



DITC/TNCD/MISC/2016/2
(16/221gd)

INFORMATION NOTE

Meeting on non-tariff measures

5 October 2016, 10 a.m.–1 p.m., Room XXVI, Palais des Nations

The UNCTAD secretariat invites interested delegates to participate in a meeting on non-tariff measures (NTMs) to be held on 5 October 2016 in room XXVI of the Palais des Nations. The session will advise delegates of the importance of trade and domestic regulations for development, and the work on NTMs of UNCTAD and seven other international organizations (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, International Trade Centre, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, World Bank and World Trade Organization). This open session is part of a two-day meeting on NTMs classification to be held on 5 and 6 October 2016. A draft programme is attached.

What non-tariff measures are and why they are important

NTMs cover a broad range of policies, including traditional trade policy instruments, such as quotas or price controls, and regulatory and technical measures that stem from important non-trade-related objectives with regard to health and environmental protection. NTMs have become increasingly important for policymakers as tariffs have been significantly reduced, unilaterally and in trade agreements. The ability to gain and benefit from market access increasingly depends on compliance with trade regulatory measures such as sanitary requirements and goods standards, yet such NTMs represent a challenge for exporters, importers and policymakers. Many NTMs such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade are directly linked to the Sustainable Development Goals. However, NTMs disproportionately negatively affect lower-income country trade.

Transparency on non-tariff measures needed

The Trade Analysis Information System, the largest global database on NTMs, will be launched at this meeting. This database – covering 56 countries accounting for 80 per cent of world trade, and containing more than 38,000 measures – is the most comprehensive database on NTMs, and its objective is to increase transparency in and understanding of regulations and trade control measures as, to date, systematic information on NTMs has been scarce and difficult to obtain. UNCTAD coordinates international efforts to reduce the transparency gap in NTMs.

Multi-Agency Support Team and non-tariff measures classification

The common language of the international trade community in this area is the international classification on NTMs, which was developed by the eight international organizations noted above, along with State observers.

The two-day meeting will revise and further develop the classification, bringing together senior trade and development experts, policymakers, trade negotiators, academics and other stakeholders to examine challenges and progress made in the common understanding of NTMs and transparency. The event will be combined with a Productivity, Non-Tariff Measures and Openness (PRONTO) meeting on NTMs. The PRONTO project is a collaborative research project on regulatory barriers to trade.

Participation

Registration should be completed online on the following website: Meeting on non-tariff measures classification and Productivity, Non-Tariff Measures and Openness meeting.

Logistics

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

Further information and contact details

All other enquiries should be addressed to the coordinators in the secretariat, Mr. Ralf Peters (ralf.peters@unctad.org) and Ms. Chi Le Ngo (chile.ngo@unctad.org).

(p.p. signed)

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