



**PROVISIONAL COMPENDIUM OF CIVIL SOCIETY
AND PARALLEL EVENTS
FOR THE
THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

BRUSSELS, 14 – 20 MAY 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Event	Page
- NGO Forum	3
- High-Level Parliamentarians Round Table	9
- Meeting of Mayors “City to City Cooperation”	16
- Migration/ Refugees Round Table	21
- Business Sector Round Table	28
- Young Entrepreneurs	46
- The Digital Economy	64
- Youth Forum	72
- Women Entrepreneurs Forum	79

EVENT: NGO FORUM

FOCAL POINT

Ms. Daphne Davies
NGO Forum Co-ordinator
Liaison Committee for Development NGOs
Square Ambiorix 10
Brussels, B-1000
Belgium

Tel: (+32 2) 743 8763
Fax: (+32 2) 732 1934
E-mail: ddavies@clong.be

PARTICIPATION OF NGOS IN THE CONFERENCE

FOCAL POINTS

Civil Society Outreach

Ms. Gloria-Veronica Koch
Chief, Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (+41 22) 907 56 90
Fax: (+41 22) 917 01 22
E-mail: gloria-veronica.koch@unctad.org

Ms. Amel Haffouz
Economic Affairs Officer
Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (+41 22) 907 50 48
Fax: (+41 22) 917 01 22
E-mail: amel.haffouz@unctad.org

Mr. Dieter Koenig
Scientific Affairs Officer
Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel: (+41 22) 907 56 61
Fax: (+41 22) 917 01 22
E-mail: dieter.koenig@unctad.org

Concept Paper

***NGO Forum at the UN conference on Least Developed Countries
May 10 – 20 2001***

Background

The Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries will take place in Brussels, Belgium from May 14 – 20. It will be hosted by the European Union, and is being held in the European Parliament.

In 1997, the U.N. General Assembly responded to the marginalisation of LDCs by deciding to convene the 3rd United Nations Conference on LDCs and designated UNCTAD as the focal point for the preparation of the Conference. In its resolution, it set the mandate of the Conference as follows:

- (i) to assess the results of the Programme of Action during the 1990s at the country level;
- (ii) to review the implementation of international support measures, particularly in the areas of official development assistance, debt, investment and trade; and,
- (iii) To consider the formulation and adoption of appropriate national and international policies and measures for sustainable development of the least developed countries and their progressive integration into the world economy. Significantly, the GA invited the Secretary-General of the Conference to facilitate the involvement of civil society, including NGOs and the private sector in the preparatory process.

Currently over 1.3 billion people live on less than one dollar a day, and this number grows by 25 million every year. The daily income for people in LDCs is the lowest in the world. Ordinary people are facing terrible poverty every day, and many of these people have no power to change the situation. Civil society organisations are one of the building blocks of society, and frequently take the lead in rebuilding societies destroyed by poverty, conflict and disease. They are also the means by which people's creativity to build up movements in the face of insurmountable obstacles comes through. Non-governmental organisations provide the means by which ordinary people can have a voice and effect change and help to participate in democratic societies.

Non-government organisations have a crucial role to play at the LDC Conference where they will be one means of making sure that people's needs are expressed, and measures are set in place to fulfil them. They are also taking steps to ensure that they can to play the most positive role possible in making sure that the Conference provides concrete, positive programmes for the future.

Many non-governmental organisations are fully international, and form partnerships between organisations in the industrialised countries and organisations in LDCs. It is this strength and this diversity which will energise NGOs participating in the Conference. Because of their position in society it is expected that they will provide new insights and approaches to a people-centred and participatory development.

As part of the third UN LDC Conference, there will be a strong “civil-society” track, and the NGO Forum will be one of the leading bodies within this. The Forum will organise a full programme of activities, as well as ensuring that NGOs are enabled to fully participate in the official Conference activities.

Major objectives of the NGO Forum

a) To build consensus in the NGO sector

The NGOs will use the days before the start of the Conference to exchange information, build consensus and finalise the preparation of their positions for advocacy work at the Conference. This work began in July 2000 at the 1st Preparatory Committee, and has been developed through the production of Policy documents, the use of a policy discussion on the NGO Forum website, and at the 2nd and 3rd Preparatory Committees in New York in February and April 2001. The NGO policy document will be finalised during the NGO Forum Plenary session (May 10 – 12), when the final draft will be debated, and the NGO’s main concerns and demands highlighted.

During the UN conference the NGO Forum will organise a full programme of workshops and discussions to which official delegates will be actively invited which will feed into the Conference discussions. In addition NGOs will be running side meetings on their particular issues of concern, and a large number of rooms have been made available from May 14 – 20 for this purpose. The NGO Forum is also running a series of daily debates with the UN agencies where top officials from the UN will debate topics with NGOs speakers. Official delegates are keenly invited to attend these.

The NGO Forum will start a few days before the Conference itself and run parallel to it for its entire duration. The main Conference runs from Monday May 14th to Sunday 20th, 2001. The entire NGO Forum will start on Thursday 10 May 2001 and end on May 20th.

b) To facilitate and support NGO advocacy and lobbying

NGO advocacy is at its most effective when NGOs can work together and deploy their limited resources in a co-ordinated way. As well as workshops on advocacy and lobbying, during the UN Conference we will be organising a daily briefing so that NGOs can be kept up to date on the state of negotiations. In addition there will be a programme of daily caucuses to discuss and exchange information on issues raised in the official negotiations.

c) To raise public awareness about the event

The staff of the NGO Forum is working to attract public attention to the event and raise international public awareness about the issues being discussed in the Conference. The NGO Forum website has been operating since January 2001, and is constantly updated. An NGO Forum Press Office will be operational during the Forum, and we are producing information packs, organising daily press briefings as well as providing all the facilities necessary for optimal media coverage.

In addition there will be an NGO Exhibition Centre set up in the Museum of Natural Sciences Building which borders the official Conference venue. On Saturday, May 12 the NGO Forum is working with Belgian NGOs to organise an event “Another World is Possible” in the Cinquantenaire Park. All these events are oriented to the Conference participants and the media as well as being accessible to the general public. On Tuesday, May 15 and Wednesday, May 16 there will be an NGO Developing Country Film Festival

Status of Progress

- 1) **Good relations have been established** with UNCTAD’s Civil Society Outreach Department (CSO), the Non-governmental Liaison Service (NGLS), the European Commission and the Belgian government in the preparatory process, and the NGO Forum Secretariat works closely with all these organisations. As a symbol of this close working relationship UNCTAD’s CSO and NGLS will both be housed in the Bibliotheque Solvay, the centre for the NGO Forum.
- 2) **Accreditation of NGOs to the official Conference**, We have worked closely with UNCTAD in carrying out outreach work and in encouraging and informing NGOs (particularly in Least Developed Countries) to seek accreditation to the official United Nations Conference. When the requests for accreditation closed in mid-March there were 400 requests from NGOs, not already in contact with the UN, and of these 230 were from Least Developed Countries. We hope that this means that these NGOs will retain contact with the UN system after the Conference.
- 3) **Financially supporting 130 NGOs from Least Developed Countries to attend the official Conference and NGO events**. The selection of NGOs has been made by our regional focal points, who are members of our International Steering Committee. We are working closely with NGLS who have responsibility for the ticketing, and also for the payment of the daily subsistence allowance. We are also working closely with the Belgian authorities to facilitate the visa process for these participants, which can be one of the main obstacles for participants from developing countries.
- 4) **Participation in the Official Conference**. UNCTAD have agreed that all those who are accredited to the Conference, or to ECOSOC or UNCTAD will have full access to the Conference building. Accredited NGOs will also have access to all the open sessions, and 80 places have been specifically set aside for NGOs to attend the inaugural session. NGOs will also be able to participate in the official Interactive Thematic Sessions both as panel members and in the audience.
- 5) **NGO participant in the NGO Forum and NGO Plenary sessions**. We have received over 1500 registrations for these two events, which we believe is a reflection of the wide interest from NGOs in this Conference and NGO Forum. Of these 1500, one third are from NGOs in Least Developed Countries.
- 6) Organising NGO events – here we have a large programme which consists of 3 parts –
 - a) **NGO Plenary from May 10 – 12**. This takes place in the Batiment Charlemagne where NGOs will be finalizing their presentation to the official Conference, as well as discussing lobbying strategy. The Plenary will be officially opened by Mr Ricupero, UNCTAD Secretary General, Ms Maj Inger

Klingwall, Swedish Development Minister, and Mr Amani Tarmaini, a civil society activist from Mali (not yet confirmed). During the Plenary these will be discussions on the NGO Policy Document as well as workshops on lobbying on 'cross-cutting issues'. It finishes on May 12 with the finalisation of the NGO Policy Document and Statement which will be presented to the Official Conference on Monday, May 14.

b) **NGO Forum Programme May 14 – 20.** This takes place in Bibliotheque Solvay, very close to the UN Conference Building, and will be addressed by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan on May 14.

The NGO Secretariat is organising a number of high-profile workshops, designed to proceed and feed into the official Thematic Plenary Sessions. Civil society experts on peace, good governance, health, social service provision, trade, infrastructural development and overseas development aid are being invited to address these sessions.

In addition we are organising a series of daily high-profile debates entitled 'Civil Society meets the Policy makers'.

There will also be daily briefings on progress of the official Conference discussions, as well as special interest caucuses.

c) **NGO Side meetings** – We are making a large number of rooms available for NGOs who want to organize their own meetings, and so far over 100 meetings are scheduled during this week. All rooms are in buildings and hotels near the UN Conference Building, many of them round Parc Leopold in which the Bibliothèque Solvay is based.

The NGO Forum will provide NGOs with logistic support in terms of computers, printers, faxes and photocopiers in the Bibliotheque Solvay where there will be a staffed cyber café, as well as a café which will provide snacks, coffee, etc. There will also be information boards, as well as other opportunities for organising caucuses and ad hoc meetings.

7) **Exhibition Space** – we are providing exhibition space for 36 NGOs in the Institute of Natural Sciences. The MNS looks onto Parc Leopold, about 4 minutes from the UN Conference Building, and NGOs and official delegates are warmly welcomed to attend these. NGO press conferences will also be held in this building.

8) Cultural activities –

(a) **Another World is Possible.** This event is being organised by Belgian NGOs and the NGO Forum in the Cinquantenaire Park, a large park near the UN Conference building on the afternoon of Saturday May 12. This symbolic event will consist of rebuilding the Cinquantenaire Arch (built with the blood of Congolese rubber slaves) and NGOs will be constructing banners, accompanied by music and dancing. NGOs will also be working on a large banner which will be displayed in the NGO Exhibition Centre.

(b) **There will be a Developing World film festival of short films,** (evening of May 15 & 16) in the Centre Sanghor (near Parc Leopold), as well as an NGO reception organised by Solidar on May 17 (open to all, small entrance fee) in the centre of Brussels.

(c) **A huge banner** will be produced on Saturday, May 12 with NGO participation, which will be hung in the NGO Exhibition hall

9) Policy Work - This is a crucial part of the NGO Forum's work, and it has been developed through the production of Policy documents, the use of an interactive policy discussion on the NGO Forum website. A number of drafts of the policy statement "What is at Stake for Civil Society" have been produced. During the 2nd and 3rd Preparatory Committees in New York in February and April 2001 a total of four policy statements outlining key civil society concerns and desired policy outcomes for the Conference were presented. The NGO policy document will be finalised during the NGO Forum Plenary session (May 10 – 12), when the final draft will be debated, and the NGO's main concerns and demands highlighted.

10) Website and publicity The NGO Forum website www.oneworld.org/liaison/forum gives details of the programme, side meetings, exhibitions, etc. It will be updated daily during the NGO Forum.

During the NGO Forum and official Conference there will be daily press briefings, and regular press releases, etc, will be issued. There will be a fully-functioning press office, operated by the press officer and her assistant.

Daily NGO Bulletin – Outreach -There will be a daily bi-lingual NGO Bulletin, produced in 1000 copies by the Norwegian Outreach Team, and printed locally. The bulk of the material will be produced by NGOs and then edited for inclusion in Outreach. Outreach will also include the updated programme of events.

Expected Outcomes

Implementation and Monitoring of Results

If the Conference is to succeed, NGOs believe that a clear implementation and monitoring structure must be set up to follow up on the results of the Programme of Action.

NGOs will seek to be part of an official monitoring team set up to monitor the results of the Conference.

In addition, discussions are currently underway about setting up a civil society team to carry out monitoring, and this structure will be set up by the NGO Forum Coordinator between May and September. Part of this work would be to seek financial support to set up an ongoing monitoring structure, initially based in NGO networks in both OECD countries and Least Developed Countries.

Financing

The NGO Forum is being supported by a grant from the European Commission which is being paid via UNCTAD. .

Contact Person

Daphne Davies
NGO Forum Co-ordinator
Liaison Committee for Development NGOs
Square Ambiorix 10
Brussels, B –1000
Belgium

Tel: ++322 743 8763
Fax:++322 732 1934
E-mail: ddavies@clong.be

April 25 2001

EVENT: HIGH-LEVEL PARLIAMENTARY ROUND TABLE

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU)

Mr. Anders B. Johnsson
Secretary General
IPU, Place du Petit Saconnex, B.P. 438
CH- 1211 Geneva 19
Tel.: (+41-22) 919-4150
Fax: (+41-22) 919-4160

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Mr. Gerhard Kalb
Secretariat of the Committee on Development and Cooperation
and of the ACP-EU Assembly
European Parliament
B-1044 Brussels
Tel: (+32-2) 284-3655
Fax: (+32-2) 284-9067
E-mail: Gkalb@europarl.eu.int

UNCTAD

Ms. Gloria-Veronica Koch
Chief, Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel. (41-22) 907-5690
Fax: (41-22) 917-0122
E-mail: gloria-veronica.koch@unctad.org

Mr. Dieter Koenig
Scientific Affairs Officer
Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel.: (41-22) 907-5661
Fax: (41-22) 917-0122
E-mail: dieter.koenig@unctad.org

Concept paper

**High-level Parliamentary Roundtable
Third United Nations Least Developed Country Conference
Brussels, 14 May 2001
3.00 – 6.00 p. m**

Background

The Parliamentary Meeting held by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) on the occasion of the Tenth Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD X) in February 2000 in Bangkok was widely commended by both the United Nations and the world parliamentary community. One of the positive aspects was the significant advancement of IPU cooperation with UNCTAD in terms of parliamentarians addressing key issues on UNCTAD's agenda.

The Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (UN-LDC III) is to be an event of importance to parliamentarians worldwide, who could make a difference in ensuring the implementation of the proposed Plan of Action following the Conference. It has therefore been planned to hold a parliamentary event in the framework of the UN-LDC III. This event would be hosted by the European Parliament and jointly organized by the Parliament, the IPU and the UNCTAD secretariats.

Status of Progress

Planning meetings involving European Parliament representatives, the IPU and UNCTAD took place in Geneva on 24 August 2000 at the IPU secretariat and on 10 January 2001 at UNCTAD. The IPU will inform all of its member parliaments about the event and recommend that parliamentarians be included in national delegations. UNCTAD will be raising awareness among LDCs whose parliaments are not members of the IPU.

Expected Outcome

The meeting would be held with the aim of mobilizing parliamentary support for and input into UN-LDC III, including through encouraging Members of Parliaments to join their respective national delegations to the Conference, and the Roundtable. The Roundtable should in particular make it possible to focus attention on the parliamentary component of the UN-LDC III follow-up. Specifically, the initiative pursues the following objectives:

- To raise awareness of national parliaments of the importance of UN-LDC III and to encourage them to use all means at their disposal for addressing the question of how their respective country is preparing for UN-LDC III;

- To promote parliamentary action prior to UN-LDC III on the basis of principal positions and recommendations of the world parliamentary community concerning issues placed on the UN-LDC III agenda;
- To encourage participation of members of parliament in official national delegations to UN-LDC III;
- To prepare an effective and meaningful parliamentary follow-up action focused on practical implementation of the commitments to be adopted at UN-LDC III.

Format and expected participation

It is planned to have eight parliamentary speakers participating in the Roundtable, who would make brief introductory presentations. Among the eight speakers, four are to represent LDCs, one is planned to be from Europe, one from Japan, one from Australia or New Zealand, and one from North America (USA or Canada). The IPU, the EU Parliament and the UNCTAD secretariats are in the process of identifying these speakers. Other parliamentarians, delegates as well as journalists and NGOs, will be given access to the meeting. The number of participants expected is approximately 150.

Limited funding from the UN-LDC III Trust Fund is to be available for parliamentarians from LDCs. UNCTAD should fund the four parliamentarians from LDCs acting as speakers (resource persons) to the extent that these are not already members of their national delegations. The theme of the High-Level Parliamentary Roundtable would be "Parliamentary support for the fight against extreme poverty". For practical purposes, a number of sub-themes would be identified, such as debt relief, capacity building, trade in commodities, and the empowerment of women in development.

Contact persons

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU):

Mr. Alain Valtat

Secretary of the Committee
for Sustainable Development
IPU, Place du Petit Saconnex, B.P. 438
CH- 1211 Geneva 19
Tel.: (+41-22) 919-4133
Fax: (+41-22) 733-3141

EU Parliament:

Mr. Gerhard Kalb

Secretariat of the Committee on Development
and Cooperation and of the ACP-EU Assembly
European Parliament
B-1044 Brussels
Tel. (32-2) 284-3655

Fax: (32-2) 284-9067
E-mail: Gkalb@europarl.eu.int

UNCTAD

Ms. Gloria-Veronica Koch
Chief, Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Tel. (41-22) 907-5690
Fax: (41-22) 917-0122
E-mail: gloria-veronica.koch@unctad.org

Mr. Dieter Koenig
Scientific Affairs Officer
Civil Society Outreach
Executive Direction and Management, UNCTAD
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Tel.: (41-22) 907-5661
Fax: (41-22) 917-0122
E-mail: dieter.koenig@unctad.org

High-Level Parliamentary Roundtable within the framework of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (UN-LDC III)
(Brussels, European Parliament Building, 14 May 2001, 15-18 h)

“Parliamentary Support for the Fight Against Poverty”
Event organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the European Parliament and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Provisional Annotated Agenda

A. Background, focus and questions to be addressed

The objective of the Roundtable is to mobilize parliamentarians worldwide to contribute to the dialogue on issues to be addressed at the Third United Nations Least Developed Countries Conference (UNLDC III). The initiative aims at promoting parliamentary action on issues addressed by the Conference and parliamentary follow-up to its results. The Roundtable’s recommendations are to be made available at the Conference.

Based on the intergovernmental agenda of the UNLDC III Conference, it is suggested that the Roundtable take a focused approach, addressing selected issues of particular urgency to the LDCs¹: (i) *Commodities, with particular focus on agriculture*; (ii) *Capacity-building and new technologies*; (iii) *Financing for development, debt relief and capital flows*. Moreover, the issue of *gender and development* would be addressed in all of these areas as a cross-sectoral issue.²

B. Agenda

15.00 – 15.30 ***Opening remarks***

Proposed speakers:

Mr. M.P. Tjitendero (Namibia), Vice-President, IPU Executive Committee

Mr. Carlos Fortin, Deputy Secretary-General, UNCTAD

Mr. J. Alexander Corrie, Co-President, Joint Parliamentary Assembly of the Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Community and its Member States (ACP-EU)

¹ See also in this context The Least Developed Countries 2000 Report. (UNCTAD/LDC/2000), New York and Geneva 2000. and the Draft Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. (A/CONF.191/6).

² The request from the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the 1990s called for fully mobilizing and involving women both as agents and beneficiaries of the development process through better access to health care, education and planning. In many LDCs, women continue to be the backbone of the economy, in agriculture they are responsible for much of the work and women entrepreneurs have taken important initiatives. However, by and large the Programme of Action remains unfulfilled with regard to ensuring an equitable participation of women in the development of LDC countries.

15.30 – 16.15

(i) *Commodities, with particular focus on agriculture*

Questions to be addressed: The commodities and agricultural sectors still lie at the centre of LDC economies and represent a major source for foreign exchange. However, declining prices and environmental pressure on agricultural lands, as well as on other natural and ecological resources have led to severe problems. These require a series of both economic and technical measures to support the commodities and agricultural sector in the LDCs. What have been the main barriers to entering international markets? And what are the main technical cooperation requirements for complying with quality standards and establishing the requisite managerial competence? How can the agricultural sector contribute better to a sustainable employment and access to credits for women in rural areas - who are often the backbone of food production in LDCs - and thereby increase their productivity, income and contribute to poverty reduction? How can market transparency and information flows be increased and benefit LDCs, in particular by linking-up with civil society, the academic community and international organizations in order to create synergies? These are among the questions which parliamentarians from North and South could address in a solidarity way.

Proposed resource persons and discussants:

Hon. Prof. Gilbert B. Bukenya, Uganda
Ms. Glenys Kinnock, European Parliament
Hon. Rosemary Yikona, Zambia

Brief introductory remarks, followed by general debate

16.15 - 17.00

(ii) *Capacity building and new technologies for development*

Questions to be addressed: Obviously, structural reform alone is not sufficient: the weak economic infrastructure in many LDCs needs to be strengthened, including capacity-building measures at all levels. What could these look like? Right now, the technological gap between the industrialized countries and the LDCs is growing further. This includes all sectors ranging from information technologies to agricultural technologies. In terms of the gender and development dimension, how can equal access of women to education, vocational training and employment be adequately addressed? Beyond traditional technical assistance - which is still needed on a large scale - could one think of new forms of partnerships, for example, between firms from developed and developing countries in this respect? How can parliamentarians contribute to create the enabling environment for such partnerships?

Proposed resource persons and discussants:

Mr. Joaquim Miranda, Chairman, European Parliament
Committee on Development and Cooperation

Mrs. Marie-Thérèse Oyie Ndzie, Cameroon

Mr. Ali Nouhoum Diallo, Mali

Brief introductory remarks, followed by general debate

17.00 - 17.45

(iii) Financing for development, debt relief and capital flows

Questions to be addressed: High levels of debt and debt servicing continue to drain the limited resources of the LDCs. At the same time the debt servicing capacity of the LDCs deteriorated critically over the past years. Therefore, it will be a challenge for the Parliamentary Roundtable to propose creative debt relief solutions. In this context, measures that would allow mobilizing domestic resources are critical for LDC development. At the same time, the contribution of FDI to development in LDCs remains low, even in those countries which have undergone considerable structural reforms. Enhancing private capital flows need to go hand-in-hand with a new focus on the possible role of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and how both could complement each other or engage in cooperative capacity-building measures. What needs to be done to motivate global economic actors to invest in LDCs and to support a positive inflow of capital into these countries? And what kind of financial policies are needed to bring about an economic empowerment of women in LDCs? What kind of alliances could parliamentarians build to address the issues of LDC debt, capital flows and finance for development?

Proposed resource persons and discussants:

Mr. J. Alexander Corrie, European Parliament, Co-President,
Joint Parliamentary Assembly, ACP-EU

Mr. Kobsack Chutikul, Thailand

Mr. Mélégué Traore, Burkina Faso

Brief introductory remarks, followed by general debate

17:45

Summary conclusions of the Roundtable by its Moderator

**EVENT: MEETING OF MAYORS
"CITY TO CITY COOPERATION"**

FOCAL POINT

Ms. Lisanne Losier

Tel: (+41 22) 907 40 54

E-mail: lisanne.losier@unctad.org

Office: E-8100, UNCTAD, Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10



Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries

Meeting of Mayors (Brussels, 15-16 May 2001)

Theme: City-to-City Cooperation

**Organized jointly by the
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD),
the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and
the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
in collaboration with the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty (WACAP)
and the City of Brussels**

INVITATION

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the City of Brussels have the pleasure to invite you to the upcoming Meeting of Mayors on City-to-City Cooperation that will be held in Brussels on 15-16 May 2001. This event will take place in the context of the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to be hosted by the European Union and to take place in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001.

Participants in this event will include mayors from LDC cities, other cities from the North and South, city associations, NGOs, organizations of the UN system and other international organizations. The primary objective of the Meeting will be to foster city-to-city cooperation, with particular emphasis on promoting cooperation between LDC cities and non-LDC cities. There is already a certain amount of cooperation taking place, but looking ahead, we hope that this parallel event will act as a catalyst to further promote cooperation both North-South and South-South city cooperation.

During the Meeting, participants will have a chance to exchange their experience and knowledge in the domain of city-to-city cooperation and to discuss the most appropriate methodology/best practices for successful and sustainable cooperation. Municipalities present at the Meeting will also have an opportunity to elaborate and sign cooperative agreements or partnerships with other cities. This segment will take the form of a cooperation fair for cities seeking new partnerships and to strengthen existing ones. Expected results include a final declaration, new cooperative agreements and recommendations on follow-up actions and implementation for sustainable city-to-city cooperation.

You will find attached the provisional programme, the registration form for the Meeting of Mayors, and general logistics information about the Conference (A/CONF.191/INF.1), including the hotel booking form (annex A) and visa requirements. The registration form specific to the Meeting of Mayors should be filled out and returned to Lisanne Losier (see address below) before **16 April 2001**. To book an hotel, please return the completed hotel booking form to RESOTEL before 10 April 2001. Further information and documents can be obtained on the LDC III website: www.un.org/events/ldc3/conference or through the UNCTAD website: www.unctad.org

For registration and queries please contact:

Ms. Lianne Losier
UNCTAD,
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Tel: 41 22 917 4054
Fax: 41 22 907 0056
E-mail: Lianne.Losier@unctad.org

For queries, cities and associations may also contact:

For UNDP (WACAP): Mr. Mohand Cherifi,
Tel: 41 22 917 8534
E-mail: Mohand.Cherifi@undp.org

For UNCHS (Habitat): Mr. Lars Ludvigsen,
Tel: 41 22 907 4683
E-mail: lludvigsen@unog.org



PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Meeting of Mayors ***"City to City Cooperation"*** **Brussels, 15-16 May 2001**

Organized jointly by
UNCTAD, UNDP and UNCHS (Habitat)
in collaboration with the World Alliance of Cities Against Poverty
and the City of Brussels

The Meeting aims at promoting and developing cooperation between LDC cities and other developing or industrialized cities in the exceptional context of the Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries. The Conference provides a favourable framework in which participating Governments and international organizations can support city-to-city cooperation.

Day 1 - 15 May 2001

Morning session (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Welcoming address and general policy statements

- Host country and City of Brussels
- UNCTAD/UNDP/HABITAT
- WACLAC

Methodology for city-to-city cooperation

Goal: To provide practical guidelines on sustainable city-to-city cooperation to assist LDC cities in their search, management and evaluation of such cooperation, and to highlight the problems and potential solutions for establishing sustainable cooperation.

Presentation of and debate on:

- Practical and wide-ranging experiences in city-to-city cooperation;
- The reasons for success (comparative advantages, follow-up action, effective and sustainable involvement over time, civil society contribution);
- The reasons for failure (badly targeted projects, exclusion of the basic society, immediate action without regard to sustainability, short-term assistance instead of medium- and long-term development partnership);
- Practical guide for city-to-city cooperation; and
- Conclusions and recommendations.

Presentations will include: selected experiences from cities; results from the IULA/FMCU Unity Congress on city-to-city cooperation; study on "the challenges of linking"; and guide for city-to city cooperation.

Afternoon session (3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

Support from Governments and international institutions for city-to-city cooperation

Any policy on decentralized cooperation should be consistent with the national political agenda of each country, hence the importance of support from Governments and international institutions, in particular in the areas that govern the success of the cooperation. The discussion will focus on local autonomy, training, financing and the support/institutional framework necessary to promote sustainable city-to-city cooperation and investments that generate local employment.

Goal: To prepare recommendations for Governments and the international community to further the development of city-to-city cooperation.

Presentation and debate on:

- Local autonomy;
- Capacity-building/training;
- Innovative approach to financing;
- Support framework from the international community;
- Public/private partnerships; and
- Conclusions and recommendations.

Presentation of selected experiences from Governments, international organizations, city associations and the private sector.

Day 2 – 16 May 2001

Morning session (9 a.m. to 12:00)

Declaration and follow-up actions

- Presentation of a Declaration;
- Discussion and adoption of recommendations and follow-up actions;
- Signing of city-to-city cooperation/partnerships; and
- Closing session

COOPERATION FAIR FOR CITIES SEEKING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

During the meeting there will also be opportunities aimed at facilitating *in situ* contacts between cities wishing to commit to new city-to-city cooperation (South-South and North-South). The results expected include concrete agreements for city-to-city cooperation concluded or, as a minimum, the start of discussions between interested cities leading to future cooperative agreements. Interested cities are invited to fill in the city profile, which is available from UNCTAD or from the following website: www.unctad.org

28 February 2001

EVENT: MIGRATION/REFUGEES ROUNDTABLE

FOCAL POINTS

Mr. Peter Schatzer

Director of External Relations Department
and
Regional Adviser for Europe

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Geneva

Tel: (+41 22) 717 92 78
E-mail: pschatzer@iom.int

Mr. Bryan Deschamp

Senior Special advisor
Office of the Director
Division of Operational Support

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Geneva

Tel: (+41 22) 739 8615
E-mail: deschamp@unhcr.ch

Mr. Manolo Abella

Chief of the International Migration Branch

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Geneva

Tel: (+41 22) 799 7892
E-mail: abella@ilo.org

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS FROM MIGRATION:

**THE INTERFACE BETWEEN MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT**

A. Rationale and Objectives

More than half of the world's 150 million migrants live in developing countries, with migration often occurring within the same continent. Over the next two decades, Least Developed Countries will continue to experience large-scale population movements, especially outward-bound. Migration frequently provides the only means to escape poverty or other forms of hardship at home, but in today's environment of economic globalisation it also provides a ready means for educated, skilled and qualified persons to expand their career potential. Today, also, some 47.5% of all migrants are women; and this increasing feminization of migration should be reflected in national and international policies on migration.

According to the World Bank's *World Development Report 1999/2000*, "cross-border migration, combined with the "brain drain" from developing to industrial countries will be one of the major forces shaping the landscape of the 21st century".

While orderly migration can help forge economic, social and cultural bonds between peoples and countries, migrants compelled or choosing to resort to irregular forms of migration may not easily avail themselves of the socio-economic benefits of regular migrants such as those guaranteed under the equal treatment principle prescribed by ILO's Convention No. 97 on Migration for Employment (Revised) and the Convention No. 143 Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions). Irregular migrants are also vulnerable to human rights abuses, especially if they fall victim to trafficking.

Just as the causes and effects of migration are complex, so are the linkages between migration and development. Large cross-border movements can be a response to the ever-increasing gaps in living standards and income between countries; and this often means a loss of human capital where it is most needed for development. They can also be the consequence of war or civil strife. A further distinctive form of cross-border movements is that of refugee outflows. All these distinctive categories of migratory movements have implications for development, be it for the country of origin or the receiving country. The Round Table on Migration and Refugees seeks to highlight the positive potential of these migratory phenomena, in spite of the negative circumstances that may have occasioned these movements, or under which migrants sometimes live and work.

For instance, emigration from Least Developed Countries can help alleviate internal imbalances, including population pressures; and the mobilisation of human and financial resources abroad can become an additional force for origin country development. Moreover, even refugees can be empowered to be positive contributors, on their return, to national development.

But cooperation and a broadening of perspective is needed to fully appreciate and develop the positive benefits of the different forms of migratory flows and reduce any potential divergence of interest on the part of generating and receiving countries. Recognizing common interests in migration matters, governments are increasingly negotiating strategies which both support the sustainable development of sending countries and the labour needs of receiving countries – while giving due regard to the rights of migrants. But more needs to be done, especially in promoting an enabling environment for returning migrants and refugees, thereby tapping the development potential of these returnees.

Negotiated migration arrangements need to grow out of integrated policy approaches that link migration to development cooperation, trade and investment, as well as demographic and social development at the national and international level. They can be most effective at regional levels where countries share common borders and similar migration challenges. As reported by the UN Secretary General: “if practical solutions are to be found, they are likely to arise from the consideration of the particular situation of groups of countries sharing similar positions or concerns within the global international migration system” (Report of the Secretary General to the UNGA, A/52/314, 1997).

A diminishing human resource base of skilled and active personnel due to emigration can seriously inhibit development. Many of the most skilled migrants never return, representing a considerable loss for the economies of their home countries. Moreover, refugees are often left to situations of increasing dependency, instead of using the circumstance of forced displacement as an occasion to empower them to contribute to their country of refuge, and eventually, to the development of their countries of origin, on return.

IOM's “return and reintegration of qualified nationals” programmes have for many years supported social and economic development of origin countries within the LDC community. Programmes in Africa, Asia and Latin America have sought to foster national human resource development and counter the negative effects of brain drain. In collaboration with governments of the country of origin, IOM identifies and selects suitable candidates, finances their return, and ensures their reintegration into both professional and personal environments, thus contributing to re-building a depleted human resource base and capacity.

UNHCR will use the occasion of the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries to call for a broader perspective in the way refugees are considered. In addition to being a humanitarian phenomenon calling for redress at the level of human rights, refugees, especially women, have the potential, through empowerment projects, to be active participants in building renewed nations on their return, not least as agents of food security.

B. The Migration/Refugees Round Table

IOM has proposed to organize, in cooperation with UNHCR and ILO, a Round Table on Migration and Refugees. This event will focus not only on the linkages between development and the movement of persons but also on concrete actions to manage

migration with the aim of preventing or at least minimizing related problems as well as maximizing the advantages of such movements.

Objectives

The M/R-RT has the following main objectives:

- To review the key aspects of the inter-relationships for LDCs between migratory movements and development
- To discuss the significance of migration of the highly skilled for the development of LDCs
- To review proposals for forging stronger links between LDCs and their Diaspora as well as practical measures to counter-act negative effects of the brain drain
- To highlight the interrelationship between forced migration, the asylum/migration nexus and the development of LDCs
- To underscore the development potential of refugees, if rightly empowered.

Methodology

Ministers and State Secretaries of Least Developed and Donor countries have been invited to attend the M/R-RT. In addition, experts from IOM, ILO, UNHCR and NGOs will provide inputs into the debate. A short clip from the movie "Ces Maliens de l'extérieur ...".will also be shown.

IOM's Deputy Director General, Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye (Senegal), will chair the Round Table.

After taking stock of some of the major issues, the discussion will focus on concrete best practices and proposals on how to utilize experience and foster resources gained by migrants (including refugees) from LDCs towards the development of their home countries.

Outputs

The M/R-RT will focus on a number of concrete outputs. IOM considers the Third Conference on Least Developed Countries as the fitting forum to present two new capacity-building and technical cooperation concepts that will foster the human resource capacities of Least Developed Countries. ILO and UNHCR have also presented two specific outputs.

1. *"Forging partnerships with nationals of Least Developed Countries in the Diaspora"*. This programme aims at the promotion of sustainable partnerships between LDC countries and their respective migrants in the Diaspora. Migrants in the Diaspora are usually committed to maintain links with their countries of origin and contribute to their development through financial, social and cultural resources. Often, however, they are not aware of the opportunity, or do not have the knowledge or contacts for doing so. The programme will collect relevant information through outreach and sensitization campaigns, the establishment of lists of investment priorities and partners interested in contributing towards development in Least Developed Countries.

2. *"Migration for Development in Least Developed Countries"*. This programme aims at enhancing LDCs' human resources through the transfer of know-how and expertise through actual or "virtual" return of those professionals from Least Developed Countries residing abroad. Flexible recruitment arrangements will ensure that experts whose skills are in high demand will not necessarily need to relocate or give up their positions overseas. The programme's strategies include permanent, temporary, periodic, or virtual transfers of knowledge according to the desires and requirements expressed by employers and professionals.
3. *"Mobilizing remittances for development of LDCs" (ILO)*. The programme aims at improving the capacity of the least developed countries to attract migrants' remittances and to encourage receiving households to allocate greater proportions for investment in self-employment. Aside from the establishment of use of sound macro policies there is a need for strengthening local-level institutions that promote savings, help expand credit facilities for small entrepreneurs, and extend appropriate technology advisory services.
4. *"Empowering refugee women as agents of food security" (UNHCR)*. In cooperation with a number of agencies, especially FAO, UNHCR proposes to enhance women's capacity in the LDCs, including that of returning refugees and the internally displaced, to be agents of food security. Rural women, in particular, play an important role in producing staple crops in LDCs, raising poultry and small animals (sheep, goats, rabbits and guinea pigs), and providing labour for post-harvest activities. Wars, increasing rural-to urban migration of men in search of paid employment, together with rising mortality attributed largely to HIV/AIDS, have led to an increase in the number of female-headed households in the developing world. This "feminization of agriculture" has placed a considerable burden on women's capacity to produce, provide and prepare food. The envisaged project, financed through a trust fund managed by FAO, and jointly directed by FAO and UNHCR, in cooperation with national bodies, including NGOs, other relevant United Nations agencies and bilateral agencies of donor countries, would have distinct, yet related components, focusing on land rights, empowerment of women, micro-finance projects, and food production.

C. Task Managers and Inter-Agency Collaboration

IOM, ILO and UNHCR, each operating in their fields of competence, are linked by 50 years of cooperation in migration management. Depending on the focus of specific follow-up activities, they will – jointly and separately – undertake projects that will require LDCs and industrialized countries not only to buy into concepts but also respond with political and donor support. The role of the business sector as an economic actor and a force driving economic change will be of primary importance.

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Parallel Event

16 May 2001, 10.00 – 13.00

HARNESSING DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS FROM MIGRATION:

THE INTERFACE BETWEEN MIGRATION, DISPLACEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduction - the context Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director General, IOM
(Chair)

Part I - National perspectives from countries of origin, of destination and donors

- H.E. M.A. Mannan
Minister of Labour and Employment
People's Republic of Bangladesh
- *H.E. Makhtar Diop
Minister of Economy and Finance
Senegal
- H.E. Eddy Boutmans
State Secretary for Cooperation and Development
Belgium
- *Hon. Basil Pesambili Mramba, MP
Minister of Finance
The United Republic of Tanzania
 - *H. E. Ahmed Salim Salim
Secretary General
Organization for African Unity
Ethiopia
 - *Ms. Graca Machel
South Africa
 - Mr. Glen Lindholm,
Director General of the Department of External Cooperation and Development
Finland

Part II - The contribution of Migrants and Returnees to Development

- Prof. Joseph Ki – Zerbo
CEDA
Burkina Faso

- Mr. Manolo Abella
ILO
Switzerland
- Mr. Gervais Appave
Coordinator, Migration Policy and Research Project
IOM
Switzerland
- Mr. Jean-Francois Durieux
Regional Representative a.i.
UNHCR
Belgium

* invited

EVENT: BUSINESS SECTOR ROUND TABLE

FOCAL POINT

Mr. Ashish Shah

International Trade Centre (ITC)
54-56, rue de Montbrillant

Tel: (+41 22) 730 03 51

E-mail: shah@intracen.org

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries
Converting LDC Export Opportunities to Business: A Business Sector Strategic Response

A. Rationale and Objectives

Export development for many LDCs is one of the keys to national development and poverty reduction. Export strategies are a fundamental starting point, but few LDCs have established an adequate response to the challenges of developing a national export effort through a public-private sector partnership; of integrating trade development into national development priorities; or of developing and maintaining a programme of qualitative support to the export community. The private sector, particularly the small and medium scale enterprise sector, is weak and fragmented. Business institutions are often not equipped to play an effective role in strategy formulation and public-private sector cooperation is fragile. Consequently national advocacy for trade development is not evident.

One of the challenges of the LDC Conference to be held in Brussels in May 2001 is to identify and disseminate best practices for development, taking into account actual bottlenecks in LDCs. The Conference offers a unique opportunity to review the conditions under which trade can materialise, to expose tested, practical export development approaches in LDCs and to make plans for the next 10-Year Programme of Action.

It is proposed to organise a Business Sector Round Table (BSRT) on “Converting Export Opportunities Into Business in LDCs”. This event will be embedded in the overall mandate and preparations for the Conference. In particular, it shall facilitate adoption of best practices in LDC export strategy and programme formulation, give impetus to trade development and help mobilise resources for the Integrated Framework Trust Fund as well as to support implementation of completed strategies.

B. The Business Sector Round Table (BSRT)

Objective

The BSRT shall have two main objectives: **Firstly**, it will provide a forum particularly for the business community in LDCs to interact with public sector officials and other stakeholders on issues, problems and best practices relating to export development and strategy formulation. It will therefore provide an opportunity for businesses to dialogue as equal partners in shaping national development and export strategies, particularly against the backdrop of declining ODA trends in LDCs and to emphasize their role as the driving force behind the integration of LDCs in the multilateral trading system. **Secondly**, it will bring export/import opportunities and experiences in the products/sectors of greatest potential to the attention of LDC exporters, international buyers and investors and help to integrate them into export

strategy formulation processes in LDCs. Export experience in LDCs reveals not only problem areas, but also opportunities. Within an analytical framework *inter alia* of market trends/product upgrading potential/supply constraints, sector-specific experience will be documented and presented for discussion.

Methodology

The BSRT will be attended by a mix of some 25 senior trade officials and 25 private sector participants from selected LDCs as well as potential buyers and investors from developed countries. Donor agencies (both bilateral and multilateral) who have been involved in export strategy formulation or in funding of subsequent trade-related technical assistance programmes emanating from such strategies shall also participate in this event.

The main focus of the discussions and presentations will be on how to convert export opportunities in LDCs into business by finding strategic solutions to critical export bottlenecks. The discussions will be fully embedded in the context of best practices in strategy formulation which will provide the overall framework for successful business ventures in LDCs.

Outputs

The BSRT will focus on three concrete outputs. While two outputs will be prepared for discussion at the BSRT, the third one shall be finalised after the BSRT and will be based on the completion of the first two outputs.

For Discussion at the BSRT

(1) Developing export strategies with LDCs and presenting them at the BSRT

Work is under way in some 16 LDCs in the area of strategy development in the context of preparing for the planned Round-tables of the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries (IF). This has resulted in a number of key processes leading to strategy formulation from which valuable lessons can be drawn. Some of this work, being undertaken under the IF and JITAP, needs to be developed further for presentation at the BSRT. Strategy formulation work is well advanced for some ten of the countries and up to five maybe taken to a stage which is suitable for presentation and discussion at the BSRT, while processes under way in the others will provide an additional platform for discussion. The key underlying theme of the strategy work will be the development of the private sector in LDCs and the fostering of effective public sector-private sector partnerships in strategy formulation. Another important theme will be the mainstreaming of trade, *inter alia*, through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) mechanism of the World Bank, in those countries where it exists. The strategies developed will be supported by an action programme for facilitating implementation in the form of costed project ideas that will help mobilise resources from donors.

The work done is expected to lay the foundation for formulating export strategies and related programmes to implement the adopted strategies in LDCs for the next decade. Best practices in arriving at realistic, implementable national export strategies will be

reviewed from both the LDC and donor perspective. In doing so, LDCs will expose, discuss and disseminate best practices in formulating export strategies which would be an important learning experience for other LDCs who are either in the process of mainstreaming their own trade development/export strategies or are yet to embark upon this process.

At the BSRT, donors may wish to indicate their support and its justification inter alia to convey their priorities to those LDCs in which export strategy and programme formulation processes are yet to be undertaken or are under way. Several cases of donor support for export programmes could be reviewed.

The BSRT will hence provide a valuable platform that will generate debate among the key stakeholders in the LDCs. It will play a signal role in informing the policy-making processes that operate in these countries thereby ensuring that the evolving policy framework in these countries is not put together in isolation from practical realities faced by business enterprises who are the actual exporters or from broader national development priorities. The work undertaken will also assist in formulating the next 10 year Programme of Action for the LDCs, preparation of which is already under way.

(2) Analysis of export opportunities in LDCs highlighting success stories of how problems faced by them were surmounted by entrepreneurs

This work will be a main topic for discussion at the BSRT. It will give a sense of direction to entrepreneurs from LDCs for developing viable export businesses. It will identify successful approaches to exporting in sectors of key interest and potential in LDCs. It will also indicate the type of support needed by them in realising the benefits from opportunities that are available. It will spell out strategic approaches to product and market development for selected countries based on cases and best practices, and provide a strategic review of ones that may prove to be attractive. It will draw upon the experiences and insights gained from the LDCs' Private Sector Symposium to be held in Oslo in January 2001 in the context of the preparations for the Brussels Conference.

For Publication Subsequent to the BSRT

(3) A Publication on Converting LDC Export Opportunities into Business: A Strategic Response

The outcome of the deliberations will culminate in the preparation of the new publication/guide for LDCs entitled “Converting LDC Export Opportunities into Business, a Strategic Response” which will bring together all the different experiences and insights gained from the conclusions of the Oslo and Brussels events, from export strategy formulation processes in LDCs, as appropriate, from the conclusions and case studies of ITC’s 1999 Executive Forum on “Redefining Trade Promotion, The Need for a Strategic Response” as well as from other sources.

The publication will include:

(a) A review of markets for 10 product areas of particular relevance to LDCs, in depth analysis of conditions for success and failure (with emphasis on national supply constraints) and future outlook in these sectors, drawing on ITC’s strategic market tools and its product expertise and networks in exporting countries and target markets. Preparations will include a search for success in overcoming constraints. Insights under ITC’s commodities, handicrafts, textiles and garments and services programmes will be of particular relevance.

(b) Identification of strategic decisions required by private and public sector actors to convert potential into actual business in the identified sectors, integrating substantive analytical work presently underway in LDCs and elsewhere. Issues for discussion will include trade support service requirements, export finance alternatives and measures to improve access to technology and technology upgrading, including investment-related issues.

The above practical issues on products, export opportunities and markets of interest to LDCs will be complemented by a chapter on best practices in strategy formulation including both process-related issues and substantive aspects of strategy formulation.

C. *Bringing the IF into the LDC Conference Processes*

As the LDC Conference Preparatory Process begins to move into full swing, the IF is set to focus on mainstreamed, trade strategy formulation. Funding for related activities is being proposed in the form of a new Integrated Framework Trust Fund, in addition to work already underway in some 16 LDCs on trade strategy formulation started under the first phase of the IF. This work must be fed into priority-setting, national development strategies. While seeking resources for the Trust Fund, limited available resources will be used in the selected countries.

It is proposed to bring the IF at the heart of the preparations for the BSRT in particular and the LDC Conference in general, in three different ways: first, by illuminating at the BSRT national export strategies and experiences in the selected LDCs and related action programmes; secondly by bringing these experiences into the interactive debates at the Conference and thirdly, by mobilising resources for the Trust Fund and eventually for project ideas developed for the implementation of strategies that have been adopted.

D. Task Managers and Inter-Agency Collaboration

ITC will be joined by partner agencies that will contribute to the preparation of the technical documents or provide the framework for mainstreaming trade (World Bank). It will coordinate the substantive inputs as well as logistical preparations. Involvement of the WTO, as Chair of the IAWG, and close cooperation with other IF partners will be important.

Fund-raising will be sought from donor agencies (multilateral and bilateral) and civil society institutions alike (e.g. business federations, private firms etc.). These resources would be used for all the different activities relating to the preparations for the BSRT such as strategy formulation, preparation of background papers and travel and DSA of participants. Potential sponsors include the Agence intergouvernementale de la francophonie and the Institute for Leadership Development.

Brief Note on Business Sector Round Table

Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

1. Background and Objectives

The Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries shall be held in Brussels from 14-20 May, 2001. The International Trade Centre, in collaboration with its partners in the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries (IF), will organise a Business Sector Round Table (BSRT) at this Conference. This one day event shall have two main objectives: **Firstly**, it will provide a forum particularly for the business community in LDCs to interact with public sector officials and other stakeholders on issues, problems and best practices relating to export development and strategy formulation. **Secondly**, it will bring export/import opportunities and experiences in the products/sectors of greatest potential to the attention of LDC exporters, international buyers and investors and help to integrate them into export strategy formulation processes in LDCs.

2. Outputs

The BSRT will focus on three concrete outputs. These outputs are as follows:

- (1) Developing export strategies with LDCs and presenting aspects of them at the BSRT
- (2) Analysis of export opportunities for selected products in LDCs highlighting success stories of how problems faced by them were surmounted by entrepreneurs
- (3) A Publication on “Converting LDC Export Opportunities into Business: A Strategic Response”

The finalisation of the third output is dependent on the successful completion of the first two outputs.

3. Participants

The BSRT will be attended by a mix of some 25 private sector participants from selected LDCs (including successful entrepreneurs who will make presentations) and 25 senior trade officials from LDCs as well as a group of about 15 potential buyers and investors from developed countries. All the six core agencies of the IF and about ten donor agencies (both bilateral and multilateral) who have been involved in export strategy formulation or in funding of subsequent trade-related technical assistance programmes emanating from such strategies shall also participate in this event.

4. Proposed Agenda and Working Sessions

The main focus of the discussions and presentations will be on how to convert export opportunities in LDCs into business by finding strategic solutions to critical export bottlenecks. The discussions will be fully embedded in the context of best

practices in strategy formulation which will provide the overall framework for successful business ventures in LDCs. It is proposed to have presentations and discussions on five main themes (Annex I). Whereas the morning session will be devoted to the analysis of products and markets of best export interest to LDCs, the presentation of success stories by LDC entrepreneurs as well as a thorough analysis of critical constraints and remedial measures, the second (afternoon) session shall be devoted to export strategy formulation processes in LDCs and their mainstreaming into national development strategies. LDCs development partners will have an opportunity to express their views on the delivery and coordination aspects of trade-related technical assistance in LDCs.

5. *Expected Results*

A. Session on Export Strategy Formulation

The key underlying theme of the strategy work will be the development of the private sector in LDCs and the fostering of effective public sector-private sector partnerships in strategy formulation. Another important theme will be the mainstreaming of trade, inter alia, through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) mechanism of the World Bank, in those countries where it exists. The strategies developed will be supported by an action programme for facilitating implementation in the form of costed project ideas that will help mobilise resources from donors.

The work done is expected to lay the foundation for formulating export strategies and related programmes to implement the adopted strategies in LDCs for the next decade. Best practices in arriving at realistic, implementable national export strategies will be reviewed from both the LDC and donor perspective. In doing so, LDCs will expose, discuss and disseminate best practices in formulating export strategies which would be an important learning experience for other LDCs who are either in the process of mainstreaming their own trade development/export strategies or are yet to embark upon this process.

The BSRT will hence provide a valuable platform that will generate debate among the key stakeholders in the LDCs. It will play a signal role in informing the policy-making processes that operate in these countries thereby ensuring that the evolving policy framework in these countries is not put together in isolation from practical realities faced by business enterprises who are the actual exporters or from broader national development priorities. The work undertaken will also assist in formulating the next 10 year Programme of Action for the LDCs.

B. Working Session on analysis of products and sectors of export relevance to LDCs

This work will give a sense of direction to entrepreneurs from LDCs for developing viable export businesses. It will identify successful approaches to exporting in sectors of key interest and potential in LDCs. It will also indicate the type of support needed by them in realising the benefits from opportunities that are available. It will spell out strategic approaches to product and market development for

selected countries based on cases and best practices, and provide a strategic review of ones that may prove to be attractive.

It will provide a review of markets for selected product areas of particular relevance to LDCs, in depth analysis of conditions for success and failure (with emphasis on national supply constraints) and future outlook in these sectors, drawing on ITC's strategic market tools and its product expertise and networks in exporting countries and target markets. Moreover, the work will help identify strategic decisions required by private and public sector actors to convert potential into actual business in the selected sectors.

6. *The BSRT and the IF*

It is proposed to bring the IF at the heart of the preparations for the BSRT in particular and the LDC Conference in general, in three different ways: first, by illuminating at the BSRT national export strategies and experiences in selected LDCs and related action programmes; secondly by bringing these experiences into the interactive debates at the Conference and thirdly, by mobilising resources for the Trust Fund and eventually for project ideas developed for the implementation of strategies that have been adopted.

7. **Task Managers and Inter-Agency Collaboration**

ITC will be joined by partner agencies that will contribute to the preparation of the technical documents or provide the framework for mainstreaming trade (World Bank and UNDP). It will coordinate the substantive inputs as well as logistical preparations. Involvement of the WTO, as Chair of the IAWG, and close cooperation with other IF partners will be important.

Direct Fax No.: 41-22-730 0570
Direct Tel. No.: 41-22-730 0351
E-mail: vijay@intracen.org or shah@intracen.org

FAX

To-À: List attached	From-De: Martin V. Dagata Director Division of Technical Cooperation Coordination
Fax No: cc: Local UNDP	File Ref: T2/19/5 LDCs
Date: Page(s) 1 - 11 Code: Financed by UNCTAD	Project Ref: Regular Budget
	Registry No.: DTCC

**Re: Business Sector Round Table (BSRT) at the Third United Nations
Conference on Least Developed Countries, Brussels, 16 May 2001**

Dear

The Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) will be held in Brussels from 14-20 May 2001, and the International Trade Centre, in collaboration with other partners, will organise a Business Sector Round Table (BSRT) on 16 May 2001 at this Conference. The meeting will provide a forum for creative dialogue to some seventy-five participants, comprising exporters and senior policy-makers from LDCs, buyers of LDC products from developed countries and LDCs' bilateral and multilateral development partners involved in trade development.

The event aims to show that despite the serious supply-side and market access bottlenecks faced by entrepreneurs from LDCs, opportunities in the emerging global economy can be seized by them, through innovative and pro-active measures. The main focus of the discussions and presentations will be on how export opportunities in LDCs may be converted into business, by finding strategic solutions to practical problems being faced by entrepreneurs. They will feature analyses of emerging trends in international trade (including analyses of specific product groups), of economic and policy imperatives derived from integrating markets, and of best practices in export strategy formulation in LDCs. At the Round Table, successful entrepreneurs will illustrate how they have succeeded in overcoming trade barriers, through innovative firm-specific and capacity-building interventions. Portraying these successes within an analytical framework for export development can act as a guide for LDC governments and entrepreneurs, and can provide a road map for developing successful firm-level export development plans, as well as efficient sectoral and national export development strategies. LDCs' development partners will have the opportunity to illustrate how they have successfully helped exporters in LDCs to improve their export performance, through focused match-making, business development and export promotion technical assistance programmes. The experience in formulating export strategies for LDCs to provide export impetus and a framework of support for exporters will also be reviewed.

We would like to take the opportunity to invite you to participate in the Business Sector Round Table. Your in-depth knowledge of and involvement in strategic and policy issues and your commitment to creating an enabling environment for export development in LDCs will provide important insights to participants at the Round Table.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will pay for your travel to Brussels and the daily subsistence allowance (per diem) in accordance with UN Rules and Procedures. You will be responsible for securing an entry visa to Belgium, if necessary, and may use this letter as a supporting document. Since there will be some informal pre- and post-event consultations, please plan to arrive in Brussels by the evening of 14 May; you could leave as early as the afternoon of 17 May.

A brief paper on the objectives, format and expected outputs of the Round Table as well as a tentative annotated agenda is attached for your information.

We should appreciate it, if you would inform us, at your earliest convenience, whether it will be possible for you to attend the meeting on 16 May 2001. Upon receipt of your written confirmation, we shall make other documentation and details on the meeting available to you.

Best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Martin V. Dagata

Director

Division of Technical Cooperation Coordination

Annotated Programme for Business Sector Round Table

Converting LDC Export Opportunities Into Business: A Strategic Response

Inaugural Session

14.00 – 14.15

Welcome Statement
Mr. Jean-Denis Bélisle, Executive Director, ITC
Mike Moore, Director General, WTO
C. Magariños, Director General, UNIDO

14.15 – 17.00

Session 1: *Products and Markets for LDCs Exports: Opportunities and Success Stories*

Moderator:

(To be identified)

14.15 – 14.30

Market Analysis Section, Division for Product and Market Development, ITC

Annotation: *This session will present the analysis of products/sectors of export relevance to LDCs. It will be based on the work undertaken by ITC. The presentations will highlight the following:*

- (1) *Overall trade trends in LDCs as well as specific trends by product and country*
- (2) *Reasons for the selection of products/sectors and a thorough analysis of why these products have a good export potential for LDCs*
- (3) *Quantitative analysis of market trends for the selected products including trade flow analysis for LDCs and indicative implications of current market trends for LDCs export structure*

14.30 – 15.00

Discussions

15.00 – 15.45

Converting Export Opportunities Into Business: Issue based presentations by entrepreneurs

Issue 1: From comparative to competitive advantage
Issue 2: Moving up the value chain
Issue 3: Niche marketing and product innovation
Issue 4: Overcoming technical and other barriers
Issue 5: The services revolution

Annotation: This session will include a thematic analysis of how export opportunities can be tapped. These discussions will draw on experience in the selected sectors (themes are now being further refined). Each of these themes/issues will be illustrated by concrete examples from LDC entrepreneurs in different sectors who have successfully converted opportunities into business. Presentations will include an analysis of the most critical supply-side bottlenecks for expansion and diversification of LDCs exports as well as demand-side constraints with particular reference to market access problems for LDCs.

15.45 – 16.45 Discussions

16.45 – 17.00 Summing up: Addressing critical constraints to export development and converting export opportunities into business in LDCs: A road map for entrepreneurs.

Annotation: This presentation will summarise the key issues emanating from the discussions under Session 1. It will highlight export opportunities and talk about how LDC entrepreneurs have been able to take advantage of opportunities and overcome critical constraints. Having said that, the presentation will then create the bridge between Sessions 1 and 2 by emphasising the fact that although some entrepreneurs have been successful on their own merit, there is a need for an enabling environment and programmes to enhance the competitiveness of exporting enterprises in LDCs.

17.00 – 17.15 Coffee Break

17.15 – 19.45 **Session 2: Creating An Enabling Environment for Export Competitiveness in LDCs**

17.15 – 17.20 Introduction by Moderator (approximately 5 minutes)
Moderator: Minister of Trade, Mr. Musa Sillah, The Gambia

Annotation: The moderator shall make the transition from Session 1 to Session 2. He will emphasise that Session 1 has shown that “success” stories of LDC export entrepreneurs do exist, that LDCs have comparative advantages in a wide range of sectors and LDC entrepreneurs are able to convert export opportunities into export business. The main theme of Session 2 will be on creating conditions at country-level so that similar successes can be achieved. This session will also discuss steps which need to be taken to ensure that new success stories also benefit the poor and reinforce LDCs’ national strategies for reducing poverty. This session is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the enabling environment required to allow exports from LDCs to prosper – including interventions at the macro, meso and micro levels. The second part discusses the need for LDCs to develop an overall vision and strategy for the development of their trade sector – encompassing actions on both cross-cutting issues and selected individual target sectors – and to link that vision to the development strategy of the country (so-called “mainstreaming”).

17.20 – 18.20 **Session 2A: Enabling Environment**

17.20 – 17.30 The Environment for Trade Sector Development (Moderator)

Annotation: *There are three principal cornerstones to an effective enabling environment for fostering rapid development of competitive export firms in LDCs:*

- (1) an effective macro-policy framework including positive trade policy and market access conditions;*
- (2) an effective infrastructure of trade support services; and,*
- (3) an effective entrepreneurship and investment climate in the export business sector.*

The presentation by the moderator will refer to each of them. At the macro level, requirements include, inter alia, macro-economic stability and a reasonably stable (and competitive) exchange rate (without which private investment is unlikely to occur) as well as favorable market access conditions. At the meso level, requirements include effective trade facilitation services and trade development services (such as trade promotion, trade financing, standards and packaging, trade information, etc) without which exporters are at a competitive disadvantage. At the micro level, requirements include a positive investment framework, development of entrepreneurship, HRD, the rule of law. Strong linkage to good governance can also be mentioned (e.g. rising business costs due to weak rule of law including absence of legal framework and lack of enforcement, excessive corruption, etc.)

Over the past 15 years attention has been focussed on reforms at the macro level (macro and trade reform under Structural Adjustment, market access opening under UR and regional integration). Although many issues remain to be resolved in this area, it is indispensable that attention be directed towards building institutional and human capacities for trade support and building export supply capacity, in the years ahead.

This presentation shall discuss the importance of strengthening LDC stakeholders' ability to shape good trade policy and negotiate favorable market access conditions (e.g. in the new WTO round, in bilateral and regional integration agreements), the use of the "network approach" to develop TSI support capacity, and the importance of the investment regime, the business legal environment (including enforcement), PSD programmes and sectoral action plans to promote investment and entrepreneurship for export.

The points raised in this introductory presentation are going to be illustrated with three case examples: (1) Uganda, to show how a combination of good macro, trade policy, meso and investment level reforms have created conditions for rapid growth of FDI and rapid growth of non-traditional exports; (2) the example of Dutch TA in area of match-making to favor development of investment for exports in LDCs; and (3) the example of an effective meso-level trade support service programme in an LDC (to be determined)

17.30 – 17.40 Case Example 1: Uganda

Possible speaker:

Annotation: *This presentation will show concretely how Uganda went about addressing a number of key enabling factors in the early 1990s to reform and open up its economy, to encourage investment in the export sector, and to support the efforts of exporters. Four or five points to be highlighted might include:*

1. *Removal of anti-export biases in trade policy in early 1990s such as elimination of government coffee board and coffee producer reference price system that penalized growers;*
2. *Investment Act, creation of Uganda Investment Authority,*
3. *Return of investment nationalized under Amin regime to their rightful owners,*
4. *Reform of Customs operation – including explicit crack-down on corruption*
5. *Extensive liberalization of air transport leading to build up of air-cargo capacity required by a number of export investment projects*

Some measures of expansion of export-oriented investment, including FDI, could be presented briefly together with measures of growth of non-traditional exports.

17.40 – 17.50 *Case Example 2: The Dutch Programme for Cooperation with Emerging Markets (PSOM)*

Speaker: **Mr. Bas Pulles**, Manager, Emerging Markets, Senter International
Mr. André Dellevoet, Senior Advisor PSOM and Africa Coordinator, Senter International

Annotation: *Senter will introduce the concept of match-making programmes between private companies in developed and least developed countries; will make the case for development institutions to foster these types of linkages; discuss the principal technical aspects of such programmes; and their relevance to development. The presenters will also discuss the PSOM programme specifically, present a few country examples, and draw up lessons learned.*

17.50 – 18.00 *Case Example 3 (Trade Finance)*

Speaker: *To be identified*

Annotation: *The presentation by an LDC government or private sector representative will highlight how the trade support service programme has had a direct and beneficial impact on the export competitiveness of exporters in the country.*

18.00 – 18.20 Discussion on Session 2A

18.20 – 19.55 **Session 2B: Trade Sector Strategy Formulation and Mainstreaming**

18.20 – 18.30 **Introduction by Moderator**

Annotation: *The second half of the session focuses on requirements for creating a framework to support the development of an enabling environment – namely the formulation of a “trade sector strategy.” In addition, the session explores how such strategies can be formulated to support the national development objectives of poverty reduction – so called “mainstreaming.”*

LDCs have limited institutional, human and financial resources and the needs of an enabling environment are many and wide-ranging. There is a need therefore to focus

“resource use” and “establish priorities.” One way to do this is for LDCs to develop a “Vision” – in other words a strategy for the development of their trade sector that stakeholders can utilize to establish priorities for action and support. Two case examples will illustrate how the process of trade sector strategy can be used to develop ownership by national stakeholders and provide a basis for ranking priorities of action. The first case looks at the process of pro-poor trade sector strategy formulation in Cambodia (through the eyes of the Government) and the second case at trade sector strategy formulation in Burundi (through the eyes of the private sector).

Mainstreaming, or ensuring that trade sector development is supportive of poverty reduction objectives, shall be examined through three case examples. The first case examples include the mainstreaming of private sector development and trade sector development in Guinea’s poverty reduction strategy. The second case shows at a micro (enterprise) level how a large scale private sector contract farming scheme in Zambia can be made to have immediate direct impact on large numbers of poor. The third case describes current thinking on how trade sector development is to be mainstreamed through the WB-IMF Poverty reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).

18.30 –19.00 Strategy: Developing a Shared Vision

18.30 – 18.40 Case Example 1: Foundations for a Shared Vision: Process, Partnership and Essential Elements for Trade Sector Strategy Formulation and Implementation in Cambodia Cambodia

Speaker: Sok Siphana, Secretary of State, Ministry of Commerce, Cambodia

Annotation: This session will address the following issues: What is a Trade Sector Strategy (content) and why does it matter: cross-cutting issues and sectoral action plans; linkage between trade sector strategy and national development strategy. How does a country develop a Trade Sector Strategy (process): stakeholder ownership, capacity-building and capacity-utilisation, sustainability.

The presentation will be based on the example of Cambodia and will show concretely how Cambodia is going about formulating its Pro-Poor Trade Sector Strategy. **First**, preparation of a preliminary Concept Paper by MoC as a first step to mobilize attention within government, in the business community, and among local donors. **Next**, adoption of concept paper by Government followed by setting up inter-ministerial committee and government-donor working group. **Then**, efforts to bring stakeholders on board to develop sectoral action plans and identify priorities for cross-cutting issues. This is **followed by** government-business sector diagnostic work leading to identification of issues and sectors, the preparation of a Pro-Poor Trade Sector Strategy, and the formulation of a plan of Action in the context of PRSPs.

Working with donors: presentation of the Concept paper to semi-annual donor meeting; use of ongoing consultative process with local donors; use of the CG process; use of other donor venues (e.g. LDC III, Financing for Development etc.)

18.40- 18.50 Case Example 2: Burundi Business Community
Participation in Private Sector Development (PSD) Strategy

Speaker: Mr. Adrien Sibomana, Président de GEXHOBU, Burundi.

***Annotation:** This presentation is to focus on the involvement of the Burundi business community in the preparation of the country's pro-poor PSD Strategy with the main focus on export business development as viewed through the eyes of a Burundian exporter. Mechanisms for participation in the identification of issues, identification of sectors, formulation of action plan, identification of possible donor-funded technical assistance, involvement of individual enterprises and business representative organizations in various stages of the work, etc.*

18.50 – 19.20 Make Trade Work for the Poor

18.50 – 19.00 Case Example 1: Mainstreaming in Guinea
(UNDP/UNIDO)

Speaker: Representative of Private Sector in Guinea

***Annotation:** This presentation is to describe the work of UNDP and UNIDO in mainstreaming PSD – with a heavy component on PSD for export – in Guinea's national development strategy.*

The presentation could highlight the key substantive issues, the process used to promote ownership and sustainability of the mainstreaming effort, the outcome thus far, and lessons learned.

19.00 – 19.10 Case Example 2: Zambia

Speaker: Mr. Marc Terken, Managing Director, Cheetah Paprika, Zambia

***Annotation:** This presentation will give a practical example of how one enterprise can contribute to poverty reduction in a very large community through exports. The presenter will provide a short description of the project, international market demand for the product, nature of the relationship between the exporter and the farmers under contracts (training, technical support, seeds etc.).*

The project presentation will be followed by a few indicators of impact on the poor, including number of farmers included in the scheme (and expected growth), \$ yield per acre of land under contract compared to \$ yield under previous crop (presumably maize), and other positive impacts that might be identified.

19.10 – 19.20 Case Example 3: Mainstreaming Trade in National Poverty
Reduction Strategy through the PRSP

Speaker: Representative of World Bank

Annotation: *This presentation would have two parts. The first part would explain the new emphasis on national poverty reduction strategies in LDCs and their reflection in key policy documents of countries such as indicative National Development Plans, PRSPs and others.*

The second part would look at mainstreaming of trade in national poverty reduction strategies including: (1) trade sector strategy as one cornerstone of national development strategies; (2) heavy emphasis on trade sector development favoring the poor; (3) implementation and monitoring of trade sector strategy in line with implementation and monitoring of national poverty reduction strategies; (4) importance of country ownership and sustainability of objectives identified in trade sector strategy; etc.

19.20 – 19.55 **Discussions on Session 2B**

19.55 – 20.00 **Closing Remarks :** J.D. Bélisle, Executive Director, ITC

EVENT: YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

FOCAL POINT

Mr. Sujit Chowdhury

Executive Director
of

The Institute for Leadership Development

275, York Lanes, York university
4700 Keele Street
North York- Ontario- Canada
M3J 1P3

Tel: (+416) 650-8081

Fax: (+416) 736-5693

E-mail: sujitc@yorku.ca

8th World Summit of Young Entrepreneurs
An Integral Part of the 3rd UN Conference on Least Countries in
Partnership with UNCTAD

Theme: A New Way Forward
International Joint Venture Opportunities through
Export Market and Digital Collaboration

Venue:
7 to 20 May 2001
European Union - European Parliament
Brussels - Belgium

Organized by : The Institute for Leadership Development
&
The Foundation for Tomorrow's Leaders

Please Contact:

Institute for Leadership Development
A United Nations Global Partnership Institute to Translate Ideas Into Events
To Serve People

Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Tel: (416) 650-8081
Fax: (416) 736-5693

E-mail: ild@yorku.ca

Website: www.ildglobal.org

Pages 48 to 63
are not reproduced on the Internet
for technical reasons

EVENT: THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

FOCAL POINTS

Mr. Jean Gurunlian

Tel: (+41 22) 907 55 44

E-mail: jean.gurunlian@unctad.org

Office: E-7082/84, UNCTAD, Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

Ms. Cecile Barayre-El Shami

Tel: (+41 22) 907 53 69

E-mail: cecile.barayre@unctad.org

Office: E-7065, UNCTAD, Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

**THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

Parallel Event: Integrating the LDCs into the Digital Economy

A. BACKGROUND

The nearly negligible share of the enterprises of the least developed countries in global electronic commerce and the extremely limited extent to which they are implementing e-business practices, threaten to cut the LDCs off from what is expected to be a major factor of growth and development in the near future. The structural weaknesses of the LDCs account in part for their difficulties in acceding to the new means of creating and distributing value that are being generated thanks to e-commerce. However, the widespread perception that e-commerce is not relevant for the LDCs is a wrong one, and should be dispelled. Electronic commerce creates new opportunities for the LDCs to enter into new areas of activity, particularly in the services sector, in which they may have a comparative advantage from which they have not yet benefited. Awareness of this potential among public and private sector decision makers, and partnerships among them to address specific bottlenecks affecting e-commerce growth have proved to be essential elements of the strategies of those developing countries that are succeeding in reaping the potential of electronic commerce. The objective of this parallel event is to take advantage of the opportunity created by the Conference on the Least Developed Countries to bring to the attention of governments and business leaders the new potential for economic diversification and growth that participation in the global digital economy represents for the LDCs. This potential will be illustrated by concrete initiatives to be launched at the Conference, in partnership with players from the civil society and the private sector to assist the LDCs in creating an environment in which e-commerce and e-business can develop there.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PARALLEL EVENT

The proposed parallel event will focus on the specific concerns of the LDCs in the area of e-commerce and e-business, allowing participants to receive first-hand information about the most salient trends in the sector that can affect the development of e-commerce in their countries and projecting to the global business community the message that e-commerce creates new possibilities for profitable investment in the LDCs.

The event will consist of a series of panel discussions. Participants in each panel will include successful dot.coms from LDCs and other developing countries, together with companies, institutions and/or non-governmental organizations willing to contribute to initiatives addressing specific problems of the LDCs in the area of e-commerce. The outcome of each panel would be the announcement of concrete commitments on

the side the counterparts from developed countries and/or more advanced developing countries concerning the following:

- (a) Means to increase the Internet visibility and the volume of e-business of LDC firms.
- (b) Telecommunications and information technology infrastructure for e-commerce.
- (c) Human resources development and training.
- (d) Legal framework for e-commerce.

At least four concrete, action-oriented initiatives to address specific concerns of the LDCs in areas such as those listed above will be prepared for their launch at the Conference. They should involve private companies, NGOs and academic centres in developed countries and/or advanced developing countries and public and/or private counterparts in the LDCs.

C. OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

Objective 1

To change existing perceptions among decision-makers in both developed and developing countries concerning the capacity of the LDCs to participate in, and benefit from the digital economy. This will be achieved by (1) creating awareness of the implications of e-commerce for the development prospects of the LDCs, particularly among the ministers, business and civil society representatives that will participate at the Third United Nations Conference on the LDCs, and (2) projecting to the international community in a broader sense the message that the growth of the “digital economy” is opening new possibilities for economic diversification and growth in the LDCs.

Output:

A one-day event to be held during the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Brussels, 13 to 20 May 2001). The event will consist of a series of interactive discussions involving panels of successful dot.coms from the LDCs, private firms, institutions and NGOs willing to participate in initiatives to address specific problems of the LDCs in the field of e-commerce, and the ministers participating in the Conference. The event will serve as the launching pad of these initiatives and as a means to attract the attention of governments, business and the civil society at large to the concerns, needs and opportunities of the LDCs in the field of electronic commerce and the importance of building partnerships with all players concerned in order to create a supportive environment for e-commerce in the LDCs.

Activities related to this output:

- (a) Identification of participants for the panel discussions concerning the following topics related to e-commerce and e-business in the LDCs:

Means to increase the Internet visibility and the volume of e-business of LDC firms; telecommunications and information technology infrastructure for e-commerce human resources development and training; and adaptation of the legal framework of the LDCs to the requirements of e-commerce.

- (b) Briefing of the potential participants and engagement of a sufficient number of them for each of the proposed panels.
- (c) Preparation of information material on the topics to be covered at the event and on the practical initiatives to be launched.
- (d) Establishment and implementation of a media strategy to ensure the maximum possible coverage of the event by the media of both developed and developing countries.
- (e) Identification of moderators (media professionals) for each of the interactive discussions to be held at the event and obtain their commitment to participate.
- (f) Performance of all the necessary logistic arrangements to ensure the travel, accommodation, etc of LDC participants in the panel.
- (g) Conduct of a survey among participants from the LDCs in order to evaluate the relevance and usefulness of the information provided to them in the course of the event.

Objective 2

To provide practical illustrations of the potential of partnerships between governments, business, academic centres and NGOs to address the specific concerns, needs and opportunities of the LDCs in the areas of e-commerce.

Output:

At least four practical initiatives involving governments, businesses, academic centres and/or NGOs in both the LDCs and their development partners in the following areas related to electronic commerce:

- (a) Means to increase the Internet visibility and the volume of e-business of LDC firms. Possible outcomes include the following: co-operation agreements involving companies from developed and least developed countries for the identification of e-commerce and e-business opportunities in the LDCs, the development of relevant e-business models and their eventual implementation; agreements to provide free or low-cost access to advertisement and/or better and easier listing for LDC enterprises in Internet portals, e-zines etc; technical and financial assistance to LDC governments to allow them to adopt Business-to-Government e-commerce practices.

- (b) Telecommunications and information technology infrastructure for e-commerce: The outcome may consist of commitments to provide technical and financial support for the establishment of "tele-centres" or "Internet centres" in LDC educational institutions, community centres or government agencies, particularly aimed at disadvantaged groups and/or remote areas.
- (c) Human resources development and training. Initiatives in this area potentially include the commitment to finance the delivery of existing TrainForTrade courses on e-commerce and the development of new ones; commitments to provide government, educational and community institutions in the LDCs with computer- and web-based materials on e-commerce and supply the necessary equipment; commitments to create rosters of experts who would advise the LDCs on the practice of e-commerce (including issues such as e-marketing, e-finance and payments, etc) at no cost.
- (d) Adaptation of the legal framework of the LDCs to the requirements of e-commerce. Initiatives may include the creation of a roster of experts who would provide free advice to governments of LDCs on actions to be taken in this area.

In all these initiatives UNCTAD's role will be that of a catalyst.

Activities related to this output:

- (a) Identification of specific initiatives that could be launched under each of the items listed above and the potential participants in each of them both in terms of players involved and of specific beneficiaries in the LDCs, the relevant e-business models that could be applicable and the basic elements of the co-operation arrangements needed for their implementation.
- (b) Preparation of background material describing in detail the goals and modalities of operation of each proposed initiative.
- (c) Contacts with potential participants to obtain the necessary commitment of a sufficient number of them.
- (d) Preparation of informative material on each of the initiatives to be launched and dissemination of it.

D. WORK PLAN

1.12.2000 to 15.01.2001

Identify specific initiatives that could be launched under each of the proposed items and the potential participants in each of them, particularly e-commerce and e-business opportunities linking “new economy” firms in developed countries and in the LDCs. Identify participants for the panel discussions. Prepare background material describing in detail the goals and modalities of operation of each proposed initiative.

15.01.2001 to 15.02.2001

Brief the potential participants identified and obtain the commitment of a sufficient number of them for each of the proposed panels. Approach potential participants and obtain the necessary commitment of a sufficient number of them for each of the proposed initiatives to be launched.

Prepare information material on the topics to be covered at the event and on the practical initiatives to be launched.

Establish media strategy

15.2.2001 to end of the LDC Conference

Implement a media strategy to ensure the maximum possible coverage of the event by the media of both developed and developing countries.

15.01.2001 to 1.03.2001

Identify moderators (media professionals) for each of the interactive discussions to be held at the event and obtain their commitment to participate.

15.3.2001 to end of the LDC conference

Carry out all the necessary logistic arrangements to ensure the travel, accommodation, etc of LDC participants in the panel.

13 to 20 May 2001

Provide substantive and administrative support to participants during the event.

21.05.2001 to 30.06.2001

Carry out evaluation survey among participants from the LDCs.

30.06.2001 to 31.07.2001

Prepare and submit project evaluation report based on the results of the survey.

Pages 70 to 71
are not reproduced
for technical reasons

EVENT: YOUTH FORUM

FOCAL POINT

Ms. Zeljka Kozul-Wright

Tel: (+41 22) 907 62 89

E-mail: zeljka.kozul-wright@unctad.org

Office: E-10072, UNCTAD, Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

YOUTH FORUM

THINK GLOBAL PLAY LOCAL: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR LDCs IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Date: May 19, 2001

Venue: European Parliament,
Brussels, Belgium

Music is the chosen theme for the Youth Forum. The reasons for this choice are multiple. Music, of course, serves as a common point of reference for young people everywhere and one, moreover, which can have a powerful influence over their perspective on the world. In this respect, it offers an attractive medium to attract a younger audience to the difficult economic and social problems and challenges facing *LDCs (debt, AIDS, poverty)*. But music is also a business and although not traditionally part of the policy agenda of LDCs, music, like other cultural resources, can provide new production and trading opportunities for these countries. A greater awareness is, however, needed of the challenges likely to face producers and exporters from developing countries in this global industry. UNCTAD has ongoing projects (conducted jointly with WIPO) in the Caribbean and Latin America on the music industry which form the institutional *raison d'être* for this event.

The objectives for this event are the following:

Objective 1:

Consciousness raising: to build awareness about the wider economic and social issues under discussion at the Conference.

Objective 2:

Bringing a positive message: LDCs do have global excellence in areas with real economic potential.

Objective 3:

To attract the attention of consumers and audiences from the developed world to the musical talent and output of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Objective 4:

Policy dialogue and development: in many LDCs music is traditionally perceived only as an item of culture and folklore, rather than a potentially significant export earner; making policy makers in LDCs aware that culture, and in particular music, is an important economic resource and should be included as an integral component of development strategies.



Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

LDC-III, Brussels, 14-20 May 2001



YOUTH FORUM *Saturday, 19 May 2001* **European Parliament** **Brussels, Belgium**

On the occasion of the Third UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (May 14-20, 2001), UNCTAD is organizing **The YOUTH FORUM**. The objectives of the Youth Forum are the following :

- Consciousness raising : to build awareness about the wider economic and social issues under discussion at the Conference.
- Bringing a positive message : LDCs do have global excellence in areas with real economic potential, such as the music industry.
- To attract the attention of consumers and audiences from the developed world to the musical talent and output of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).
- Policy dialogue and development: in many LDCs music is traditionally perceived only as an item of culture and folklore, rather than a potentially significant export earner, making policy makers in LDCs aware that culture, and in particular music, is an important economic resource and should be included as an integral component of development strategies.
- To discuss the challenges and prospects for the music industry for LDCs; the new technologies and the copyright ; policies and best practice for the development of the music industry for LDCs.
- To launch MIDI (Music Industry Development Initiative) – an education and training scheme for musicians and music business professionals from LDCs.

The one day Forum will take place on Saturday, May 19, 2001 at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium. The Forum will bring together representatives from the music industry, the UN system, NGOs, academics, journalists, national officials, copyright lawyers and music industry specialists from around the world. One of the aims of the Forum is to launch MIDI - Music Industry Development Initiative, developed jointly by UNCTAD and Civil Society at large, aimed at providing a tool for training and education of musicians and music business professionals from LDCs.

Further details of the Conference will be posted on the UNCTAD website (www.unctad.org).

Please register by sending the attached form, duly completed, by fax or e-mail to the number and e-mail addresses listed below, should you be interested in participating in the Youth Forum.

*Ms. Zeljka Kozul-Wright
Focal Point
Youth Forum
UN LDC-III Conference
UNCTAD
Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: (+41 22) 917 6289
Fax: (+41 22) 917 0197
E-mail: zeljka.kozul-wright@unctad.org*

UN LDC-III Conference
Youth Forum, May 19, 2001
PROGRAMME
MUSIC INDUSTRY WORKSHOP
The European Parliament Brussels, Belgium

Chairperson: Her Excellency Mme. **PENDA MBOW**, Minister of Culture, Ministry of Culture, Dakar, Senegal.

9.15 *Welcome and Opening Remarks*

9.30- 11.15 a.m. **SESSION 1**

Challenges and Prospects in the Music Industry of LDCs

Cultural Industries in Smaller Economies: Economic Aspects

Rapporteur: Dr. FIONAN O'MUIRCHEARTAIGH, Chief Economic Advisor, Enterprise Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.

The Role and Contribution of Folk Song in Bangladesh Music Industry

Professor ABDUL KHALEQUE, Dept of Bengali, University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh.

The State and Prospects of the Music Industry in Africa

Mr. AYO OLOKUTON, Editorial Consultant, Daily Times of Nigeria, Ikeja, Nigeria.

Building Musical Capacities in Africa

Mr. HORTENCIO LANGA, Chairman, AMMO, Association of Musicians of Mozambique, Maputo, Mozambique.

Caribbean Music in the International Context: Dancing to the Beat of a Small Place

Dr. RALPH HENRY, Development Economist, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago.

11.15-11.30 *Coffee Break*

11.30 – 13.00 **SESSION 2: New Technologies and the Copyright**

Creativity, Diversity and Communication: Threats and Opportunities in Today's Global Music Industry

Rapporteur: Dr. ROGER WALLIS, Executive Chairman, Swedish Society of Popular Music Composers, SKAP, Professor, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden.

Updating Copyright Protection in LDCs and Worldwide An Incentive to Music Creation and Business

Mr. KURT KEMPER, Director-Advisor, in charge of copyright matters Cooperation for Development (Intellectual Property Law) Department, WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization).

Music in the Digital Age: The Case of India

Mr. Pravin ANAND, Advocate, Anand & Anand, New Delhi, INDIA

Copyrights in Cultural Production in Haiti

Mr. WILLEMS EDOUARD, Director, BHDA, Bureau Haitiens du Droit d'Âuteur,
The Copyright Office of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

***Copyright in the Music Industry in the Southern African Development
Cooperation (SADC) Region***

Mr. SERMAN CHAVULA, Executive Director, COSOMA, Copyright Society of
Malawi, Lilongwe, Malawi.

***Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) and Cultural Industries for Business and
Society***

Dr. BIRGITTE ANDERSEN and Ms. FIONA MACMILLAN (Senior Lecturer &
Reader in Law) Birkbeck College, University of London, London, U.K.

13.00 – 14.30

Lunch Break

14.30 – 16.30

SESSION 3: Policies and Best Practice Cases

***Challenging the Dominant Global Agenda: The Possibilities for Musical
Roots and Alternative Routes***

Rapporteur: Dr. KEITH NEGUS, Senior Lecturer, Goldsmiths College, University of
London, London, U.K

Musical Works and Copyright Protection in Brazil

Mr. JOSE CARLOS COSTA NETTO, Chairman, Dabliu Discos, Sao Paulo, Brazil

***The Contribution of Major Record Companies to Developing Music in
Emerging Markets***

Mr. JOHN SHEEHAN, Managing Director, Sony Music-Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.

Music and Media in Ireland

Mr. NIALL STOKES, Editor, Hot Press, Dublin, Ireland.

16.45-17.0

Coffee Break

Opportunities for the People of the LDCs through Creative Expression

Mr. MICHAEL IBO COOPER, CEO, Freshear Music, Kingston, Jamaica.

17.15-17.45

General Discussion

17.45

Closing Remarks

18.00

End of Youth Forum Workshop.

April 25, 2001.

EVENT: WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS FORUM

FOCAL POINT

Ms. Chitra Radhakishun

Tel: (+41 22) 907 56 95

E-mail: chitra.radhakishun@unctad.org

Office: E-9066, UNCTAD, Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

Concept Paper

The Women Entrepreneurs Forum

A CIVIL SOCIETY EVENT

AT THE 3D UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

SATURDAY 19 MAY 2001, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

I. BACKGROUND

UNCTAD's programme on the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) accepted the responsibility for a project funded by the government of the Netherlands, Enhancing the participation of women entrepreneurs in LDCs' (Least Developed Countries) economies. Under this project, UNCTAD conducted an assessment of the impact of policies and instruments on the development of women's entrepreneurship in nine LDCs namely Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Ethiopia, The Gambia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Cambodia, Nepal and Vanuatu. The outputs of this project include nine country reports on the role of women entrepreneurs in LDC economies and synthesis studies.

Based on original facts and data drawn from surveys, practical and policy guidelines are proposed for accelerating the process of enhancing women entrepreneurs' participation in the economy and on integrating them in mainstream development.

The findings were first presented in July 1999. A country case study was presented at a national seminar in Burkina Faso, synthesis findings for Africa at a regional seminar, also held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The seminars were well attended by policy makers, representatives of the international donor community, research institutions, NGOs, providers of business development services, women's business associations and by starting and successful women entrepreneurs from West Africa.

Main Findings and conclusions

Judging from the limited attention paid to women entrepreneurs in programmes and projects for SME development, there is still little awareness, at all levels of government and the society, of the potential and actual contribution to social and economic development women entrepreneurs –can- make.

SMEs, Globalization and Existing Programmes

Most of the support programmes established (particularly donor programmes) for women entrepreneurs are for self-employment and micro-enterprises, the two largest segments of entrepreneurial activity in African countries. While women running SMEs form a minority among their entrepreneurial sisters, SMEs can be and indeed

are the locomotives of private sector development. SMEs will have to spearhead further integration in the world economy, ... but will also be among the first to suffer the negative effects of globalization.

The Social Responsibility of Women's Firms

While less publicized, women's firms take social responsibility in their stride. As such they are not only agents of economic development but also of social change.

Main Obstacles

The main obstacles for women to establish or develop an enterprise are the lack of access to, including control over capital, land, business premises, information and technology, as well as lack of training, production inputs, networking and assistance from relevant public agencies.

Government 's Role - and its Problems

Governments of Least Developed Countries have started to attach greater importance to "women and development" issues. This increased importance is due not only to the international debate on the subject, but also to the insistence of donors and multilateral support organizations. Still there appears to be no common strategy or approach to the policy aspects of women's empowerment.

Two major problems at the level of government include the lack of public-private sector dialogue, demonstrated by insufficient dissemination of information to women entrepreneurs and the poor coordination and collaboration of public and private providers of business development services.

II. ENHANCING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Conditions in Least Developed Countries cannot be said to be favoring effective enhancement of women's entrepreneurship in general, and even less so in the SME sector. To optimize the socio-economic contribution of women entrepreneurs and enhance women's entrepreneurship, the right mixture of policy and practical action needs to be applied. Building blocks of a conducive policy environment exist, as do programmatic elements. The challenge is to use these policy and programmatic elements to achieve the desired realities.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS FORUM

The Forum will consider key issues of relevance to enhancing women's entrepreneurship in Least Developed Countries. To this end it brings together experts from Governments and non-governmental organizations, academia, representatives from women's and business associations and women entrepreneurs. The objective of the Forum is to come up with alternatives in the form of so-called deliverables, that is, relevant programmes or projects.

IV EXPECTED OUTCOME

Deliverables by UNCTAD and other United Nations bodies and international organizations.

UNCTAD's proposed deliverable: Business Services for Women Entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs face special problems in assessing finance and technology and often they lack the necessary managerial skills to use such finance and technology they might have to their best advantage. Thus, enterprises owned by women usually have the least chance to grow and compete in the global economy.

Most business development service programmes treat male and female entrepreneurs alike not realizing the special barriers women face because of cultural and social practices and attitudes. Therefore, within business development services (BDS) programmes, new initiatives must be taken to equip women with the skills they need, managerial and otherwise, to access finance and technology – particularly e-commerce. This project will, within the context of EMPRETEC, develop special training modules for women in the least developed countries to address these problems of exclusion from finance and technology.

V EXPECTED "SPILL-OVERS & SIDE-EFFECTS"

- (a) B2B effects: Networking, partnering and possibly swinging of business deals
- (b) a further opportunity for inter-agency collaboration on enhancing women's entrepreneurship

The Women Entrepreneurs Forum
A CIVIL SOCIETY EVENT
AT THE 3D UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
SATURDAY 19 MAY 2001, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The Women Entrepreneurs Forum A Civil Society Event at the 3d United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries will take place on 19 May 2001 in Brussels, Belgium. The possibility to register is still open. The Forum will consider key issues of relevance to enhancing women's entrepreneurship in Least Developed Countries. To this end it brings together experts from Governments and non-governmental organizations, academia, representatives from women's and business associations and women entrepreneurs. The objective of the Forum is to come up with alternatives in the form of so-called deliverables, that is, relevant programmes or projects. Panels will take up key issues on women's entrepreneurship. United Nations and international organizations will present their deliverables.

Participation in the forum is free, there are no cost for neither registration nor participation in the forum. Publications on women's entrepreneurship distributed at the forum are also available at no cost to participants. The forum will benefit from simultaneous interpretation in four UN languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish).

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

<i>09.00 – 10.00</i>	Registration
<i>10.00 – 11.30</i>	Networking Coffee - for registered participants only
<i>13.00 – 14.15</i>	Women entrepreneurs: opportunities in the global market Chair: Mr. Eugene Koffi Adoboli, former Prime Minister, Togo

The first Panel, *Women entrepreneurs: opportunities in the global market*, looks at the impact of the AGOA and the Cotonou agreement (ACP-EU) on enhancing women's entrepreneurship in Africa respectively ACP Least Developed Countries.

Speakers on the panel include:

- Ambassador Viyay Makhan, Deputy Secretary-General of the OAU;
- A senior representative of USAIDS;
- A senior representative of the Regional Negotiating Machinery (Caribbean)

- Mrs. L Hendricks, Deputy Minister of Trade, South Africa; and
- Mrs. Catherine Mwanamwambwa, Entrepreneur, Zambia

14.15 – 15.30

Women entrepreneurs' access to finance

Chair: Ms. Mu Sochua, Minister for Women's and Veterans' Affairs, Cambodia

The second Panel, *Women entrepreneurs' access to finance*, looks at the obstacles to getting credit and finance for market expansion and enterprise development for women in micro, very small, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Speakers on the panel include:

- Mrs. Maheen, Mehtab Hussain Khan, BRAC-AARONG, Bangladesh and
- Ambassador Ms. Rina Villeda Bermudez, representative of Honduras to the Inter-American Commission for Women.
- Ms. Ndioro Ndiaye, Deputy Director General, IOM

15.30 - 16.45

Women entrepreneurs' access to technology

[Chair: to be confirmed]

The third Panel, *Women entrepreneurs' access to technology*, looks at women's relative inability to access technology, not as a financial obstacle only, but even more as an issue of capacity – especially in Least Developed Countries. Important is also the ability to grow, diversify production and achieve sustainability in the globalized environment.

Speakers on the panel include:

- Ms. Nazare Imbiriba Secretary-General, Bolsa Amazonica, Brazil;
- Ms. Gisele Yitamben, ASAFE, Cameroon; and
- Ms. Bruna Massi Alexander of AIDDA, Italy and FCEM International.
- Ms. Yacine Mbengue, REFESA, Mauritania

16.45 – 17.15

Deliverables: United Nations Projects for women entrepreneurs in LDCs

Chair: Mr. Enrique ter Horst, Ambassador, Foreign Service of Venezuela

17.15 - 17.45

The Capetown Declaration and women's entrepreneurship development in LDCs

Mrs. L. Hendricks, Deputy Minister for Trade, South Africa

18.00 – 19.30

Networking session - for registered participants only

: