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NOTIFICATION

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

Third session

Small Island Developing States: Transport and Trade Logistics Challenges

**Room XXVI, Palais des Nations
Geneva, 24–26 November 2014**

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 2015.

The third session of the multi-year expert meeting is entitled Small Island Developing States: Transport and Trade Logistics Challenges and will be held from 24 to 26 November 2014 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, in room XXVI. The meeting will commence at 10 a.m. on Monday, 24 November 2014.

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, small island developing States (SIDS) 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 third session of the multi-year expert meeting will focus on some of the particular transport and trade logistics challenges that SIDS face in connection with their remoteness and geographical location (cf. Doha Mandate, paragraph 56(j)). SIDS share the same environmental and economic vulnerabilities and sustainable development challenges, such as susceptibility to natural disasters; vulnerability to external shocks; remoteness from large markets, low transport volumes and connectivity leading to high freight and logistics costs; and high economic dependency on sea and air transport links.

Improved access to global markets and enhanced trade competitiveness is particularly important for these countries, as is ensuring the resilience of critical transport infrastructure. With SIDS being completely dependent on ports and airports, climate change risks such as rising sea levels, increasing temperatures and more frequent and/or intense storms pose serious threats to vital transport infrastructure, services and operations. Understanding the underlying risk and vulnerabilities and developing adequate adaptation measures is of the essence. Against this background, the strategic importance of ports for the growth and development of SIDS will be particularly highlighted.

Convened in 2014, which is the International Year of SIDS, and following the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (Samoa Conference), the meeting offers a renewed opportunity to focus international attention on the unique transport-related challenges facing SIDS and consider ways in which these can be better understood and adequately addressed.

Relevant issues to be considered include, inter alia, the following:

- (a) Key transport and trade logistics related challenges facing SIDS;
- (b) Sectoral interlinkages between transport and trade, as well as other key economic sectors of relevance to SIDS, in particular, tourism and fisheries;
- (c) Climate-change impacts on transport infrastructure in SIDS and adaption needs;
- (d) Financing as a cross-cutting enabling factor;
- (e) Priority action areas and effective response measures;
- (f) The role of partnerships, relevant partners and collaboration mechanisms.

Participation

Member States of UNCTAD are requested to nominate experts in the relevant fields at an early date and **no later than 10 November 2014 (13 October 2014, if funding is requested)**.

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 **10 November 2014**.

Financial assistance

Depending on the availability of funds in the trust fund for financing the participation of experts at the time of nomination, funds may be allocated to finance the participation of a limited number of officially nominated experts from developing countries, including least developed countries, SIDS and countries with economies in transition. Governments requiring funding are therefore invited to explicitly request this 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 two experts for each meeting), 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. Changes in the experts nominated will be considered as new nominations.

Nominations with requests for funding should be received **no later than 13 October 2014** and should be accompanied by the following information about the nominee:

- (a) Curriculum vitae;
- (b) Mailing address;
- (c) Telephone and fax numbers;
- (d) E-mail address;
- (e) Name of a contact person in the respective 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.7/7](#). To facilitate the discussion, the UNCTAD secretariat has prepared a background note entitled "Small island developing States: Challenges in transport and trade logistics", which will be circulated as [TD/B/C.I/MEM.7/8](#).

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 **10 November 2014** and addressed to Ms. Wendy Juan, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; fax: +41 22 917 0050; e-mail: wendy.juan@unctad.org.

Logistics

Before entering the Palais des Nations, participants are requested to collect their badges from 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. to complete entry procedures in good time and proceed to the meeting in Building 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; visitors should therefore be dropped off at the entrance gates. Furthermore, luggage may not be brought into the buildings unless the Security Service gives 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.

Registration should be completed online. To do so, please use the following link: [Multi-year Expert Meeting on Transport, Trade Logistics and Trade Facilitation](#). All other enquiries concerning substantive issues should be addressed to the coordinators in the division (contact Ms. Hassiba Benamara; fax: +4122 917 0050; e-mail: hassiba.benamara@unctad.org, cc. policy.legislation@unctad.org).

(signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

26 September 2014