mind their potential relevance for the discussions in the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation (NGTF).

The review shows that a shortcoming of the currently existing provisions is the lack of operational and legal linkage between technical assistance, special and differential treatment regarding the application of commitments and the reporting, notification and review requirements of member states. On-going discussions in the SPS and TBT Committees and the TRIPS Council underline the benefits and importance of strengthening transparency and reporting mechanisms for a more effective application of the special and differential treatment provisions. The study concludes that a new and more effective approach to the implementation of WTO obligations should link S&DT flexibilities to technical assistance commitments and an effective transparency mechanism. Based on the findings of the review of the existing provisions, the study concludes with an outline of such a comprehensive implementation framework and the procedural requirements it entails.

The document is available under <http://r0.unctad.org/ttl/>. For further information contact Birgit Viohl, birgit.viohl@unctad.org, or José María Rubiato, jose.rubiato@unctad.org, Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD.

Technical Notes on Trade Facilitation Measures

UNCTAD revised and updated the Handbook on Trade Facilitation, Volume II

Trade facilitation is a diverse and challenging subject with potential benefits for both business and government at national, regional and international levels. It involves political, economic, business, administrative, technical and technological as well as financial issues. With trade facilitation reforms, governments seek to establish a transparent and predictable environment for cross-border trade transactions based on simple, standardized Customs procedures and practices, documentation requirements, cargo and transit operations, and trade and transport arrangements.

The profile of trade facilitation was raised in 2001 when the WTO Ministerial Conference placed it on the Agenda of the Doha Round of Trade Negotiations with the aim of clarifying and improving multilateral trade rules governing transparency, Customs operations and transit trade. In July 2004, WTO members agreed to start negotiations on trade facilitation on the basis of principles and modalities set out in the so-called Annex D of the July 2004 Package (WTO/L/579). The negotiations aim to clarify and improve relevant aspects of Articles V, VIII, and X of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994, draft provisions for effective cooperation between customs or any other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation and Customs compliance and enhance technical assistance and capacity building support.

Against the background of the negotiation process information on these best practices, concepts and recommendations used globally for trade facilitation were needed. UNCTAD therefore published a Handbook on Trade Facilitation in 2006, including a Part I on national trade facilitation bodies, and a Part II of so-called technical notes on trade facilitation. Each of the technical notes was written by an acknowledged expert in the field and provides technical and practical information on a trade facilitation concept, recommendation or best practices. A particular emphasis was placed on the presentation of implementation related issues, including, when possible general information on costs and benefits. The Part II constituted a useful document for use by capital and Geneva based negotiators engaged in the WTO negotiations on trade facilitation.



Since 2006, the negotiations have progressed and a first draft consolidated text for a future agreement on trade facilitation was issued by the Chair of the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation in December 2009 (TN/TF/W/165). The current draft text is substantially different from the proposals presented in 2005, the first year of the

negotiations. WTO members have since been working on draft legal language for each of the proposed legal discipline. Also, some concepts and proposed disciplines have been dropped from the negotiating agenda, whilst others have been expanded or newly introduced. A revision of the Handbook Part II seems therefore both relevant and timely.

This revised version of the technical notes relates more closely to the text currently negotiated. New notes have been incorporated on the following subjects: national trade facilitation working groups; the right of appeal; Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA); bonded Customs regimes and Customs procedures; and, border Agency coordination, while two previously included notes have been deleted as they no longer relate to any proposal included the current draft consolidated text. The remaining 12 notes were partly or fully rewritten so as to provide more detail and clarity.

The document is available under <http://r0.unctad.org/ttl/>. For further information contact Birgit Viohl, birgit.viohl@unctad.org, or Jan Hoffmann, jan.hoffmann@unctad.org, Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD.

Trade Facilitation and Regional Trade Agreements

An important role of trade facilitation as a trade policy tool has been reaffirmed by its inclusion into the WTO Doha Development Agenda negotiations in 2004. Over the past years, the trade facilitation negotiations have made significant progress towards a multilateral agreement. Once the agreement is in place, developing countries will have to implement the multilateral commitments through the adoption of specific trade facilitation measures in their national trading systems.

In parallel, a majority of developing countries have increasingly been pursuing trade facilitation initiatives at the regional level. The number of regional trade facilitation initiatives and commitments stemming from regional trade agreements (RTAs) has exploded in recent years. Today, there are 474 RTAs notified to the WTO, 96 (20 per cent) of which include some type of provision related to trade facilitation. During the first half of 2010, there were 16 new notifications of RTAs to the WTO, among which 13 (80 per cent) include Trade Facilitation provisions, clearly reflecting the growing importance of the issue within RTAs.

Many trade facilitation reforms are achieved more easily at the regional than at the global level, including those that involve transit issues, common standards, and harmonization of border procedures. Experience shows that regional partnerships and cooperation in transport and trade facilitation can provide a catalyst for national trade facilitation reforms. Regional solutions are often aimed at enhancing regional trade by introducing transport corridors, customs transit systems and trade procedures at border crossings between the neighbouring countries, including transit and land-locked developing countries.

Is regional trade facilitation truly WTO-friendly?

Many trade facilitation measures included in regional initiatives are not discriminatory against countries from other regions. Such measures include, for example, national Single Windows and paperless trade environments, which are usually applied equally to trade flows from all trading partners. The ASEAN Single Window, resting on national single windows, might seemingly have a regional character. However, experience of several ASEAN countries which already have a national single window in place (such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) shows that benefits stemming from the use of a national single window can be equally enjoyed by traders from non-ASEAN countries.

Some other trade facilitation measures included in RTAs appear to be discriminatory toward the non-RTAs trading partners as they are to be applied on a preferential basis among the parties to the RTA in question. Such measures can be discriminatory in two ways:

- A first type of discrimination lies in a nature of an agreed trade facilitation measure between parties to an RTA itself. These can, for example, include the provision of advance rulings, harmonized customs procedures, fees and charges exclusively agreed among the parties of an RTA, and the application of regional standards.
- A second type of discrimination lies in the level of preferential trade facilitation measures, which vary across a “spaghetti bowl” of different RTAs. Put differently, different countries or regional groupings are parties at least to two or several RTAs, applying similar trade facilitation measures with a different scope. Box 1 below provides an example of three RTAs involving the same country (Malaysia), as member of a regional grouping (ASEAN) or individual contracting party and covering the same trade facilitation measure (procedures for administration/ issuance of a certificate of origin) applied in all three RTAs differently.

For the above reasons, it is crucial for developing countries to manage the interface between different regional trade facilitation measures so that such measures do not become a stumbling block to the emerging multilateral trade facilitation agreement at the WTO. To achieve this, a coherent and coordinated approach at regional level would be critical.

There are two urgent tasks lying ahead of such efforts. One is the need to carry out a mapping of all trade facilitation measures covered in the multiple RTAs of individual countries and identify the potentially overlapping commitments. Another one is to ensure a coordinated implementation of the non-preferential trade facilitation measures and to possibly “multilateralize” the remaining preferential trade facilitation provisions. The latter one can be achieved, for example, by adopting international standards for trade facilitation instead of regional standards.

Box 1: Varying procedures for administration and issuance of Certificate of Origin

Rules of origin determine what products can benefit from the tariff concession or preference under an RTA. In order to do so, a certification procedure, involving an issuance of certificate of origin, usually takes place. Provisions on the certification procedure are embedded in RTAs to establish the origin of the goods concerned which is necessary for claims of preferential tariff. As demonstrated below, the degree and ease, however, in obtaining a certificate of origin for claims of preferential tariff differs across RTAs. In the first case (ASEAN-China), a certificate origin shall be issued by a government agency, while the second case (ASEAN-Japan) uses a more liberal approach, leaving an issuance of the certificate of origin to entities or bodies designated by the government (e.g. Chambers of Commerce or trade associations). In the third case (Malaysia-New Zealand), there is no need to issue the certificate of origin neither by government agency, nor any other designated agency and declaration of origin rests with the exporter or producer.

Framework Agreement on ASEAN–China Free Trade Agreement, Annex 3 Rules of Origin for the ASEAN–China FTA, Attachment A: “...The Certificate of Origin shall be issued by the Government authorities of the exporting Party.”

ASEAN–Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, Annex 4 Operational Certification Procedures: “... competent governmental authority of the exporting Party shall, upon request made in writing by the exporter or its authorized agent, issue a CO or, under the authorization given in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations of the exporting Party, may designate other entities or bodies (...) to issue a CO.”

Malaysia–New Zealand Free Trade Agreement, Annex 3 Procedures and Verifications, Article 1 Declaration of Origin: “A claim that goods are eligible for preferential tariff treatment shall be supported by a declaration as to the origin of a good from the exporter or producer.”

Source: Hamanaka Shintaro et al., 2010, Trade Facilitation Measures Under Free Trade Agreements: Are They Discriminatory Against Non-Members? Asian Development Bank

Regionalism in trade facilitation addressed through a new project of UNCTAD

The project “Strengthening capacities of developing countries in Africa and Asia to support their effective participation in negotiating bilateral, regional and multilateral trade facilitation arrangements” seeks to increase regional coordination and cooperation in interfacing bilateral, regional and multilateral trade facilitation commitments of selected landlocked and transit developing countries in South Asia and East Africa, and to mainstream them into national trade facilitation policies. This will be achieved through a) establishing new or strengthening existing national and regional trade facilitation coordination mechanisms; b) mapping studies of trade facilitation measures covered by the multiple RTAs of the project countries; c) enhancing the technical knowledge of policy makers and trade negotiators on trade facilitation measures as well as their planning, organizing, managerial and negotiating skills; and d) creating a knowledge management tool providing best practice examples in this area. The project is funded by the United Nations Development Account (7th Tranche) and will be implemented over the period of three years, starting early 2011.

Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on Trade Facilitation in Regional Trade Arrangements

The Ad Hoc Expert Meeting on Trade Facilitation in Regional Trade Arrangements will take place on **23-24 March 2011, at the Palais des Nations, in Geneva**. The expert meeting will discuss trade facilitation measures arising from a “spaghetti bowl” of regional trade arrangements.

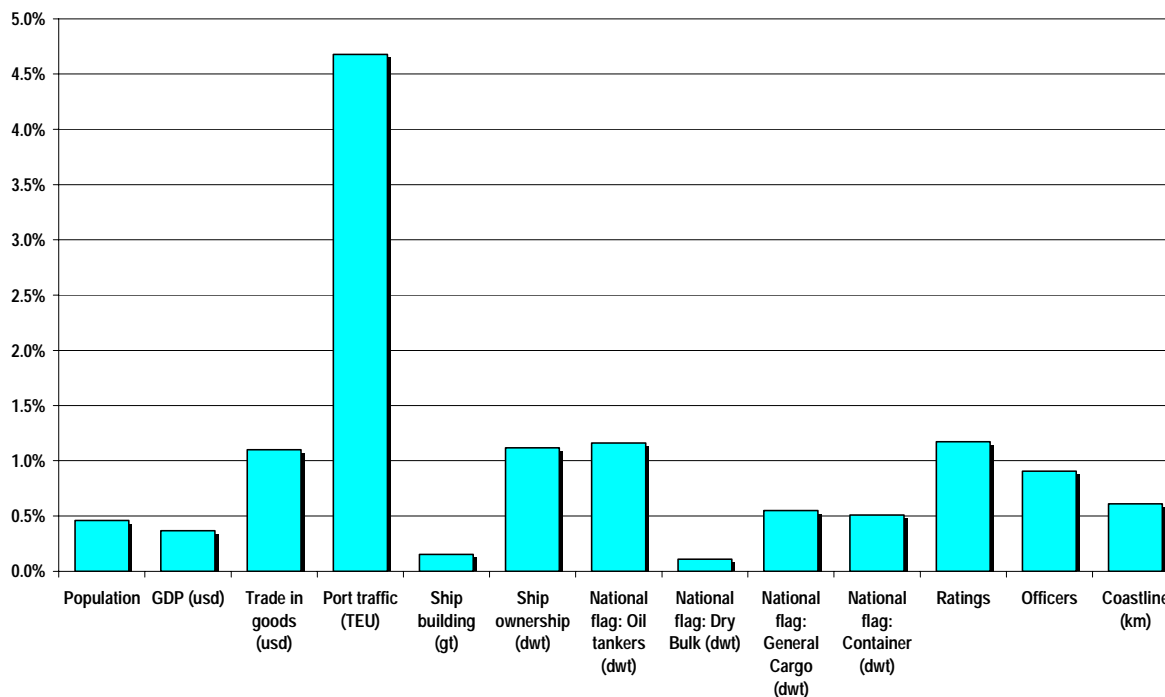
The primary target audience of the expert meeting are policy makers and negotiators involved in negotiating and implementing regional trade arrangements and in the WTO agenda. The meeting will be open to participation of other interested parties, including the trade facilitation practitioners, Customs experts, the private sector representatives and the representatives of the relevant international and regional agencies.

For further information contact Maria Misovicova, maria.misovicova@unctad.org, or Jan Hoffmann, jan.hoffmann@unctad.org, Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD.

A Maritime Country Profile of Malaysia

At the sixth *Asia Maritime and Logistics Conference* (Kuala Lumpur, 10-12 October 2010),¹ UNCTAD made a presentation on *Global trade and its transport: the rise of maritime Asia*. As part of the analysis, a “Maritime Profile” of Malaysia was developed which provided estimates of Malaysia’s market shares in different maritime industries (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Malaysia’s market shares in different maritime industries
(Share of world total, January 2010 or latest available data)



Malaysia is a very open economy, depending heavily on international shipping. The country has less than half a per cent of the world’s population and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while accounting for 1.1 per cent of global trade in goods. This international trade is mostly transported by sea, as is evidenced by the country’s high market share in container port traffic (almost 4.7 per cent of the world’s total). The latter is the result of the high containerization of Malaysia’s imports and exports in manufactured goods, as well as the provision of transshipment services in its ports.

Malaysia also participates in the construction of ships (about 0.15 per cent of world ship building), and its ship owners control more than 1.1 per cent of the world commercial fleet. An important part of the nationally controlled fleet does not use the national flag. About 1.2 per cent of the world’s oil tanker fleet is registered in Malaysia (i.e. using the Malaysian flag), against just of 0.1 per cent of the dry bulk fleet and 0.5 per cent of general cargo and container ships. Malaysian nationals account for approximately 1 per cent of the world’s seafarers, with a slightly higher share among the ratings as compared to the officers. Many of the Malaysian seafarers work on foreign flagged vessels.

A national maritime policy sometimes has to make choices and accept trade-offs between different policy objectives. In Malaysia, for example, the decision was taken to liberalize certain cabotage traffics so as to improve the competitiveness of Malaysian ports vying for national cargo. As a consequence, nationally flagged ships lost some market protection for feeder services. This policy choice may be one of the reasons why today Malaysia has a higher market share in port traffic than it has in the nationally flagged fleet.

UNCTAD aims at developing additional and more detailed “maritime country profiles” with a view to assisting member countries in the formulation of national maritime policies.

For further information contact Jan Hoffmann, Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD,
jan.hoffmann@unctad.org

¹ <http://www.asiamaritimelogistics.com>

Landlocked Developing Countries: Highly Vulnerable to External Shocks

On 2 November 2010, in New York, the United Nations Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) convened the 6th Meeting of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group comprising United Nations Agencies and other partner institutions. The aim of the meeting was to consult and share information on activities that the agencies are undertaking to advance the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and identify areas where collaboration can be fostered.

The Meeting recalled that the Almaty Programme of Action aims to address the geographical challenges of the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and ensure their effective integration into the global economy through the implementation of specific actions in the five priority areas of fundamental transit policy issues, infrastructure development and maintenance, international trade and trade facilitation, international support measures and implementation and review.

Participants noted that some progress has been made in implementing the Almaty Programme of Action by the LLDCs, transit countries, the agencies and other stakeholders. Landlocked and transit developing countries had made progress in implementing important policy reforms to remove physical and non-physical barriers to the effective participation in international trade. With support from partners they had made some improvements in the transport, communication and energy infrastructure and in streamlining and harmonizing border facilities and procedures to increase efficiency and reduce delays.

With regard to fundamental transit policy issues, the Meeting noted that international legal instruments had been developed; ECA in partnership with IRU and UNECE had organized workshops on transport facilitation; ESCAP was currently involved in facilitating a proposed regional Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports in the Asian region; UNDP in collaboration with the European Union were supporting a Border Management Programme in Central Asia and UNDP was also supporting training activities on the supply chain security and transports international routiers (TIR) theories and practices in Asia.

Under infrastructure development and maintenance, the UNECE and ESCAP were collaborating on the Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) initiative aimed at promoting capacity building, technical study tours and studies on the trans-continental harmonization of transport investments; the World Bank was undertaking several transport transit facilitation projects in Africa and Asia; ESCAP had facilitated the establishment of the regional agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Trans-Asian Railway Network; OHRLLS in collaboration with ECA, African Union, African Development Bank, and World Bank were working to support the strengthening of the Legal Framework on the Trans-African Highway; the Asian Development Bank had initiated a project on promoting regional infrastructure development in Asia aimed at undertaking pre-feasibility and investment studies of Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railways; and ESCAP in collaboration with ECA, ECE, and UNCTAD were undertaking capacity building for landlocked and transit developing countries in Africa and Asia on addressing barriers for cross-border/transit transport.

With regard to international trade and trade facilitation, participants noted the efforts that they were undertaking including: capacity building of African trade negotiators based in Geneva, Brussels and in the capitals under the Aid-for-Trade Initiative by ECA; the World Bank had introduced the Trade Facilitation Facility (TFF) targeted at activities on trade facilitation such as logistics, customs, transit, border management, trade finance, and product standards; the World Bank was also providing support to the WTO trade facilitation negotiating group; UNDP was providing technical assistance on assessments of Aid for Trade needs in Asia and Africa; ITC has a project on non-tariff measures aimed at identifying trade facilitation problems and mapping out strategies to address them; and the ADB was providing support for capacity development and trade facilitation in Asian region.

The Meeting also discussed notable initiatives that had been implemented such as the establishment of an International Think Tank on LLDCs in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia which will provide a centre of excellence for high quality research, capacity building and policy advice for LLDCs. The Meeting also took note of upcoming events including the High-level meeting on progress achieved in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, with a focus on infrastructure development, aid for trade and trade facilitation being prepared by OHRLLS in collaboration with the Government of Kazakhstan; the ten-year review of the APoA; the Annual Ministerial Meetings of the LLDCs; Aid for

Trade conference that will take place in December 2010, in Baku organized by UNDP in partnership with ECE, ESCAP, UNCTAD, ITC, WTO and other partners, and a National Aid for Trade workshop in Paraguay organized by UNDP; and the 19th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development that will be held in May 2011 that has transport as one of the main topics to be discussed.

Participants agreed on the following points as the way forward.

- Coordinated support to strengthen the analytical capacities and negotiation skills of LLDCs on trade facilitation, in particular market access and rules of origin.
- Enhancing coordination of the work on indicator or measurement of transport costs for LLDCs.
- Continued enhanced support to the legal framework to support the Trans African Highway.
- Development of a compendium of who does what for LLDCs which can provide details of what each agency is doing.
- Supporting and collaborating with the LLDC International Think Tank.
- Development and dissemination of a list of recent studies and publications.

Source: Selected parts of a press release of OHRLLS. The complete text can be read at <http://www.un.org/ohrls>

World Customs Journal

The International Network of Customs Universities (INCU) has been established to provide the World Customs Organization (WCO) and other organizations with a single point of contact with universities and research institutes that are active in the field of customs research, education and training. The INCU is also designed to provide a global resource for governments and the private sector, and an educational source for students wishing to further their knowledge in the field of customs management and administration, and international trade and logistics management.

While there is a substantial and diverse knowledge base on customs and international trade amongst tertiary institutions, international organizations, government and the private sector, this knowledge base is often difficult to integrate in an efficient and meaningful way. That remains the case notwithstanding the increased demands for information in these areas, particularly in the context of the trade facilitation agenda which represents a key element in the current WTO Doha Round of negotiations, and the reform and modernization push by many customs administrations.

The INCU produces the *World Customs Journal* (WCJ). The first edition of the WCJ was launched in March 2007, initially as an e-journal, but with the option of also releasing it as a paper journal at a later date. The Journal includes contributions from both academics and other interested parties.

<http://incu.org>

World Road Statistics

Now in its 47th edition, the International Road Federation (IRF) World Road Statistics (WRS) is an authoritative compilation of official international road, traffic and transport data. The publication further provides a selection of Sustainable Development Indicators and other data of key relevance, not only to industry and business but also to leading international organisations and financial institutions.

For further information contact Kacem Iaych, kiaych@irfnet.org, IRF, <http://www.irfnet.org/statistics.php>

Europe-Asia Transport Links

The Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links met in Tashkent on 1-3 November 2010. Issues covered included recent developments related to the Euro-Asian Transport Links Phase II initiative; the identification of priority routes and investment in transport infrastructure; and studies to identify and analyse inland transport options, examine non-physical obstacles to transport and the collection of data on transport flows.

For further information contact Robert Nowak, UN Economic Commission for Europe, Robert.Nowak@unece.org, http://www.unece.org/trans/main/wp5/wp5_ge2_05.html

ECE Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport

Geneva, 28 September - 1 October 2010.

The Working Party noted that, so far, the work on the eTIR project had been focused on technical aspects and that the financial implications of eTIR would still need to be addressed. It stressed the importance of studying the experiences made within other IT systems in the Customs field, such as UNCTAD's ASYCUDA, NCTS (New Computerized Transit System), TIR-EPD, SafeTIR, national Customs systems, etc. In this context, the representative of the World Bank recalled a Canada–Afghanistan project on Customs-to-Customs data exchange which had benefited from the 360 degree overview of the existing systems and available human and financial resources.

<http://www.unece.org/trans/bcf/wp30/documents/ECE-TRANS-WP30-252e.pdf>

Port Cities

On the occasion of the 12th International Cities and Ports Conference (15-19 November in Argentina), the delegates of local port communities, port authorities, economic and institutional partners of port cities meeting in Argentina in Buenos Aires and Rosario, reasserted the engagements drawn up in the Charter of Montreal of Cities and Ports for the Environment (1993), and the Charter of Sydney for the Sustainable Development of Port Cities (2006). They engage to contribute actively towards putting in place a more sustainable growth necessary for the maintenance of the global economic, social and environmental balances.

The complete Declaration is on-line under
<http://www.citiesandports2010.com>

COCATRAM

The Central American Maritime Commission COCATRAM has published a bi-lingual (Spanish and English) Port Manual about the main 25 Central American ports. The book can be consulted on-line or downloaded as a pdf file.

<http://www.cocatram.org.ni/>

Shipping services in the Caribbean

A new web based service, "BECCA" provides data on ports and shipping services in the Caribbean Basin. It also aims at helping shippers and freight forwarders identify the best maritime transport options between any two ports of the Caribbean basin.

<http://becca-exchange.com/>

Supply Chain Security

A report published by the Swedish National Board of Trade describes the supply chain security initiatives that were developed following the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 and discusses how trade is affected by the tightening of security requirements. The report is a partial result of a research project that was initiated by SWEPRO (the Swedish Trade Procedures Council), and carried out by the Swedish National Board of Trade. The report suggests that security initiatives are increasing steadily and that no clear-cut conclusion may be drawn as to how they will affect trade, either globally or at the regional level. According to the report, the aims to increase security and to introduce trade facilitation are thus not mutually exclusive, but may, in fact, be mutually supportive.

http://www.kommers.se/templates/Standard2_4647.aspx

International Ocean Institute

The International Ocean Institute (IOI) announces the "Danielle De St. Jorre Scholarship" Call for Applications for 2011 and pays tribute to His Excellency Mr. K. Bhagwat-Singh. Since 2000, the IOI presents a Scholarship of CHF 10 000 annually for one woman from a Small Island Developing State involved in marine related research activities to improve her knowledge in the subject by attending specialised training or University Degree programmes. The IOI hereby invites applications/nominations for the 2011 scholarship. A copy of the Application Guidelines may be requested by sending an email to antonella.vassallo@ioihq.org.mt

Antonella Vassallo, ioihq@ioihq.org.mt, www.ioinst.org

PICARD conference

At the invitation of the United Arab Emirates Federal Customs Authority, the 5th annual WCO PICARD Conference was held in Abu Dhabi from 23 to 25 November 2010. Around 200 participants from Customs and the academic world gathered to share their research outcomes relevant to the WCO agenda as well as developments in Customs professional education. The conference was jointly organised by the WCO and the International Network of Customs Universities and co-hosted by the Centre for Customs and Excise Studies of the University of Canberra and the Abu Dhabi University Knowledge Group. The 2010 PICARD Conference focused on the following specific issues:

- Customs Business partnerships;
- Performance measurement;
- Customs and Revenue Collection; and
- Climate Change issues.

Presentations delivered at 2010 PICARD Conference are now available on-line under

http://incu.org/conference_PICARD2010.html

OECD Expert Meeting on Trade in Transport Services

Paris, 15-16 November 2010

The Trade and Agriculture Directorate of the OECD has launched a project that aims at quantifying barriers to trade in services by developing services trade restrictiveness indices (STRI). Three pilot sectors, telecommunication, business services and construction were initially chosen, while the new sectors are transport, distribution and audiovisual services.

Transport includes air, maritime, rail and road services. A host of restrictions on market access, national treatment and other regulatory measures affect the cost of foreign transport services suppliers to enter and service a foreign market. The STRI project aims at aggregating such restrictions into one index for each sector and mode of supply. In order to do so, expert advice is required for the selection of the measures to be included in the indices.

The objective of the meeting was to bring together experts from the private sector, governments, international organisations and academia to share knowledge and ideas on key reform issues in transport services, including driving forces, main impediments, and impact on trade and other measures of economic performance. In particular, the meeting is to provide background information for future development of STRIs for the transport sector and to inform policy analysis and policy recommendations regarding individual transport sectors against the backdrop of a holistic understanding of the transport chain.

Presentations made at the meeting are now available on-line via <http://www.oecd.org/trade/stri>.

For further information contact Hildegunn Kyvik Nordås at Hildegunn.nordas@oecd.org.

Vessel energy efficiency

The initiative "Shippingefficiency.org" assesses and provides energy efficiency ratings for over 60,000 international vessels based on the Energy Efficiency design Index (EEDI) of the International Maritime Organization. A separate search tool provides ratings based on the Clean Cargo Working Group Index, which benchmarks container vessels' CO2 efficiency against other vessels plying the same major container routes.

The web site provides the free data base access, designed for ship owners, operators, charterers, ports, insurance companies, shipbrokers and other stakeholders, to factor in vessel efficiency information when making business decisions

<http://www.shippingefficiency.org>

ESCWA meeting on Trade Facilitation and Single Window

2-4 March 2011, Beirut, Lebanon.

The workshop will address, among other issues: Trade facilitation and regional integration, the concept of Single Window and related international recommendations, Single Window initiatives and implementations, and requirements for establishing Single Window for handling exports and imports. The meeting will also discuss a new study on "Key Factors for Establishing Successful Single Windows for Handling Export/Import in ESCWA Member Countries"

For further information contact Fathia Abdel Fadil, ESCWA, abdefadil@un.org



**New contracting parties to international maritime conventions adopted
under the auspices of UNCTAD**

United Nations Convention on Maritime Liens and Mortgages, 1993

Entry into force: 5 September 2004; Contracting States: 16
Albania - 9 August 2010 (a)

United Nations Convention on Arrest of Ships, 1999

Entry into force: Not yet in force; Contracting States: 9
Ecuador - 15 October 2010

(Please note that one more Contracting Party is required for this Convention to enter into force.)

*For more information on the latest status of this and other Conventions, please visit:
www.unctad.org/ttl/legal*