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## EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

New season - new look.

With the start of autumn, the third 2012 issue of the UNCTAD Transport Newsletter lands in your inbox with new colours and format. But, do not worry; while we might have invested some efforts in making our newsletter more appealing, we have not underestimated the importance of its content. In this issue, you will still find interesting news and articles on Transport and Trade Facilitation from all around the world.

For comments, suggestions and contributions to the next Transport Newsletter, please contact [Arantzazu.Sanchez@UNCTAD.org](mailto:Arantzazu.Sanchez@UNCTAD.org) or [Jan.Hoffmann@UNCTAD.org](mailto:Jan.Hoffmann@UNCTAD.org) before 15 December 2012.

The Trade Logistics Branch Team,  
Geneva, October 2012



# THE ROLE OF TRADE FACILITATION IN INTEGRATING THE LLDCS INTO THE WORLD MARKET

**On the occasion of the Pre-Conference Event of the Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action on 13-14 September 2012, a High-Level Global Thematic Meeting on International Trade, Trade Facilitation and Aid For Trade took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Anne Miroux, Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD, made an intervention at the meeting to discuss why and how trade facilitation plays a particularly important role for the integration of land-locked countries into world markets. This is a textual transcription of the speech that Ms Miroux used as introductory remarks.**

"I would like to highlight three key points why and how trade facilitation plays a particularly important role for the integration of land-locked countries into world markets. First, the challenge of crossing borders as compared to just overcoming distance; secondly the inclusion of trade facilitation commitments in multilateral and regional trade agreements; and thirdly the potential of win-win situations, based on a common interest among land-locked and transit developing countries.

## Trade and transport facilitation and crossing international borders

Let me start with the first point, the need for trade facilitation in the context of crossing international borders. In fact, UNCTAD pays particular attention to the issue of trade and transport facilitation because of its key role in the integration of developing countries into the world economy: indeed what matters is not only the goods that cross borders, but also the ability to make them cross borders in the most efficiently way. The goods, when crossing an international border, are confronted with different regulations and standards; service providers and transport operators are faced with different commercial practices; while the vehicles have to comply with different standards and traffic regulations.

There has been some discussion about the importance of the specific challenges that LLDCs are confronted with. Some have highlighted the geographical distance, while others focus more on the challenges faced in crossing borders. While distance does certainly matter for transport costs, especially over-land distance as compared to maritime distance, many regions in coastal countries are further away from the sea than some economic centres in land-locked countries. The difference is really the fact that borders need to be crossed, and that goods, vehicles and services have to comply with different

standards and regulations, which compliance is to be verified at the border. An often quoted study on US exports concluded that 1000 km by sea increase transport costs by 4%; 1000 km by land increase transport costs by 30%, and the fact of being land-locked increases freight by a further 50%. So, yes, distance does matter, but trade facilitation at border crossings has its own, direct impact on trade costs. In many developing countries, the transit as such may imply the use of convoys or delays at way bridges or police control points – and the longer the distance, the more such control points may be encountered. These are often more of an obstacle for trucks that carry international transit trade than for domestic trade of the transit country.

We, at UNCTAD, support land-locked and transit developing countries in their trade and transport facilitation efforts in various ways. We have been providing technical assistance for the modernisation and computerisation of all kinds of Customs operations through the ASYCUDA Programme for more than thirty years. The Programme aims at simplifying documentation and procedures for facilitating trade while strengthening Customs Controls and preserving revenue collection that is crucial for developing countries. Computerised solutions for the management of international transit have been implemented in several regions. Our ASYCUDA programme currently has over 58 operational projects, including 14 regional projects (e.g. with COMESA and CEMAC). We have an expanded collaboration with the EC and the WCO, and our implementation is always based on a very close involvement of the beneficiary countries. A functioning Customs automation system is necessary at the entry points of both, the transit country and the land-locked country. In addition, the transit module of ASYCUDA, and in some advanced cases the connection between the two systems, also helps the transit operations. ASYCUDA controls and monitors transit operations in several Central and Eastern European countries such as Georgia and Moldova (TIR-EPD

Electronic Pre-Declaration) and at regional levels in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa (CEMAC, COMESA, SADC).

Another example of our support is the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), which was developed under and UNCTAD trade and transport facilitation capacity building project. Thanks to APTTA, Afghan trucks will be able to take cargo up to the border between Pakistan and India, and Pakistan will have improved access to Central Asian markets through the land-locked Afghanistan.

## Trade facilitation in international trade agreements

As Customs tariffs and quotas have been reduced significantly over the last decades in various rounds of trade liberalization under the GATT and also within Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs), the importance of trade and transport facilitation is increasingly recognized as a key area to cover in new agreements.

At the WTO, as you know, the negotiations on trade facilitation are among the very few areas where significant progress has been made in the context of the on-going Doha Development Round. Less well known, but perhaps even more important, is the increased inclusion of trade facilitation commitments in RTAs. A recent UNCTAD study has shown that the number of RTAs with trade facilitation provisions has grown six-fold in the last decade, and among the newly notified RTAs, more than 80% include Customs and other trade facilitation measures.

We believe that international commitments in trade facilitation can potentially be very beneficial for developing countries, both land-locked and transit developing countries. The negotiations at the WTO include specifically the improvement and clarification of Article V of GATT, which covers transit issues. But perhaps even more importantly, the general im-



provement and clarification of Articles X (on transparency issues) and VIII (on formalities) will directly benefit the facilitation of imports, exports and also transit trade.

The trade facilitation measures included in RTAs tend to cover the same issues as those that are being negotiated at the WTO. In fact, they may be even more ambitious in their scope and the time given for their implementation. Also, they can more easily be linked to the provision of technical assistance, as participating countries and potential donors are more easily identifiable.

Engaging in firm commitments in trade facilitation can help strengthen the case of reform-minded stakeholders at the national level. Often, trade facilitation reforms encounter opposition from vested interests, and if initial investments are required, may compete with other priorities. If there is firm international commitment - be at the multilateral or regional level - coupled with increased possibilities to obtain technical financial assistance, it is much easier to advance those reforms. We thus see an important opportunity for land-locked and for transit developing countries to both, work towards an ambitious trade facilitation agreement at the WTO, and also to include trade facilitation commitments in their various regional trade and transport agreements.

We at UNCTAD support our members in the negotiation of trade facilitation agreements, and in the implementation of the resulting commitments. And we pay particular attention to the needs of LLDCs and LDCs. Since the beginning of the negotiations at the WTO we have collaborated with other Annex D organizations. As you know, Annex D of the WTO negotiating mandate calls upon UNCTAD, together with the World Bank, World Customs Organization, the OECD and the IMF, to support the developing countries dur-

ing the negotiations and also afterwards, when it comes to implementing the trade facilitation reforms. We have also collaborated with regional organizations in meetings and training events focussing on the linkage of multilateral and regional trade facilitation commitments. At present, we are implementing a series of projects that aim at a sort of gap-analysis, comparing the current situation in the participating countries with the obligations ensuing from the future WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, and developing an implementation plan that would ensure compliance with future commitments. About one third of the participating countries are LLDCs, notably Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Nepal, Paraguay, Rwanda, and Uganda.

In the context of the trade facilitation negotiations, we are also providing support to national trade facilitation committees, for example through an on-line repository for the sharing of experiences and best practices. Such committees are not only an important tool for analysing, negotiating and implementing trade facilitation commitments, but they are in fact about to become an obligation: According to Article 14 of the future WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, I quote, "Each Member shall establish and/or maintain a national committee on trade facilitation or designate an existing mechanism to facilitate both domestic coordination and implementation of provisions of [the WTO] Agreement." Such committees are in fact also a useful mechanism to help countries collaborate and identify win-win situations for different stakeholders, which, Mr. Chairman, leads me to the third and last issue of my intervention.

### **Trade facilitation and the common interest of landlocked and transit developing countries**

There is an increasing understanding in transit countries and their ports - which are often in private hands - that they actually benefit from attracting transit trade. Different stakeholders, especially from the private sector, from the transit and land-locked countries get together as it can be observed most recently in West, Central and Southern Africa and Central Asia, even before, in South America and South and Eastern Asia to identify and benefit from synergies.

Port operators seek business from traders in neighbouring countries; Trucking companies seek increased opportunities for cargo in broadened markets; Transport Infrastructure Investors seek greater returns from larger volumes of trade. Traders from the transit country increasingly realize that the traders from neighbouring land-locked countries are not necessarily a competition, but by combining their cargo volumes, they can both benefit from lower transport costs and higher frequencies of international shipping services. UNCTAD's Port Training Programme, with its global port networks of ports covering English, French, Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries, thus not only benefits the coastal countries, but also their land-locked neighbours.

Policy makers and traders from land-locked countries, too, realize that they benefit from investments made in the transit countries, e.g. in infrastructure, trade facilitation reforms or port modernizations. Transit and land-locked developing countries see their respective position change in regional integration schemes: land-locked countries can become transit countries; for instance, Zimbabwe offer land links to South African exporters for their clients in Zambia; Lao PDR connects Central China with Thailand, Paraguay may see goods transit from Brazil to Argentina or Chile.

## Current UNCTAD support to partnerships between land-locked and transit countries

We at UNCTAD currently support partnerships in transit and land-locked developing countries through the UN Development Account project: "Capacity Building for Control Authorities and Transport Operators to Improve Efficiency of Cross-border Transport in Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries". The aim of the project is to ease transport operations along transit corridors by creating collaborative clusters and measuring the performance of transit operations. The project, co executed with ESCAP, focuses on two pilot corridors: the East African Central Corridor (Tanzania-Burundi-Rwanda) and the Central Asian corridor linking Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan and Tajikistan.

Another UN Development Account project brings together representatives from national trade facilitation committees in five land locked countries - Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Rwanda, and Uganda - and three transit countries - India, Kenya and Tanzania- to share and compare respective national trade facilitation implementation plans, including on transit. In Geneva, we have hosted round tables to help Delegates to identify common interests and advance in the negotiations of the improvements and clarification of Article V of GATT.

Our objective in this context to bring together the relevant stakeholders from the private and public sectors, the providers and users of services, the policy makers from land-locked and transit developing countries to contribute to a better understanding by all of each other's position so that convergence can be achieved.

In conclusion, Mr. President, Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, let me highlight again that - first - the role of transport and trade facilitation for the development of land-locked countries can not be underestimated; - second, the inclusion of trade facilitation in multilateral and regional trade agreements is an opportunity, especially for the land-locked countries; and last-but-not-least, UNCTAD will continue to assist both land-locked and transit developing countries to seize the potential benefits from collaborative approaches in trade facilitation".

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## PROGRESS OF THE UNCTAD PROJECT ON IMPLEMENTATION PLANS FOR AN EVENTUAL WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT

The UNCTAD project on Implementation Plans for an eventual WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, (see Transport Newsletter No. 53, First Quarter 2012, pp. 12-13), launched in December 2011, continues its progress with the launch of the project in six Eastern Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines) and in Bangladesh, as well as with the validation conferences in Guatemala and Dominican Republic.

A special regional workshop to discuss the project in the Eastern Caribbean was held in Castries, Saint Lucia, on 21-22 August 2012 in close cooperation with the secretariat of the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). The workshop participants, including trade and customs officials, noted that trade facilitation negotiations at the WTO level was one area in which OECS member states stood to benefit significantly. Reforms in this context could result in increased efficiency by reducing delays in the clearance of

goods which could also be more cost effective for consumers. During the workshop, the participants reviewed the state of WTO negotiations on trade facilitation, the experience of the national trade facilitation needs assessments and the state of their national trade facilitation task forces. They then discussed, in the light of these elements, the project's tools, outputs and the expected stakeholders' involvement. The workshop also sought to identify OECS interests and concerns, in the context of the establishment of the OECS Economic Union and identify regional approaches to implementation. The regional workshop was followed by the special meetings of the national trade facilitation taskforces in each participating country to discuss and launch the project at the national level.

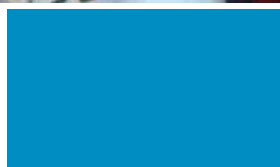
In July 2012, the project was officially launched in Bangladesh where UNCTAD counted with the cooperation of OECD. In Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, where the project had been launched in March, the national validation conferences

were successfully held on, respectively, 5-6 July and 5-6 September 2012. The project, thus, continues to make steadfast progress with the strong support of the trade facilitation stakeholders in the participating countries, as well as other annex D organizations. In particular, Ms. Evdokia Moise-Leeman from the Organization for the Economic Cooperation and Development was in charge of launching the project in Bangladesh, Mr. Enrique Fanta from the World Bank led the programme of the validation conference in Dominican Republic and Mr. Thierry Piroux from the World Customs Organization was responsible for the supervision and organisation of the national event in Gabon.

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Validation conferences in Guatemala and Dominican Republic.  
Regional OECS meeting in Saint Lucia.



# ANALYSING TRADE FACILITATION PRACTICES IN EAST AFRICA AND SOUTH ASIA

In the Transport Newsletter N°51 (October 2011), the UNCTAD Trade Facilitation Section announced 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”. In this article, you will find a short overview of the progress so far and how technical cooperation is taking shape for Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda in East Africa, and Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan in South Asia.

## What is this project aiming at?

Among other objectives, this project aims at mapping out the status of implementation of various trade facilitation commitments, and determine (to the extent possible) actions required for compliance, implementation costs and technical assistance needs. At the end of the project, each country counterpart should receive a detailed implementation plan including an overview of the current situation as well as a list of activities and resources needed for future action. Thus, this part of the project has similar objectives to the UNCTAD project on Implementation Plans for an eventual WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, which was just described above. In addition, this project includes a regional and an interregional phase. While the regional phase aims at addressing challenges and finding solutions at regional level, the interregional phase will enable a South-South exchange of best practices.

## What has been achieved so far?

This project financed under the UN Development Account has started as planned in all countries mentioned above. Fact finding missions have been organized in each country, permitting UNCTAD to present the project’s methodology to relevant national trade facilitation stakeholders from the public and private sector, as well as introducing the selected national consultant to conduct the exhaustive field work research.

While in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Rwanda and Uganda, UNCTAD consultants are still collecting all necessary information on trade facilitation measures in their countries, first validation conferences have already taken place in Tanzania and Nepal.

On 28-29 June, a two-day conference was organized in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. It counted with the participation of around 40 key stakeholders from the private and public sector. After a plenary session, the participants were divided into two working groups,

where different trade facilitation measures and their particular implementation in Tanzania were discussed. The Principal Trade Officer of the Tanzanian Ministry of Commerce presented in plenary the current situation of the Tanzanian Trade Facilitation Committee, highlighting its importance and the current challenges that the Committee is facing. Participants had the opportunity to comment on which tasks they believed that the Committee should prioritize in order to tackle some of the trade facilitation challenges that did come out during the working groups. Discussions concerning the sustainability and effectiveness of the existing national Trade Facilitation Committee led to the suggestion that the UNCTAD project activities should aim at supporting this objective – which is in fact in line with the goals of this particular project. As agreed during the event, the UNCTAD national consultant is currently collecting further relevant information to finalize the implementation plan for Tanzania.

On 26-27 September 2012, UNCTAD organized a validation conference in Kathmandu, Nepal. More than 55 people attended the event which aimed at completing and validating the information previously collected by the national UNCTAD consultant, Mr. Kes-hab Kaphley. Prior to that event, a total of 30 trade facilitation stakeholders assisted to a half-day training on international standards, authorized economic operators and ways to strengthen the national committee on trade facilitation.



Participants at the training in Kathmandu

## The way forward

In coming months, validation conferences and trainings will be organized in the remaining countries included in the project, completing then the so-called national phase of the project. The regional phase of the project will take place next year while the interregional phase will start in 2014.



Participants at the training in Kathmandu present the results of their working groups

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One working group of the Validation Conference in Dar es Salaam

## BENIN AND BURKINA FASO: GEARING UP FOR THE WTO AGREEMENT

Facilitating international trade, improving the circulation of goods and services, safeguarding imports and exports are all major challenges facing African economies and their development. Ensuring that trade is governed by fair rules and freely negotiated agreements which respect the capacity and interests of all partners is an UNCTAD priority, as per the mandate and values of the Organization.

It is this commitment which recently led two UNCTAD teams, the Division on Investment and Enterprise (Business Facilitation Programme) and the Trade and Logistics Division (Trade facilitation unit) to join forces to provide complementary technical assistance to several Governments in Africa. The objective is to promote clear, transparent and fair rules to facilitate trading across borders.

The Trade and Logistics Division has been supporting more than twenty countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa since 2011 to provide the means to comply with the regulatory framework that comes with the signature of WTO's trade facilitation agreement. A diagnosis of needs at national levels is ongoing in every country. According to article 1 of the future WTO agreement (revision 12), ensuring absolute transparency of import and export procedures (namely through the Internet) is an obligation for signatory countries.

This commitment towards administrative transparency is precisely the one to which all countries who take part in the eRegulations project have subscribed. eRegulations is a system which presents administrative procedures online in a structured, concrete and detailed way and always from the business' point of view. It enables the user to contact the relevant authorities in the event of fraud or simply to obtain complementary information, complementing transparency with interactivity.

But the eRegulations system is first and foremost an administrative reform tool for governments. It provides governments with a reliable dashboard of procedures as they are experienced by the user allowing for easy identification of incorrect application of laws, incoherencies and anachronisms.

The eRegulations system has been adopted by more than twenty countries across the world, namely by Bénin and Burkina Faso who requested that UNCTAD combines efforts to help them comply with the WTO agreements. Therefore, work has begun on documenting cross-border trade procedures. They will be available online as is already the case in Comoros, Mali and Rwanda.

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*To read this article in French, please  
click here: <http://news.eregulations.org/?p=1231>*

Marie-Louise AKATI, Head of international trade relations unit at the Ministry of Trade and Bénédicte HOUETCHENOU, of the eRegulations Bénin team, June 26, 2012 (picture from eRegulations' team)



eRegulations, a global transparency network



The eRegulation site in Benin



# HOW LEAST DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES MANAGE TO IMPLEMENT TRADE FACILITATION MEASURES: INSPIRING BEST PRACTICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

In a globalised world, trade facilitation is becoming more and more important. It is seen as a gateway to growth and inclusion, especially for Least Developed Countries and Developing Countries, in general.

Pre-arrival processing, authorized economic operators (AEO), post clearance audit, risk management and customs cooperation are trade facilitation measures that can make a difference, even if their introduction might require major reforms that are not always easy to implement. The examples below show that managing change is not only possible but desirable, given the benefits for governments, trade stakeholders and consumers. These case studies were presented by national delegates during a Symposium of Best Practices held at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva in July 2012.

## Flexibility when introducing pre-arrival processing: the Peruvian case

Over 90% of developing countries' trade by volume is carried by sea. A container ship leaving China for Peru will take one month to reach its destination. During that time, pre-arrival processing will allow traders to lodge with Customs the relevant documentation in advance, so that release time at arrival can be kept to a minimum. The implementation of this measure might be challenging: some countries have to overcome the lack of a legislative framework and resources. The example of Peru shows that challenges can be overcome and that the benefits that countries may obtain from the pre-arrival process are much higher than the costs of incorporating and providing such a service.

Peru has had a strong trade facilitation agenda for the past years and has introduced pre-arrival processing through a private-public partnership. To make sure that the trading community was on board and will start using the service adequately, Peru created a flexible pre-arrival processing scheme. First, it gives better conditions for pre-arrival processing to those traders using a guarantee system. Second, it allows traders to rectify their import and export requests without any sanction within a given period. And finally, making proof of flexibility and a real client orientation attitude, Customs agents undertook an awareness campaign among traders, to inform them about the requirements and benefits of this new service. As a result, the use of this service has been significantly growing in the past year, contributing to the fact that today, clearance is effectively taking place within 48 hours. In addition, pre-arrival processing is a complement to the Peruvian risk management system as 87% of pre-arrival pro-

cessed cargo goes into the green channel.

## The use of pilot cases prior to the launch of an AEO program: the Kenyan example

An authorized economic operator is a legal or physical person that has been certified as a reliable trade agent by the authorities of a given country. To get this official recognition, the operator will have to fulfill several requisites and undergo different examinations. In exchange, this person will benefit from special conditions while trading in that country. In countries applying a risk management system, they might be allocated to a special so-called blue channel. How to set up conditions for certification, which kind of benefits should AEOs get and how to audit them are some of the questions raised by countries who do not have this kind of system yet.

Kenya launched its AEO program in 2007, in a pilot project including 12 companies. This limited exercise helped the country to test the procedure and resolve its shortcomings before going public. A total of 64 AEOs have already been certified and up to 40 more are expected to get this official recognition for the financial year 2012-2013. The program has so far helped to raise compliance levels in declarations and payment of correct duties and taxes, which has resulted in an increase of revenue collection. To avoid a misuse of the program, the Kenyan authorities came up with a strong pre and post audit scheme, which foresees the continuous involvement of other governmental agencies.

## Tangible benefits of post clearance audit: the cases of Taiwan, Province of China, and Senegal

Post clearance audit implies that Customs agents might inspect and control a specific cargo and/or trade documents after having

released the goods. This measure might not facilitate trade on its own, but it is a very useful complement to other measures such as risk management, or authorized economic operators and it contributes to the separation of release from clearance.

When they introduced this procedure in 2002, the authorities of Taiwan, Province of China, had to confront two main challenges: the creation and constant update of the Customs valuation database and the payment and training of qualified auditors. However, soon they realized that the benefits from post clearance audit were drastically higher than the costs. For instance, the costs of implementation for the fiscal year 2010-2011 were around 260,000 USD, a figure that includes salaries and training for 40 auditors. Over the same period of time, the Customs authorities recovered up to 26 million USD or, in other words, ten times the costs of implementation.

By the same token, in Senegal, the Customs authorities controlled 70 companies in 2011. A total of 34 illegalities were found, meaning that more than 6.8 million USD were recovered.

## A gradual implementation of risk management: the model used by Cameroon

Risk management is an automated system that uses risk predictability models to calculate the probability of certain consignments to constitute a threat (of any kind) to the country. Depending on the risk evaluation made, the cargo will be sent through a green, orange or red channel, where it will undergo none, some or thorough inspections respectively.





Cameroon is currently applying a risk management system based on UNCTAD's ASYCUDA++. For launching and managing it, a Risk Management Unit, with dedicated staff, was created. The reform was supported by a change in the legal framework. One and a half years were needed to gather support for the project at a political level and for its official approval. After that, the system needed one and a half more years for its actual implementation. To be able to assume the costs of such reform, Cameroon applied a gradual implementation in three phases: selectivity, performance monitoring and other modules.

Resistance to change and lack of cooperation from other agencies and stakeholders were some of the biggest challenges that the Risk Management Unit had to face. To overcome this, the National Trade Facilitation Committee was given a mandate to instruct other governmental agencies to comply with the risk management structures and integrate it

in their procedures. Thanks to the risk management system, Cameroonian Customs confirmed that 100% controls are not more efficient than selective controls. The benefits for the Government are huge: there have been an increase of revenue by 40% and a palpable improvement of governance in the customs environment. Traders are also taking advantage of the new system, as clearance times and costs have been reduced.

#### **An electronic tool for Customs cooperation: the use of IDIRA in Mercosur**

Customs cooperation is the principle under which Customs agencies might be requested to exchange import, export or transit-related information with foreign Customs authorities. This cooperation is important in the fight against fraud and illegal trafficking.

In MERCOSUR, the system IDIRA enables

electronic information exchange of Customs registries between four Member States of the Union (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay). In real time, Customs agents from those countries can access import and export declarations from border posts, which helps ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of trade documents, resulting in an increase of revenue collection.

*Article written by Ms Arántzazu Sánchez, Trade Facilitation Section (arantzazu.sanchez@unctad.org), on the basis of presentations held by national delegates during the Symposium of Best Practices held in the WTO in July 2012.*

*Presentations can be found here: [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/tradfa\\_e/case\\_studies\\_e/symp\\_agendajul12\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tradfa_e/case_studies_e/symp_agendajul12_e.htm)*



# THE PHILIPPINES ADOPTED IN AUGUST THE AUTHORIZED ECONOMIC OPERATOR PROGRAM

The Bureau of Customs of the Philippines, a country making use of ASYCUDA, announced last August the adoption of the Authorized Economic Operators (AEO) Program, as the Customs Administrative Order N°1-2012 has been approved by the Department of Finance.

## AEO in The Philippines

The program will be first implemented inside the Clark Freeport Zone, a former United States Air Force base which has been re-developed by the Philippine Government to become “the best international service and logistics hub in the Southeast Asia region”(http://www.clark.com.ph/).

Mr Biazon, Customs Commissioner of The Philippines described the benefits for AEO as follows: “The order will also reduce processing periods, last priority in post entry audits, recognition as a low risk company, reduced inspection or expedite clearance if covered by mutual recognition programs under bilateral/multilateral arrangements, and other trade facilitation benefits which the BOC may give under existing laws and regulations” (http://customs.gov.ph/news/2012/08/15/boc-adopts-authorized-economic-operator-program-for-trade-facilitation/)

## About the concept of AEO

The AEO is an increasingly used customs concept. It is currently being negotiated in the framework of the WTO Agreement on Trade

Facilitation. This measure is also included in the World Customs Organization Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade (WCO-SAFE) as well as in the Revised Kyoto Convention on the Harmonization and Simplification of Customs Procedures.

The AEO program creates a framework for establishing an effective partnership between the public and private sector. The idea behind the AEO program is that economic operators with positive records of compliance regarding export and import requirements should be compensated by the involved Governmental agencies. As a result, compliance to rules becomes a carrot for exporters and importers and the overall degree of compliance of economic agents increases.

There are three major aspects to consider when establishing an AEO program:

- 1) What are going to be the conditions to become an accredited operator,
- 2) What will be the benefits of being one and
- 3) How should the monitoring of authorized operators be guaranteed.

The requirements to become an accredited operator should not be by any means dis-

criminatory: “The criteria, which shall be published, may include: an appropriate record of compliance with customs and other related laws and regulations; a system of managing records to allow for necessary internal controls, and financial solvency, including, where appropriate, provision of a sufficient security/guarantee”(Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation - Draft consolidated negotiating text - Revision, TN/TF/W/165/Rev.12) . Another advantage of having transparent criteria is that States can easily negotiate AEO mutual recognition agreements, which might create a further incentive for agents to become accredited.

*Article written by Ms Arántzazu Sánchez, Trade Facilitation Section (arantzazu.sanchez@unctad.org), based on information provided by the Bureau of Customs of the Philippines. <http://customs.gov.ph>*



# THE EAST AFRICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL RE-LAUNCHES THE BUSINESS CLIMATE INDEX (BCI) SURVEY

The BCI Survey was produced in collaboration with the EAC Secretariat and with the support of GIZ and African Capacity Building Foundation.

## OVERALL BUSINESS CLIMATE INDEX

With regard to the Current Situation of Business Climate Factors (BCF), access to affordable and reliable energy emerges as the single most serious obstacle to businesses operations across the region. With respect to whether the BCF situation improved or deteriorated in year 2011, the average EAC responses indicate no changes occurred regarding access to affordable skilled labour, quality and cost of transport, security, legal and regulatory framework, and access to business support services. In addition, some minor deterioration was recorded on access to affordable energy and on access to finance.

## OVERALL BUSINESS CLIMATE INDEX

In assessing future business climate expectations, based on the predetermined business climate factors, the EAC average shows some minor improvements are expected on Ease of trading across EAC borders under the Customs Union and on Ease of trading across EAC borders under the Common Market.

## OVERALL SEVERITY OF NON-TARIFF BARRIERS (NTB)

The BCI Survey shows that on average, Customs procedures and administrative requirements are considered by businesses as the most severe among the NTB clusters, followed by Police, Weighbridges, Immigration, Technical standards, Business registration and licensing and SPS standards.

Customs procedures were perceived as too lengthy with customs' systems also experiencing network failures, which caused delays. Businesses are additionally required to get approvals from numerous government institutions, and this additional delay results in increased cost of doing businesses and lost opportunities.

On port related administrative requirements, the Survey found out that the cause of the congestion at the Ports was insufficient and inefficient cargo handling facilities, poor speed in transferring cargo from incoming vessels to ICDs, and insufficiency of warehousing facilities for incoming cargo. CFSs which were originally introduced to address ports' congestion by facilitating the direct movement of cargo from the port area have been unable to cope with increased demand for containerized cargo, thereby contributing to increased congestion resulting to inevitable imposition of vessel delay surcharge by some shipping lines.

On Immigration procedures and administrative requirements, businesses experience bottlenecks related to slow acquisition of passport and work permits thus restricting travels within the region and restricted entry of desired investment. Additionally, the Community has opened free trade in the region without giving due emphasis to review of requisite travel procedures and administrative regulations, which has delayed expected gains of the integration process including free movement of business people across the borders.

During the launch of the BCI, the EAC Secretary General reiterated the commitment of the EAC partner States to address the challenge of NTBs: "The EAC has put in place mechanism at a high level with the most recent being the EAC ministerial session on NTBs that was held in Mombasa, which I consider a milestone in scaling up the elimination campaign on trade restrictive measures..", he said. He added that "...the recommendations of this report will be used to facilitate and enlighten the National Monitoring Committees and enhance the process of developing a NTB time bound programme which is constantly being updated".

While responding to the findings, the Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers called on all the Partner States to take the matter of eliminating NTBs seriously, adding that Kenya had formed an Inter Ministerial Committee to address the NTBs in Kenya in order to facilitate intra EAC trade. He called on the business community to regularly update the public sector on prevailing NTBs.

## ABOUT EABC

East African Business Council (EABC) is the umbrella body of the private sector apex in the East African Community (EAC) region.

Established in 1997, EABC brings together the widest cross section of businesses from various sectors, from all the 5 EAC Partner States. EABC's main objective is to, among others, represent and voice the concerns of the business community at the policy level, in order to create a constituency for change that will lead to sustainable, bottom-up policy reforms; with the overall aim of creating a more conducive business environment.

With a Secretariat in Arusha Tanzania, EABC works in close collaboration with the National Private Sector Umbrella bodies, who are also the EABC National Focal Points. These are: Federal Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Burundi; Kenya Private Sector Alliance; Private Sector Federation Rwanda; Tanzania Private Sector Foundation and Private Sector Foundation, Uganda

*For more information, please contact Ms. Lilian Awinja, East African Business Council (EABC), [lawinja@eabc-online.com](mailto:lawinja@eabc-online.com) <http://eabc.info/node/811>*



## INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS ON ELECTROTECHNOLOGY FACILITATE MARITIME TRANSPORT EFFICIENCY AND SAFETY

Recent decades have witnessed major advancements in electronic equipment in the maritime world resulting in more accurate and safer navigation. The position of ships is no longer established on nautical charts and compasses or binoculars and identification devices such as lights or foghorns. Communications between ships and from ship to shore are essential for safety and navigation and significant developments have taken place, evolving from wireless telegraphy using Morse code to voice communication via HF (high frequency) and more recently to voice and data communication via satellite. Despite these improvements, given the importance of maritime transport in global trade, there is still room of manoeuvre to improve safety and in turn efficiency. Here is where international standards on electrotechnology for safe equipment could play an essential role.

Since 1906, the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), a not-for-profit organization gathering experts and delegates coming from industry, government bodies, associations and academia from all around the world, serves world markets and society through its standardization and conformity assessment work for all electrical, electronic and related technologies – collectively known as “electrotechnology”.

The IEC is currently working on electrical installation of ships and of mobile and fixed offshore units as well as maritime navigation and radio communication equipment and systems. The objective is to develop International Standards for the electrical installations for the shipping and offshore industries, allowing them to operate reliably and safely through improved communication and navigation under harsh conditions.

International Standards on electrotechnology facilitate maritime transport, which in turn serves as a key facilitator to international trade. It is crucial for countries to ensure that their needs and priorities regarding international standard setting in electrotechnology are taken on board.

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International Electrotechnical Commission: <http://www.iec.ch/>*





## PROCEEDINGS

### 20th session of the UN/CEFACT Forum

The United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and E-business (UN/CEFACT) organized the 20th session of the UN/CEFACT Forum in Vienna, from 17 to 21 September 2012.

The forum discussed the following priorities:

- Advancing current projects and domain activities
- Ongoing maintenance tasks (such as UN/EDIFACT Data Maintenance Requests)
- Formulating and approving a series of new projects to be conducted within the framework of the approved programme of work 2012-2013
- Continuing liaison and cooperation activities with external organizations (governmental as well as industry and standards consortia)
- Advancing UN/CEFACT's current and forthcoming technical framework

<http://www.unece.org/unece/dev/colo.iway.ch/index.php?id=3145>

### Global Customs Forum 2012

The Global Customs Forum 2012 took place on 18-19 September in São Paulo.

As with the World Customs Forum events the Trusted Trade Alliance organized in conjunction with the WCO 2007-2010, and the conference organized in Brazil by ICI last year, the Global Customs Forum has been built on the premise that

collaboration between traders and the government agencies charged with border management is the best way to develop an efficient national economy engaged in the international trading environment. Following in the tradition of such events, the September conference aimed at bringing together key players from both sides of the public-private sector divide, from the region's largest economy, Brazil and countries in the broader region, and from other parts of the world. The underlying focus was on discussion of international standards for trade facilitation, and on customs and border solutions directly relevant to the region's trade growth potential, collecting feedback from both sides in order to formulate a consensus document listing the conference outcomes.

[www.globalcustomsforum.com](http://www.globalcustomsforum.com)

### USAID/World Customs Organization (WCO) Trade Facilitation Conference, September 2012

The purpose of this conference, "21st Century Trade Facilitation Tools: Increasing International Competitiveness", was to share proven trade facilitation tools (national single window, customs connectivity, coordinated border management and one stop border posts) and programs that are being used with positive results by countries around the globe to increase their competitiveness and their Doing Business/Trading Across Border Indices with the view of encouraging more countries in Southern Africa to understand and benefit from these tools.

The conference was held from September 10-11, 2012, at the Peermont Metcort Convention Center at Emperors Palace, Johannesburg, South Africa.

More information about the event as well as the presentations held by the speakers are to be found here:

<http://www.satradehub.org/trade-facilitation/sath-content/newsroom/hub-happenings-articles/usa-id-world-customs-organization-wco-trade-facilitation-conference-september-10-11-2012>

### Secure Cross Border Transport Model

Non-physical barriers are a major challenge to growth in intra-regional trade and transport in Asia and the Pacific. The developments in information and communication technologies offer tremendous potential to deal with these barriers in cross-border and transit transport. The Secure Cross-Border Transport Model developed by ESCAP uses technologies such as global positioning systems, cellular communication systems, geographical information systems, radio frequency identification, advanced web based software(s), electronic seals and computer network to provide a conceptual basis for design of the system that can be used to facilitate cross-border transport while addressing the pressing concerns of the control authorities.

[http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TFS\\_pubs/SCBM/SCBM-fulltext.pdf](http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TFS_pubs/SCBM/SCBM-fulltext.pdf)

## New Contracting Party to International Maritime Conventions adopted under the auspices of UNCTAD

### United Nations Convention on Conditions for Registration of Ships, 1986

Entry into force: Not yet in force  
Contracting States: 15

Morocco – 19 September 2012

For more information on the latest status of this and other Conventions, please visit: <http://treaties.un.org>



## PUBLICATIONS

### UNCTAD publishes the Liner Shipping Connectivity Index (LSCI) 2012

Five Asian economies are those best connected to the global liner shipping networks, as per UNCTAD's 2012 LSCI. Countries that have seen strongest improvements since UNCTAD started generating the index in 2004 include Morocco, Viet Nam and Lebanon. The average LSCI increased 7 per cent between 2011 and 2012.

<http://unctadstat.unctad.org/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=92>

For more information contact Jan Hoffmann, [jan.hoffmann@unctad.org](mailto:jan.hoffmann@unctad.org) or Bismark Sitorus, [bismark.sitorus@unctad.org](mailto:bismark.sitorus@unctad.org), Trade Logistics Branch, DTL, UNCTAD

### UNECE Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide

The United Nations Commission for Europe (UNECE) recently published an online Trade Facilitation Implementation Guide, a tool for simplifying cross-border trade.

If you are implementing trade facilitation reform, whether you come from the public or private sector, the Guide will help you identify, examine and select available solutions and possible paths for your policy objectives.

It was developed by UNECE, with contributions from its UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT), and financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. A large team of high-level experts from different technical areas and parts of the world were involved in its preparation.

Available at: [www.unece.org/trade/tfig](http://www.unece.org/trade/tfig)

### Updated version of UNNExT BPA Guide for the Simplification of Trade Procedures

This updated Guide is based on the accumulated experiences in conducting Business Process Analysis in over a dozen countries in the Asia-Pacific region since 2010, as well as the suggestions and inputs received from the UNNExT Advisory Group on Business Process Analysis.

The guide now provides even more examples highlighting practical issues that Analysts may face when conducting BPAs of import and exports processes. More emphasis is also given to not only analyzing the "as-is" procedures, but also in developing the "to-be" process. A key addition to the guide is a much expanded Annex providing a detailed example of a BPA.

<http://www.unescap.org/tid/publication/tipub2558new.asp>

### The Geography of Transport Systems

Jean-Paul Rodrigue,

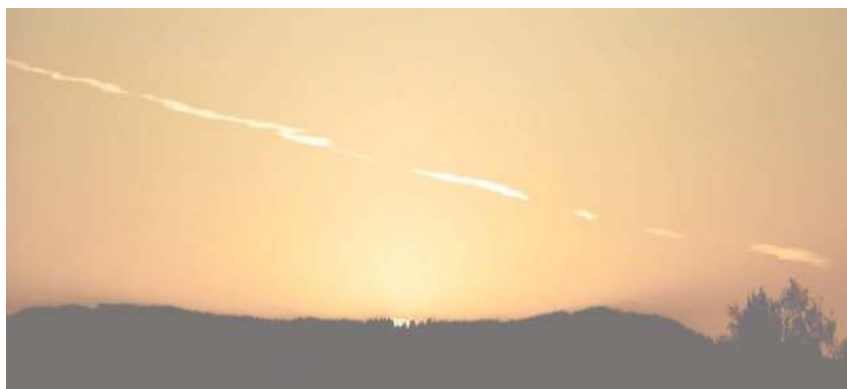
Claude Comitois and Brian Slack

Mobility is fundamental to economic and social activities such as commuting, manufacturing, or supplying energy. Each movement has an origin, a potential set of intermediate locations, a destination, and a nature which is linked with geographical attributes. Transport systems composed of infrastructures, modes and terminals are so embedded in the socio-economic life of individuals, institutions and corporations that they are often invisible to the consumer. This is paradoxical as the perceived invisibility of transportation is derived from its efficiency. Understanding how mobility is linked with geography is main the purpose of this textbook.

"The Geography of transport systems" provides an overview of the spatial aspects of transportation. It is divided in nine chapters, each covering a specific conceptual dimension including networks, modes, terminals, freight transportation, urban transportation and environmental impacts. Each chapter also covers methodologies linked with transport geography such as accessibility, spatial interactions, graph theory and Geographic Information Systems for transportation (GIS-T). The third edition will offer new and updated material, namely over the issue of security, energy, green logistics, as well as a revised content structure. It will be released at the beginning of 2013.

Mainly aimed at an undergraduate audience, "The Geography of transport systems" provides a comprehensive and accessible introduction to the field with a broad overview of its concepts, methods and areas of application. An updated companion web site has been developed for the book. It contains additional material, including digital maps, PowerPoint slides and datasets.

(<http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans/>)





## The Human Element in container Shipping

**Burkhard Lemper, Thomas Pawlik and Susanne Neumann**

The shipping industry is run by people and for people. Thus, the main element in shipping is the «human element» - the mariners at all levels.

Since the human element aboard vessels - being in and coping with a very special environment - is the crucial point of every transport chain, it is important to take a closer look at maritime human resource management issues which are scarcely tackled in scientific literature. This book deals with topics such as the criminalization of seafarers, piracy as part of shipping companies' risk management, corporate social re-sponsibility and human error in shipping.

<http://www.peterlang.com/index.cfm?event=cmp.ccc.seitenstruktur.detailseiten&seitentyp=produkt&pk=64368&cid=448>

## Transportation & Logistics 2030 Vol.5: Winning the talent race

Around the world, populations are ageing. In many developed economies, increasing numbers of workers are contemplating when to retire. That's a major problem for some sectors, like road freight, where labour shortages due to retirements are already beginning to take their toll. In developing economies, transportation and logistics as a sector is growing rapidly - but workforce development isn't yet keeping pace. How will transportation and logistics companies cope?

To get some answers, we've put together a global panel of experts and posed a series of questions using a RealTime Delphi methodology. Will transportation and logistics executives be standing in the winner's circle in 2030? You can read the experts' views in this report. We also present some suggestions on how transportation and logistics companies can position themselves.

<http://www.pwc.com/gx/en/transportation-logistics/publications/tl-2030-volume-5.jhtml>

## Maritime Governance and Policy-Making

**Michael Roe**

A close analysis of the framework of existing governance and the existing jurisdictional arrangements for shipping and ports reveals that while policy-making is characterized by national considerations through flags, institutional representation at all jurisdictions and the inviolability of the state, the commercial, financial, legal and operational environment of the sector is almost wholly global. This governance mismatch means that in practice the maritime industry can avoid policies which it dislikes by trading nations off against one another, while enjoying the freedoms and benefits of a globalized economy.

A Post-modern interpretation of this globalized society prompts suggestions for change in maritime policy-making so that the governance of the sector better matches more closely the environment in which shipping and ports operate. Maritime Governance and Policy-Making is a controversial commentary on the record of policy-making in the maritime sector and assesses whether the reason for continued policy failure rests with the inadequate governance of the sector.

Maritime Governance and Policy-Making addresses fundamental questions of governance, jurisdiction and policy and applies them to the maritime sector. This makes it of much more interest to a much wider audience - including students, researchers, government officials, and those with industrial and commercial interests in the shipping and ports areas - and also of more value as it places the specific maritime issues into their wider context.

[http://www.springer.com/engineering/production+engineering/book/978-1-4471-4152-5?cm\\_mmc=NBA-\\_-Aug-12\\_IN\\_10969141-\\_-product-\\_-978-1-4471-4152-5](http://www.springer.com/engineering/production+engineering/book/978-1-4471-4152-5?cm_mmc=NBA-_-Aug-12_IN_10969141-_-product-_-978-1-4471-4152-5)

## Volume 39, Number 4 of Maritime Policy & Management

"Networks effects in the East Asia container ports industry", "maritime policy development against ship flagging out" and "effect of proposed CO2 emission reduction scenarios" are some of the articles to find in this new volume of Maritime Policy and Management.

<http://mpm.iame.info>

## Transport, The Environment And Security: Making the Connection

**Rae Zimmerman**

From a primarily urban perspective, the author illustrates that the fields of transportation, environment (with an emphasis on climate change) and security (for both natural hazards and terrorism) and their interconnections remain robust areas for policy and planning. Synthesizing existing data, new analyses, and a rich set of case studies, the book uses transportation networks as a framework to explore transportation in conjunction with environment, security, and interdependencies with other infrastructure sectors. The US rail transit system, ecological corridors, cyber security, planning mechanisms and the effectiveness of technologies are among the topics explored in detail. Case studies of severe and potential impacts of natural hazards, accidents, and security breaches on transportation are presented. These cases support the analyses of the forces on transportation, land use and patterns of population change that connect, disconnect and reconnect people from their environment and security.

The book is intended to be a insightful read for academics, students, and practitioners across a wide range of fields including: transport, environmental economics, environmental management, urban planning, public policy, and terrorism and security.

[http://www.e-elgar.co.uk/Bookentry\\_main.lasso?id=13884](http://www.e-elgar.co.uk/Bookentry_main.lasso?id=13884)

## Volume 14, Issue 3 of Maritime Economics & Logistics

This new volume of Maritime Economics & Logistics brings interesting articles on "costs, revenue, service attributes and competition in shipping", "understanding mode choice decisions", and "factors and conditions affecting regional port governance in South China".

<http://mel.iame.info>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ASSESSING PORT PERFORMANCE

In some developing countries over 95 per cent of the country's international trade passes through one main port. This concentration of goods does not always translate into economies of scale or lower transport costs. Increased bureaucracy and congestion may occur leading to a negative impact upon the level of port performance which undermines the nation's integration into international transport and trading systems.

Increasing port performance can lead to lowering transport costs and help increase trade competitiveness.

Greater transparency in port performance indicators ports could also help ports to benchmark themselves and stimulate competition. However, there is presently no global comparison of world port performance.

Individual studies are carried out by researchers from institutes or government are often hampered by a lack of primary data and a reasonable population sample. This often limits research to nations, regions or large ports that publish their own data.

A meeting to discuss what port performance indicators could be universally provided will be held on Monday, 10 December 2012, at the Palais des Nations, Geneva.

**When?** 12 December 2012

**Where?** Geneva, Switzerland

**Organizers?** Trade and Logistics Branch, UNCTAD

To attend or request further details, please contact Mr. Vincent Valentine, Officer-in-Charge of the Transport Section, Trade Logistics Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD: [vincent.valentine@unctad.org](mailto:vincent.valentine@unctad.org)

### ASIA PACIFIC TRADE FACILITATION FORUM 2012

Organised by the ADB and UNESCAP, the second Asia Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum 2012 will take place at the Galadari Hotel in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on 30-31 October 2012 and followed by various trade facilitation related side events on 1-2 November 2012.

The objectives of the event are:

- To share experiences and knowledge on trade facilitation between countries of the greater Asia and Pacific region;
- To increased understanding and exchange of views between public and private stakeholders, as well with trade facilitation standards developers and technical assistance providers;
- To learn about and draw lessons from on-going implementation of national and regional trade facilitation measures; and introduce relevant international tools, instruments, and facilities aimed at increasing the efficiency of regional and global cross-border trade.

**When?** 30 October-2 November

**Where?** Colombo, Sri Lanka

**Organizers?** ADB and UNESCAP

<http://www.unescap.org/tid/projects/tfforum12.asp>

### VI DAYS OF AFRICAN SHIPPERS' COUNCILS

*The position of African Shippers' Councils towards the challenges of the 21st century*

The conference will answer several key questions such as:  
Which role has the National Observatory of Transports for the Shippers' Councils and their members?  
Which legal protection for the interests of shippers?  
What is the role of Shippers' Councils regarding the trade facilitation challenges?  
Which are the possibilities for landlocked countries?

**When?** 12-17 November

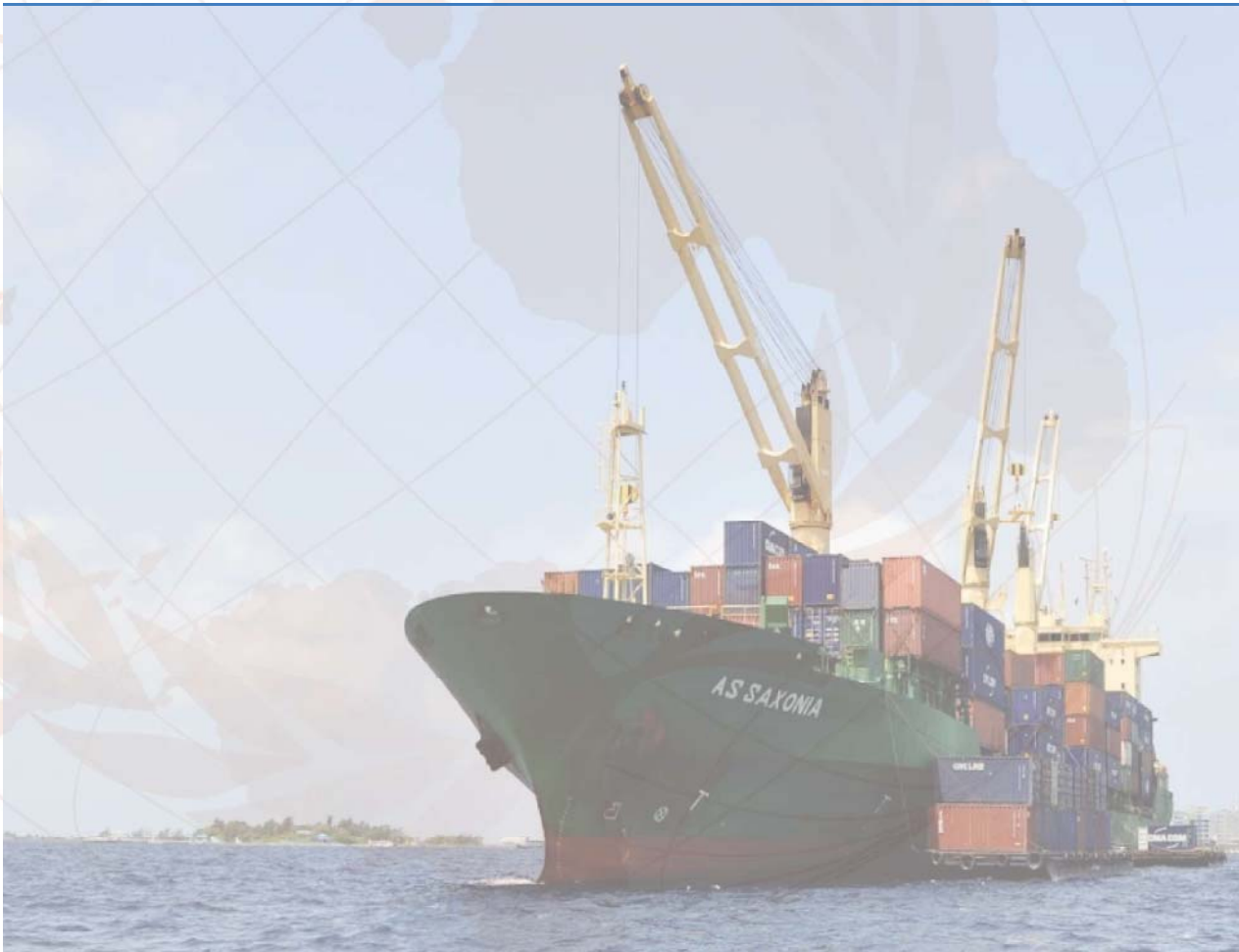
**Where?** Libreville, Gabon

**Organizers?** Union of African Shippers' Councils

*To request further details, please contact  
Mr. Serigne Thiam DIOP  
Secrétaire Général Union des Conseils de Chargeurs Africains (UCCA)  
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please contact [jan.hoffmann@unctad.org](mailto:jan.hoffmann@unctad.org) and [arantzazu.sanchez@unctad.org](mailto:arantzazu.sanchez@unctad.org)

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