UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

DTL
DIVISION ON TECHNOLOGY AND LOGISTICS

ACTIVITY REPORT 2008

UNITED NATIONS

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Notes

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Contents

A.   Introduction

This report presents an overview of the activities undertaken by the three branches of the **Division on Technology and Logistics** (DTL) in 2008. It is complemented by stories from beneficiaries in developing countries.

In 2008, the Division underwent a number of changes, the most important of which was the transfer of the Science and Technology Section from the Division on Investment and Enterprise to DTL. This, among other factors, led to a change in the name of the division from "Services Infrastructure for Development and Trade Efficiency" (SITE) to "Technology and Logistics" (DTL) in order to better reflect the type of work undertaken.

DTL consists of three branches:

- Science, Technology and ICT Branch;

- Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development Branch; and

- Trade Logistics Branch, including the ASYCUDA programme.

The work programme of the Division is to enhance the economic development and competitiveness of developing countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition, in the globalized world economy and international trade, through efficient trade logistics services, transit transport systems, strengthened capacity to develop, increased access to and sustainable utilization of technology and knowledge - including information and communications technology (ICT), and training and capacity-building programmes for local institutions.

This is done through *(a)* promoting access to - and enhancing the capacity to develop and use - technology and knowledge; *(b)* strengthening capacity in the areas of trade logistics and trade facilitation - including Customs, trade-supporting services and legal frameworks; *(c)* following up as a focal point for the Executive Committee of Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA) on science and technology, as well as transport; *(d)* coordinating and contributing to the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development that was launched at UNCTAD XI; *(e)* coordinating the system-wide follow-up of the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), including enhanced access to and efficient application of information and communications technology for development; *(f)* serving as a secretariat for the Economic and Social Council's Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) and reporting to the General Assembly; and *(g)* developing human and institutional capacities in the fields of trade and the interrelated areas of finance, investment, technology, enterprise development, competition and sustainable development.

DTL works together closely with other divisions within UNCTAD, United Nations organizations, and partner institutions. The three pillars of UNCTAD - namely research and analysis, consensus-building and technical cooperation - are fully integrated into the work programme, and also into cross-cutting issues.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY - Overview

Stimulating outstanding scientific and technological institutions in developing countries, and using them as regional hubs of learning and training for scientists and researchers from these countries.

There are now more than 4 billion mobile phone subscriptions in the world helping to bridge the digital divide. Notwithstanding recent successes, we still have a long way to go. The international community must pursue vigorously its efforts to promote an information society for all.

"Information and communication technologies (ICTs) are helping to drive globalization by lifting enterprises into the knowledge-based economy [...] Access to low-cost ICTs, in particular telecommunications, is crucial to the development of a competitive business sector" (Accra Accord, para. 120).

Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, at the eleventh session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, in May 2008:

"The last two decades have witnessed enormous advances in science and technology. [...] **Technology has never been as vital to development as it is today**, when varying levels of economic and social well-being are the direct result of differences in the level of technological and scientific development."

On ICTs: "No other technology in history has so deeply and widely permeated every area of our lives, **with innumerable implications for development.**"

The upgrading of the technological capabilities of developing countries was identified by UNCTAD XII as a key element of policies to strengthen the productive capacities of developing countries and to harness knowledge for development.

These considerations resulted in specific mandates for UNCTAD:

1. To "strengthen its research and analysis in the area of **science, technology and innovation, including ICTs"**, and to "promote effective international and national policies" (Accra Accord, para. 158).

2. To "contribute to consensus-building in the international debate on **science and technology for development, including ICTs** and their implications for development, and continue to provide support as the secretariat to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development" (Accra Accord, para. 159).

3. To "provide technical assistance to countries in the area of **ICT**, notably on ICT policy reviews, pro-poor policies, legal and regulatory frameworks, and measuring the information economy, including through the **Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development"** (Accra Accord, para. 160).

4. To "contribute to the implementation of the **World Summit on the Information Society** (WSIS) action lines on capacity building, an enabling environment, e-business and e-science" and to assist the **Commission on Science and Technology for Development "**in implementing its mandate on the follow-up to the WSIS outcomes" (Accra Accord, para. 161).

> **"To help upgrade technological capabilities, Governments should regularly assess the conditions for technology acquisition and upgrading and should implement and review their science, technology and innovation (STI) policies. Supportive institutions may include public-private partnerships and STI policies may be incorporated into national development policies and poverty reduction strategies" (Accra Accord, para. 134).**

> **"North-South and also South-South, partnerships and cooperation should be strengthened for the sharing of knowledge, innovation and technology transfer, and to address the gaps in education and research in developing countries, especially LDCs" (Accra Accord, para. 135).**

In order to optimize synergies in UNCTAD's activities in these fields, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD decided in early 2008 to merge the Science and Technology Section of the Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise with the ICT and E-business Branch of the Division on Services Infrastructure for Development and Trade Efficiency, later renamed the Division on Technology and Logistics. The entity resulting from this merging is the present Science, Technology and ICT Branch, which comprises the *Science and Technology Section*, the *Policy Review Section* and the *ICT Analysis Section*. The following paragraphs cover the activities undertaken by these sections with regard to each of the three pillars of UNCTAD's work during 2008.

Long-term economic growth and development cannot happen unless - among other things - the productive capacities of developing countries are strengthened. For this to happen, countries need to be able to harness knowledge and technology, so that they can reach higher levels of technology absorption and faster innovation by their enterprises. The experience of successful developing countries shows that science, technology and innovation (STI) policies to promote technological learning and innovation, as well as to facilitate technological catch-up, need to be fully integrated in national development strategies.

The **research and analysis** work of the Branch is geared to support that process. In order to maximize its impact, a re-examination of its work programme was undertaken in this area. The result was a reorganization and streamlining of its publications programme. As of 2008, the publication of the ICT Development Index has been discontinued, and the Information Economy Report will become a leaner and more focused publication. A new report will be published as of 2009, to cover issues of technology, innovation and development. Research work was undertaken in 2008 on the issue of agricultural technologies and their role in developing innovative solutions to raise farmers' productivity levels in developing countries, as part of the measures to address the pressing challenges created by the global food crisis.

Technical cooperation activities in the area of STI focused on two areas:

1.   Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) reviews

2.   the activities of the Network of Centres of Excellence

1 - STIP Reviews

In 2008 work was carried out for the STIP reviews of Angola, Ghana, Lesotho and Mauritania. Of these, the STIP Review of Angola was completed. Activities for the remaining STIP reviews are expected to be completed during 2009.

Also in 2008, funding was obtained for the implementation of STIP reviews in three Latin American countries. Project proposals were also submitted for three STIP reviews in African countries, and these are expected to materialize into concrete projects during 2009. In a related exercise, UNCTAD agreed with UNESCO to participate in a science policy review in Gabon.

Furthermore, a Memorandum of Understanding between UNCTAD and Iraq on science, technology and innovation was signed in Geneva on 1 September 2008 by Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and Mr. Raid Fahmi, Minister of Science and Technology of Iraq in the presence of Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The Memorandum of Understanding sets the framework in which UNCTAD and the Government of Iraq will cooperate for the implementation of a Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) review of Iraq. It was developed following discussions at the eleventh session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, which took place in Geneva in May 2008.

At this same session of the Commission, the outcome of UNCTAD's review of the STI policies of Angola - undertaken in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and in consultation with the Government of Angola - was presented. The STIP review of Angola pinpoints a number of structural, institutional and financial bottlenecks that hinder technological learning and capacity building in the country. The Review also formulates policy options for the Government to consider in ensuring a strong STI component in its development strategies.

In the presence of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Mr. Raid Fahmi, Minister of Science and Technology of Iraq shaking hands with Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

2 - Network of Centres of Excellence

The Network of Centres of Excellence (NOCE) was established in 2005 on the recommendation of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), following discussions with the heads of the science and technology institutions of the Trieste system (a network of scientific institutions supporting sustainable development based in Trieste, Italy, which includes the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics, the Third World Academy of Science, the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, the International Centre for Science and High Technology, and the InterAcademy Panel on International Issues).

As part of the response to the challenges facing developing countries in the field of STI, UNCTAD launched the Network of Centres of Excellence to strengthen links and facilitate mobility among the scientific community in developing countries. The NOCE was designed with a South-South cooperation dimension. It operates with outstanding scientific and technological institutions in developing countries identified from the existing centres of excellence affiliated to the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology and other centres identified by the steering committee in cooperation with the Trieste system. These institutions collaborate as hubs of learning and training, and carry out advanced and basic training courses in biotechnologies and ICTs for scientists and researchers from these countries.

The Government of Italy sponsored the activities of UNCTAD´s Network of Centres of Excellence from 2006 to 2008. In 2008 the following activities took place:

- Training course on *cybersecurity,* organized by the National Agency for Computer Security of Tunisia; Tunis, 6-17 October 2008

- Training course on *biosafety and GMO detection,* organized by the Agricultural Genetic Engineering Research Institute of Egypt, Giza, 9-20 November 2008

Moreover, the Network has broadened its scope to include non-English-speaking scientists and engineers, so that they too can benefit from improved access to science and technology knowledge. To this end, the website of the project has been translated into French and Spanish, and the first training course in French has been planned.

An expanded website platform - available at *http://www.unctad.org/noc* - has been implemented to facilitate interaction among members of the network and participants in the training courses. The expanded website platform allows course participants to interact online and share documents; promotes interaction among partner centres, participants, trainers and the NOCE team; facilitates access to training and administrative documents; and allows participants to evaluate the course online.

"I write on behalf of participants to appreciate the opportunity granted us by UNCTAD to attend the training on Information Technology in Agriculture for Africa. The way the training was carefully packaged with field trips to rural farms and organizations where information technology has been successfully used to enhance agricultural productivity in China made it a very fulfilling experience. Needless to say, the training was quite educative, expository and very exploring. It has opened up great challenges to us as Africans... We have consolidated ourselves into a group branded ITAA G-20 (meaning Information Technology in Agriculture for Africa Group of 20) with the intent of formulating a new research agenda on IT and agriculture, and preparing proposals on common research subjects and other areas that may enhance and promote the awareness on IT and allied areas to improve rural livelihoods and agriculture in Africa. "

B.S. Ogunsina M.Sc, Group Leader, Department of Agricultural Engineering, Obafemi Awolowo University, ILE-IFE, Nigeria

The programme builds upon existing organizations based in developing countries, offering them the opportunity to organize international courses, interact with other experts, and expand professional networks.

The programme is now well established, with key partners playing a very supportive role. The commitment of leaders from these centres of excellence is what makes the training courses a success. While the organization of the courses is in many cases an additional workload for the often limited capacities of these centres of excellence, the fact that some centres have held several courses shows that there is a recognized benefit in participating in the Network.

The Network benefits from a large audience in the developing world's scientific community, and a database of over 400 scientists, researchers and various contacts in the academic world. Demand for the training courses has been very high, despite the fact that some of the courses cater for a narrow group of experts. For example, the training course on cybersecurity received over 100 applications for a total of 15 places. In total, over 580 applications were received for 133 places.

In the area of **consensus-building**, UNCTAD provides substantive and technical servicing to the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), a functional body of the Economic and Social Council. The broad mandate of the CSTD is to examine and advance the understanding of the role of science and technology in development and to advise the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly thereon. This includes the formulation of recommendations and guidelines on science and technology matters within the United Nations system. In addition, the CSTD is coordinating the WSIS follow-up process at the international and regional levels.

The eleventh session of the Commission was held in Geneva from 26 to 30 May 2008. It considered two priority themes:

- Development-oriented policies for a socio-economically inclusive information society, including access, infrastructure and an enabling environment; and

- Science, technology and engineering for innovation and capacity-building in education and research.

A special segment was devoted to the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review of Angola. The Commission also undertook the second annual review of progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the two-phase World Summit on the Information Society. The Commission recommended one draft resolution and three draft decisions to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration.

The inter-sessional panel of the CSTD was held in Santiago, Chile, from 12 to 14 November 2008, organized jointly by UNCTAD and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Research and analysis was carried out in a number of ICT-related fields in 2008. As is often the case, in order to adopt and enforce the right ICT policies and strategies, Governments need access to reliable data. UNCTAD here plays a leading role in this regard, as a member of the Steering Committee of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, and being directly responsible for the collection of data related to the use of ICT by businesses, and the ICT sector and ICT trade. These are available at *http://measuring-ict.unctad.org*. The results will be included in the *UNCTAD Information Economy Database* and reported in the *Information Economy Report 2009.*

The *Information Economy Report 2007-2008 - Science and Technology for Development: The New Paradigm of ICT* was issued in February 2008. It explores how ICT helps to generate innovations that improve the livelihoods of the poor and support enterprise competitiveness. The Report examines how ICT affects productivity and growth, and reflects on the need for a development-oriented approach to intellectual property rights in order to enable effective access to technology. ICT has also given rise to new models for sharing knowledge and for collective production of ideas and innovations, known as "open access" models, which often bypass the incentive system provided by intellectual property rights.

UNCTAD's first country analysis of the impact of ICT on business activities was published. The study, entitled *Measuring the Impact of ICT Use in Business: The Case of Manufacturing in Thailand* had been prepared jointly with the national statistical office in Thailand.

During 2008, UNCTAD saw growing demand for its ICT-related **technical assistance**. It reached all developing-country regions, and relied partly on regular budget funds from the Development Account, and partly on extra-budgetary support from the Governments of Finland, France and Spain.

ICT-related technical assistance work is focused on three main areas:

1. Measuring ICT for development

2. ICT and law reform

3. ICT policy reviews

1- Measuring ICT for development

UNCTAD is actively supporting member States' efforts to improve collection of ICT statistics, especially with regard to ICT use by the business sector and to the ICT sector itself. In most developing countries, there is still a serious lack of reliable data in these areas. During 2008, related technical assistance was offered to countries in Africa and Asia.

UNCTAD assisted the Government of Tunisia in setting up a process of collection and analysis of statistics on ICT use in enterprises. UNCTAD provided feedback to the National Institute of Statistics of Tunisia on its technical preparatory note for its first survey on ICT use in business. UNCTAD also provided comments on the survey questionnaire and on how to define the ICT sector. In this context, an advisory mission to Tunis was conducted. UNCTAD's support enabled Tunisia to effectively prepare its first national survey on ICT use in business, which should provide the Government with more reliable and internationally comparable data on ICT use in business and inform policy decisions on ICT developments in the country.

In June 2008, UNCTAD conducted an advisory mission to Nepal to assist the Government in developing its work on ICT measurement. As a result of the mission, national stakeholders agreed to create in Nepal a high-level Coordination Committee for ICT statistics, and to consider the establishment of a national framework for collecting and producing ICT statistics.

During 2008, UNCTAD launched the process of revising its *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy,* by means of a worldwide consultation with national statistical offices, and an Expert Group on the Manual (Geneva, 26 May 2008), organized jointly with the United Nations Statistics Division and supported by an online discussion forum. UNCTAD will present the revised version of the Manual for approval to the fortieth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 2009.

A regional training course on the production of statistics on the information economy took place in Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 18-22 February. It was hosted by the Asia and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development - which is a subsidiary body of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific - and was delivered in collaboration with the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. The course was attended by 24 participants from 16 countries in the region.

Also in February, UNCTAD participated in the fourth Regional Workshop on Information Society Measurement in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in San Salvador, presenting its work on the statistical indicators related to ICT use by businesses and the ICT sector, advancing the consultation on the *Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy*, and presenting the progress in the activities of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development.

> **"The Philippines will be conducting the 2008 survey on ICT among establishments and the Manual was of great use in the formulation of the questionnaire."**
>
> *Director, National Statistics Information Centre, NSCB, Philippines*

2- ICT and law reform

In order to seize the development opportunities created by ICT, effective cyberlaws are essential. In 2008, UNCTAD's technical assistance activities in this field aimed primarily at facilitating increased regional harmonization of cyber-legislation, with projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The harmonization of cyberlaws in the *East African Community (EAC)* supports the effective implementation of e-government and e-commerce strategies

Meeting on Cyberlaws in the United Republic of Tanzania

prepared by the partner States since 2004. Following the formation of the EAC Regional Task Force on Cyberlaws ("the Task Force") in December 2007, UNCTAD facilitated three of its meetings in 2008: in the United Republic of Tanzania on 27-30 January, in Uganda on 23-25 June, and in Burundi on 10-12 September. These meetings allowed members of the Task Force to prioritize among the various legal issues to be considered for the preparation of a harmonized regional framework and to discuss related options and challenges.

In this context, UNCTAD carried out a comparative review of existing draft laws and bills, and assisted in the preparation of a regional legal framework for the harmonization of cyberlaws. Following national consultative meetings organized by partner States to seek the views from stakeholders, the Task Force met on 10-12 September 2008 to review the framework. The final draft was submitted to the EAC Secretary-General in November. The EAC Council of Ministers is expected to discuss and adopt it early 2009. From its outset, the project has benefited from strong support from the EAC secretariat and the partner States. They shared a vision that regional integration in East Africa would help to create wealth, raise living standards and enhance international competitiveness, while recognizing the key role of competitive and well-functioning ICTs.

In Asia, technical assistance was primarily offered to Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, in the framework of the regional TrainForTrade project (see also page 20). Further to the draft cyberlaws prepared in 2007 for the two countries, awareness-raising activities on the legal implications of ICT were organized by the Government of Cambodia throughout the country, using the Khmer distance-learning version of the training course developed by UNCTAD on the Legal Aspects of e-commerce. Additional needs have been identified to facilitate the adoption of the cyberlaws in Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic to comply with the e-ASEAN initiative. Additional capacity-building activities are planned for policymakers and parliamentarians, to enhance their understanding of the legal implications of ICT before processing and enacting the cyberlaws.

"The UNCTAD training workshops on cyber legislation should be further delivered, as this would contribute to the reduction of the digital gap in the region by allowing countries that are at an advanced stage of cyber legislation to share their knowledge and experience with the others."

Adviser, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Colombia (Buenos Aires, October 2008).

In 2008, some 100 government and private sector representatives from member countries of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) were trained through distance-learning and face-to-face training workshops organized by UNCTAD. During a workshop organized in Buenos Aires in October, twenty participants from nine member States presented the status of cyberlaws in their countries as a basis for a regional comparative review of cyberlaws. They also identified legal issues of concern for the regional harmonization of cyberlaws. Following this workshop, UNCTAD started exploring the possibilities for cooperation with the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), in the framework of the MERCOSUR Digital Initiative. This project aims to promote harmonized regional strategies for the information society and to reduce the digital gap through the promotion of e-commerce and the harmonization of legal and regulatory frameworks, training and capacity-building activities.
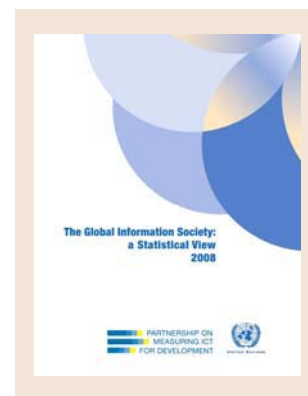
3- ICT policy reviews

The Accra Accord stressed that UNCTAD should undertake ICT policy reviews (para 160). A framework for such reviews was presented in the *Information Economy Report 2006*, and in 2008, initial steps were taken towards undertaking the first pilot review, for Egypt. Thanks to the financial contribution of the UNDP office in Egypt, the first review of its kind is expected to be conducted in 2009.

An area in which much **consensus-building** is still needed relates to how best to capture statistically the rise of the information economy. In this context, the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development (the "Partnership") is an important forum, at which all relevant international organizations participate. It was initially launched at UNCTAD XI in Sao Paulo. UNCTAD is a member of its steering committee - together with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and ECLAC - and participates in three task groups. At a meeting of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, member States called upon the Partnership to expand its work by recommending that:

> *"…the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communication Technologies for Development consider the creation of benchmarks and indicators, including impact indicators, for further consideration and decision by the Statistical Commission, in order to track progress towards the attainment of the specific goals and targets set out in the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society, particularly part B of the Plan of Action adopted in Geneva"* **(Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/3, para 29).**

During 2008, UNCTAD contributed to the Partnership publication *The Global Information Society: A Statistical View 2008*. Furthermore, UNCTAD hosted the Partnership's Global Event on Measuring the Information Society (Geneva, 27-29 May 2008). The Global Event considered proposals for new core ICT indicators on education, revisions made to the indicators included in the existing core ICT list, impact measurements, the development of a global ICT database, and technical capacity building needs.

There was excellent attendance, by more than 150 participants from 66 States Members of the United Nations, and by 22 intergovernmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations. These included representatives from national statistical offices and other government offices responsible for ICT statistics, telecommunication regulatory authorities, ICT-related ministries, and other relevant stakeholders.

Recognizing that ICT has a positive impact on development, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) has highlighted the need to measure the Information Society. The Partnership's work can benefit the follow-up of the WSIS, since it can help assess the progress towards the achievement of the WSIS goals. Immediately after the Global Event, the Partnership presented a progress report of its work to the eleventh session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), which was held at the same time in Geneva, under its agenda item on the WSIS follow-up.

As mandated by paragraph 108 and the annex of the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, UNCTAD - in cooperation with ITC, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) - organized the third WSIS Follow-up Action Line Facilitation Meeting on "E-business" on the theme of "E-commerce as a key facilitator for SME competitiveness". The meeting took place in May 2008 and brought together about 30 WSIS stakeholders to address the issue of the contribution of e-commerce to development. It covered the major aspects of e-commerce - exchange of electronic information between parties, electronic transactions and related payments, and the exchange of goods, via case studies and observations of industry experts, such as Alibaba.com and the Postal Service Bureau of China. The role of mobile technology for enhancing SME competitiveness was discussed too, with examples of its use in developing countries. The meeting addressed policy options to improve the participation of SMEs in international trade, focusing on the policies related to the creation of an enabling legal framework for e-commerce with the experience of the ASEAN and ALADI.

KNOWLEDGE-SHARING, TRAINING AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT - Overview

Speaking of the Course on Key International Economic Issues, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, stated that: "It is UNCTAD's flagship training programme **tailored to the needs of national policy-makers at senior levels.** [...] The course is also tailored to the particular challenges faced by policy-makers in different regions."

"Countries at all stages of development, [...] must **come to grips with the challenges of globalization.** They need effective negotiators and policy-makers with solid knowledge of international economic issues. They also need up-to-date analysis about how the changes in the trade system will impact their national economies. [...] **We believe that academia can bridge this gap."** - Statement by Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, in a video on the Virtual Institute.

Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi also mentioned, with regard to TrainForTrade that it "allows beneficiaries to implement a nationally owned capacity-development framework that progressively **strengthens their local capacities."**

Regional and Geneva-based courses are organized for Government officials on the links between trade, finance, investment and development within the context of ongoing multilateral trade negotiations. (Bangkok Plan of Action, para.166).

C.   Knowledge-sharing, Training and Capacity Development

"UNCTAD should enhance its assistance in cross-divisional capacity-building programmes, including training for policymakers, on the integrated treatment of the trade, investment, finance, technology and development issues referred to in paragraph 166 of the Bangkok Plan of Action, which must ensure wide and inclusive participation of developing countries. It should also continue to support the development of local teaching and research capacities in member countries' academic institutions through the Virtual Institute, and foster training and capacity-building aimed at trade practitioners in order to assist member countries in developing a sustainable local capacity in trade, investment and development issues through TrainForTrade. UNCTAD should also continue to use these programmes to strengthen the synergies between its research and capacity-building activities" (Accra Accord, para. 162).

The Accra Accord reaffirmed the value of training, education and research for economic development, and granted the Virtual Institute, the Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda and TrainForTrade a consolidated mandate to continue and expand their activities in the above fields.

The three capacity-building programmes of the Knowledge Sharing, Training and Capacity Development (KSTCD) Branch address the needs of developing-country training and research institutions through different but complementary activities, tailored to the needs of their specific target audiences. The *UNCTAD Virtual Institute on Trade and Development* works mainly with academia and to some extent with research institutes in developing countries; the *Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda* (the so-called "Paragraph 166 course") is UNCTAD's flagship training course for policymakers on trade and development; and *TrainForTrade* works with trade practitioners, trade officials and private enterprises.

The KSTCD Branch emphasizes the need to develop and support local institutions to ensure the long-term sustainability of its capacity-building efforts. To this end, the three programmes of the KSTCD Branch have integrated various tools and methods into their work, such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and networking arrangements, and they draw on their pedagogical advantages for the creation of high-quality materials and the delivery of training.

The KSTCD Branch also leverages various partnerships - across the divisions within UNCTAD, and also with partner institutions, such as the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations regional commissions.

The activities of all three programmes expanded during 2008 and the number of beneficiaries increased, largely thanks to the commitment and support of a number of donor countries. The programmes have existed for several years, and are now well embedded both in the work of UNCTAD and at the national level in many participating institutions. Their usefulness has been consistently highlighted by both beneficiary and donor countries at intergovernmental meetings of UNCTAD, and in external evaluations and reports of advisory groups on theactivities of the KSTCD Branch. Experts participating in these groups have repeatedly praised the work of the three programmes, especially for their focus not just on training, but also on sustainable capacity development at the local level.

The UNCTAD Virtual Institute (Vi) works with academia in developing and transition countries to strengthen their teaching and research of trade and development, and facilitates cooperation between the members of its university network - in both the "North" and the "South".

> In 2008, the network grew from 23 members to 28. This included the addition of three Northern institutions, to diversify the Vi's support to universities in the South and to encourage greater networking and cooperation. The network also admitted two new members in Latin America. See: *http://vi.unctad.org.*

The Vi undertook **technical cooperation** activities in the following areas:

1. Professional development through workshops and fellowships

2. Membership work through joint members' projects and the local adaptation of training materials

3. Access to expertise through study tours and curricular support

4. Access to knowledge through a website, training materials and newsletters

1- Professional development through workshops and fellowships

Vi regional professional development workshops aim to enhance the knowledge and research skills of participating academics on specific topics covered by Vi teaching materials. The objective is to facilitate the use of these materials in regular teaching programmes at universities, and to encourage policy-oriented research on these topics.

On the round table with policymakers:
"I am thinking about writing a proposal for the Vi funding (Vi - mentored research projects), and in this respect I want to contact the Ugandan Investment Authority to see in which area they would like someone to conduct policy relevant research."

Richard Sebaggala, Uganda

"My expectations were exceeded, because it was very interesting to get the views of the policymakers. To me, the meeting was very fruitful because the two sides were able to say their views, as far as research is concerned."

Uganda workshop participants

This year's regional professional development workshop in Uganda focussed on the topic of foreign direct investment (FDI), covering both economic aspects and legal elements, in particular international investment agreements. It also provided an opportunity to share experiences, present research undertaken on the topic, and get feedback from the resource persons and their peers. The workshop was attended by 24 academics from 10 English-speaking countries in Africa and was co-funded by the Governments of Finland and Spain.

On the workshop in Uganda
"I have added to my knowledge in the sense that the country experiences, challenges and successes are information that I would have not read in a textbook. Learning from experts in the field has opened up new possibilities of looking at the problems in FDI, and finding possible solutions."

Victoria Ndzinge-Anderson, Botswana

The Vi has worked hard to "embed" its training after its workshops have ended: this is partly achieved by the Vi's membership model, which offers long-term support. However, following feedback from previous workshops, in 2008 the Vi launched a scheme of mentored research projects. Mentored research projects will be offered on a competitive basis, and successful applicants will have their project supported by an UNCTAD mentor, leading to submission of the final paper for publication or for use in policymaking.

James Njuguna (Kenya) presents his research paper at the investment workshop in Uganda.

Now in its third year, the Vi fellowship scheme also provides support to young academics seeking to develop their skills as researchers or to prepare new teaching courses for their institution. Three of this year's fellows, from Least Developed Countries in Africa (Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda), were supported by a grant from the Government of Finland; and one fellow, from the Russian Federation, participated on a self-funded basis.

"I got comments to improve my study on FDI, and also materials that will enlighten my knowledge on FDI. A number of opportunities in terms of networking in research with some participants and the Vi were secured."

Charles Domician, Tanzania

2- Membership work through joint members' projects and the local adaptation of training materials

2008 began with the third Vi members meeting in Geneva. Two joint research projects were launched and a discussion took place about regional activities in Latin America and support to Vi members from the least developed countries, sponsored by the Governments of Finland and Spain. The meeting also initiated the second round of the Vi's localization programme (the adaptation of generic Vi teaching materials to suit local needs).

Because Vi teaching materials are generic - they are produced for an international audience - they cannot contain detailed information and data about each particular country in which they could be used. To address this issue, the Vi provides grants and expertise for the "localization" of teaching materials to better suit members' local conditions. Additionally, other members who wish to have access to case studies or data from other regions or a country from their own region also make use of the localizations.

"I must say that this experience with the (localization of) teaching material has been a huge experience in many ways [...] and an excellent starting point for further developments in teaching and writing about international negotiations."

Maria-Alejandra Calle, Colombia

3 - Access to expertise through study tours and curricular support

The value added that the Vi brings to its member universities includes UNCTAD's expertise on trade and development matters, as well as the access to the expertise available at partner international organizations. Several Vi services have been built around this comparative advantage: study tours of Geneva institutions for postgraduate students, advisory services on the establishment and design of master's level teaching programmes, video conference presentations and debates with UNCTAD experts, and direct teaching support to university master's programmes. This year, the Vi organized two study tours for its member universities in the Caribbean and in the Russian Federation, with over 70 students involved.

Students from St. Petersburg University, the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, and the Higher School of Economics at the Russian study tour in 2008

In addition to study tours, the Vi also provided advisory and curriculum support to several members, including the Makarere University Business School in Uganda on the development of a master's programme in trade and development. The Vi also facilitated several teaching inputs to master's programmes via the use of video conferencing and direct training.

4 - Access to knowledge through a website, training materials and newsletters

At the start of 2008, the Vi launched a new website with enhanced functionalities to better cater for the needs of its members. The site contains newly produced multi-media resources, and members can now share information and resources more easily and benefit from more opportunities for networking with each other. Towards this end, the Vi also produced four quarterly newsletters during 2008, which keep universities and individuals up to date on network activities, research and teaching opportunities, newly available resources, web-links and publications. During 2008, the Vi updated its teaching material on foreign direct investment and international investment agreements, and also published a new teaching material on the transfer of technology, which had been requested by network members at the second Vi meeting. Work has been started - jointly with the WTO research division and with UNCTAD colleagues working on trade analysis - on converting the Vi teaching material on trade data analysis into a book, by adding chapters and producing a CD-ROM with exercises.

The Vi also provides its members with access to other organizations and their publications, via cooperation agreements that it has developed with several institutions. In 2008, the World Bank, the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe joined existing Vi partners: WTO, the South Centre, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. This increases the opportunities for members to access up-to-date knowledge on trade and development issues.

The Training Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda, or paragraph 166 course as it is also known, primarily targets policymakers - both in ministries and government agencies, and in permanent missions to the United Nations in Geneva. It is delivered in two forms:

1. three-week regional courses for policymakers working in the government

2. short (half-day) courses for Geneva-based diplomats

1 - Three-week regional courses

The participants in the regional course are predominantly government officials who work on specialized tasks in trade ministries, investment agencies or central banks. The course gives them a comprehensive overview of how economic factors such as international trade, finance, investment and technology are related to one another, how they can impact positively on the economic and social development of their countries, and how appropriate policies in these areas can bring gains from the globalized economy.

Participants at the course in Minsk, Belarus

At the end of the course, participants are better able to understand the links between their specific work and the overall economic development objectives of their countries, enabling them to better contribute to the formulation of national trade-related policies and international negotiating positions coherent with their countries' interests. Two three-week regional courses were organized in 2008: one for transition economies in Minsk, Belarus (June-July 2008), and one for Western Asia, held in Manama, Bahrain (October-November 2008). Forty-two participants from 20 countries in the two regions attended the courses.

Participants at the course in Manama, Bahrain

UNCTAD continued inviting academics as both participants and resource persons to the course. The intention is to encourage the integration of course materials and knowledge into regular academic programmes at participating countries' universities. The course also aimed to facilitate exchanges between policymakers and academics so that the academics could better understand policy concerns and the policymakers would be better aware of analytical research and findings that could help them in the formulation of policies.

2 - Short (half-day) courses

The objective of short courses is to update Geneva-based policymakers on the most recent issues and developments on the international economic agenda. The success of the first series of monthly half-day short courses in 2007 led UNCTAD member States to request their continuation in 2008. The programme of the courses is demand-driven: the diplomats propose topics that are of relevance to them. Their suggestions are complemented by courses on emerging topics on which UNCTAD and its individual divisions conduct research work.

In 2008, a series of six short courses for Geneva-based delegations was delivered in the following areas:
- **Trade and environment;**
- **Explaining the capital flow paradox;**
- **SMEs and global value chains;**
- **Aid for trade and development;**
- **Adapting to the new energy realities: trade and development perspectives;**
- **Addressing the global food crisis through trade and development strategies.**

Participants at the short course in Geneva on Aid for Trade and development, September 2008

"I have understood more about the dynamics and the challenges of international trade negotiations. We were exposed to different negotiating positions and the course enhanced my negotiating skills."

Tatiana Sadovskaya, Head of Sector of Innovation Development of the Economy, Institute of Economics, National Academy of Science of Belarus

An average of 47 diplomats from developing, transition and developed countries participated in each short course, with a peak attendance of 63 participants.

The website of regional courses - with online registration - that was launched in 2006 continued to provide downloadable pre-course reading materials and exercises, and its online discussion forum was used in the two regional courses. To facilitate access to short courses for participants and other interested parties not able to attend, course materials are published on the programme's website at *http://p166.unctad.org/shortcourses*. These materials contain not only the Powerpoint presentations and background readings, but, most recently, videos of some presentations given at the courses too.

UNCTAD pays particular attention to the evaluation of the regional courses' impact and their multiplier effects in participating countries. A first evaluation is conducted at the end of each course; six months later, a follow-up evaluation is conducted to check how the course knowledge was actually used and whether participants' plans have been implemented. The course team stays in touch with the participants to follow up, provide further assistance, and keep track of participants' work.

Over the years, TrainForTrade has developed expertise in promoting local ownership of training in the field of trade-related and development issues, by involving multiple stakeholders from relevant ministries, private institutions, and from academia and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Evaluations carried out by independent experts acknowledge the results obtained through the programme's approach to capacity-building.
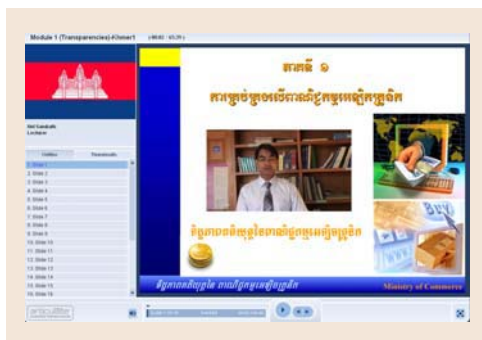
The TrainForTrade training and capacity-building strategy is based on three elements:

- **A sound methodology for the development and continuous updating of pedagogical material;**

- **A flexible learning method that includes both face-to-face deliveries and the use of distance-learning tools adapted to the technological conditions of all developing countries, including least developed countries;**

- **An institutional approach which promotes local ownership through the setting-up of national/regional steering groups and train-the-trainer activities.**

In 2008, the TrainForTrade programme continued its **training and capacity-building activities** with the financial support of the Governments of France, Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain, as well as of the European Commission, the Integrated Framework, and the members of its Port Training Programme.

It continued revising, updating and adapting its courses to better meet beneficiaries' needs in cooperation with other UNCTAD divisions and programmes:

- An updated version of the course material on Third Generation Investment Promotion, targeting member countries of the Latin American and the Caribbean Economic System (SELA) is now available in English. A distance-learning version of the same course is also available in the Lao language.

- The distance-learning course, on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce and the course on Competition Law and Policy have been adapted into Khmer. New versions of the workshops, for the training of instructors and distance-learning tutors, are now offered in both Khmer and Lao. These courses are now used to train local trainers and distance-learning tutors for course deliveries in Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Distance learning course in Khmer

Distance learning course in Lao

- Updated versions of the distance-learning courses on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce and on International Investment Agreements were prepared in Spanish and uploaded to the TrainForTrade platform at *http://learn.unctad.org* for the use of trade operators from the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and its secretariat.

In addition, during 2008 TrainForTrade organized three high-level workshops in Phnom Penh, Valencia, and Bamako respectively, on:

- training and trade-related issues (February);

- training and port management issues (March);

- training and sustainable tourism issues (October).

These meetings offered the possibility of discussing new technical assistance activities for South-East Asia, Latin America and French-speaking African countries.

In 2008, seven train-the-trainer courses, one of which was for distance-learning tutors, were organized for 106 African, Asian and Latin American trade operators who can now take an active part in local seminars, and initiate training schemes in their countries. Also, a total of 21 face-to-face and distance-learning workshops benefited 609 trade operators (about 229 women and 380 men) from 39 developing countries, including 17 least developed countries. About 291 of these trainees followed distance-learning courses all over the world. These workshops were organized in cooperation with other UNCTAD services, such as the Information and Communication Technologies Analysis Section; the Trade, Environment, Climate Change and Sustainable Development Branch; the Competition and Consumer Protection Branch; the Enterprise Development Branch and the Policy and Capacity-Building Branch.

Activities in Africa

In 2008, technical assistance activities were launched in Angola for the strengthening of the country's training and institutional capacities in the field of international trade. Thanks to the funds made available by the European Commission, TrainForTrade carried out an in-depth needs assessment mission in Luanda to discuss with the national steering committee the priority actions to be taken. Based on such plan, the programme implemented an extensive programme on international investment agreements. Assistance was also provided to government officials, judges and lawyers to draft a competition law. A regional training of port trainers was organized, and the design of specific training material on trade, energy and environment was begun.

In 2008, a joint UNCTAD/ ITC project was signed for the "Strengthening of Guinean capacities in the field of international trade through training, support to intermediate institutions and direct assistance to food-processing businesses and units", funded by the French Development Agency. In cooperation with the Ministry of Trade and Competitiveness of Guinea, project activities were launched on 28 October 2008 in Conakry with the establishment of an annual work plan.

In the area of sustainable tourism for development, TrainForTrade continued to promote its training and capacity-building activities for African countries. As a follow-up to the decisions taken during the regional seminar on sustainable tourism held in Geneva in November 2007, TrainForTrade organized a regional workshop on sustainable tourism for development, targeting French-speaking African countries, which was held in Bamako, Mali, in October 2008. The event was attended by participants from Burkina Faso, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali,

Tourism ministers of Guinea, Mali and Mauritania pose with participants in the Coordination Meeting on Tourism for Sustainable Development, in Bamako, on 19 October 2008.

Mauritania and Senegal, and also by representatives from donor institutions. Recommendations adopted at the workshop valued the importance of training and capacity-development activities in this field for least developed countries.

Moreover, a joint UNCTAD /ITC project to promote "Sustainable Community Tourism" in Benin was signed. This 18-month project aims at developing local capacities in tourism in Abomey, Ganvié and Ouidah. It is funded under the Integrated Framework of Benin.

Activities in Latin America

TrainForTrade has recently been very active in Latin America, consolidating its results with successful course deliveries and by the expansion of its activities to new countries and topics, with the support of the Spain. The programme organized several missions to Central American countries to analyze training needs, and prepared capacity-building work plans. In this framework, a training for distance-learning tutors was organized in Guatemala City, in May 2008. This allowed the network of TrainForTrade distance-learning tutors, which had been developed the previous year, to expand to all Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America.

In cooperation with the ICT Analysis Section, a four-week distance-learning seminar was delivered on the "Legal aspects of e-commerce" in August and September to 99 participants from 10 ALADI member States.

A distance-learning regional course targeting negotiators on international investment agreements was delivered via the UNCTAD distance-learning platform to 108 policy-makers and local experts from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

From the distance-learning course on "Legal Aspects of e-Commerce":
"I consider that the workshop was very interesting and comprehensive with regard to the duties I am fulfilling in the field of consumer protection; and I am convinced that it will enhance the work I do thanks to the acquired knowledge."

"In my opinion it is vital to develop these types of courses where participants have the possibility of exchanging their experiences with all the professionals involved in the development of e-commerce issues."

Participants from the ALADI member countries

In cooperation with the Latin American and the Caribbean Economic System (SELA), TrainForTrade and the UNCTAD Investment Facilitation Section organized a regional training course on "Investment targeting for economic and social development". The workshop was held in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in November 2008.

Activities in Asia   The year 2008 saw progress towards local ownership of the activities carried out under the TrainForTrade project for Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic through the transfer of the project management to local authorities. Stronger partnerships with the Cambodian Royal School of Administration and the Lao Economic Research Institute for Trade were discussed. National networks of trainers and distance-learning tutors were established in both countries. Capacity-building activities, such as the organization of training seminars and round-table meetings, are now being organized and run by local teams.

In February 2008, the TrainForTrade programme organized the UNCTAD High-Level Conference on Trade-Related Capacity Development in Selected East-Asian Countries, in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. One hundred and thirty-five representatives from Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Viet Nam, as well as from France and other donor countries and organizations, attended the event, which was opened by the UNCTAD Secretary-General and the Cambodian Minister of Commerce. The conference adopted a concluding statement, in which the participants reaffirmed their commitment towards trade-related capacity-development programmes such as those developed by the UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme.

Port Training Programme   With the involvement of the ports of Conakry, Colombo, Cotonou, Dakar, Dar es Salaam, Douala, Dublin, Dunkirk, Ghent, Gijón, Kuantan, Leixões, Lomé, Malé, Marseille, Medan, Mindelo, Phnom Penh, Praia, Sabang, Sihanoukville, Takoradi, Tema and Valencia, the TrainForTrade/Port Training Programme continued its training and capacity-building activities in the framework of its English-, French-, Portuguese- and Spanish-speaking networks, and in Khmer for Cambodian ports.

In 2008, the African port members of the French-speaking TrainForTrade Port Training Network continued to implement the Port Training Programme and delivered new cycles of the Modern Port Management course. About 78 participants from the port communities of Cotonou, Douala, Dakar and Lomé prepared their final assignments, to be presented before a panel of port experts in order to be granted the UNCTAD Port Certificates in 2009. The participants from the Conakry Autonomous Port in Guinea were trained on the Modern Port Management course in 2007 and presented their assignments in 2008.

Two train-the-trainer workshops were organized for port operators of the French-speaking Network.

- The first course took place in Marseille, France, from 18 February to 7 March 2008 and was carried out in cooperation with the Autonomous Port of Marseille, with the financial support of the Regional Authority of Provence-Alps-Côte d'Azur. It taught the 20 participants from Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritania, Senegal and Togo how to deliver the modules 5 to 8 of the TrainForTrade course on Modern Port Management

course, thereby completing the train-the-trainer cycle which had been started in Marseille in 2007 with the workshop on modules 1 to 4.
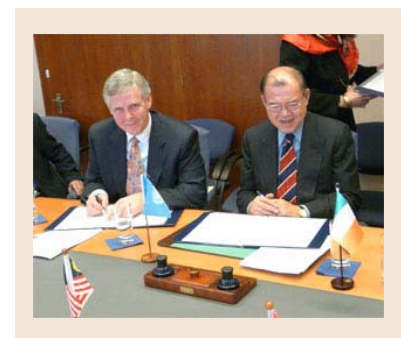
- The second course was held in Cotonou, Benin, from 19 to 30 May 2008 - in cooperation with the Autonomous Port of Cotonou, and funded by the Government of Greece. It focused on techniques to improve the participants' training skills, and benefited 18 port operators from Benin, Cameroon, Guinea, Senegal and Togo.

A three-week regional train-the-trainer workshop for Portuguese-speaking port communities in Africa was organized in Luanda, Angola, in July 2008, with the support of the Port Authority of Luanda. This workshop concluded the training cycle started in Portugal in July 2006. In parallel, a coordination meeting of the Portuguese-speaking network was organized with representatives of Angola, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. The conclusions of the meeting recommended, inter alia, the extension of the programme to the ports of Mozambique.

In 2008, in response to the recommendations made during the Dublin Coordination Conference of June 2007, fact-finding missions were organized jointly by UNCTAD and the Dublin Port Company (Ireland) in Ghana, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and the United Republic of Tanzania to assess the needs of local port communities in the areas of human resources development, training and capacity building. Based on their results, TrainForTrade organized the first train-the-trainers workshop on "Modern Port Management" (phase I)" for the English-speaking Port Training Programme network. Senior managers from the port communities of Accra, Dar es Salaam, Kuantan, Male, Medan, Sabang, Takoradi and Tema attended the event that was held in Dublin, Ireland, in September and October 2008.

An international coordination meeting of the UNCTAD Port Training Programme for Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America was organized in Valencia, Spain, in March 2008, in cooperation with the ports of Gijón and Valencia. Thirty-two representatives from eleven Spanish-speaking port communities in Latin America expressed their interest in the Port Training Programme, and invited all Spanish-speaking port communities to get involved in the TrainForTrade Port Training Programme. As a follow-up to the conference, several fact-finding missions were organized in the region, followed by the organization of a train-the-trainers workshop in Gijón, Spain in November 2008.

In December 2008, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the CEO of the Dublin Port Company signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which established an official framework of cooperation between the two entities for the benefit of English-speaking port communities in developing countries.

Left: Mr. Joe Burk, CEO of Dublin Port Company
Right: Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD

TRADE LOGISTICS - Overview

"Trade facilitation and access to efficient transport systems, as well as improvement of productive capacities, are essential for trade competitiveness. Ineffective trade procedures, excessive transport costs and lack of connectivity undermine the export competitiveness of developing countries, especially landlocked developing countries. Developing countries also face increasing demands to comply with different requirements in respect of maritime trade and supply-chain security" (Accra Accord, para.121).

Trade-based globalization has been enabled by advances in transport and communications. Modern supply chains fully incorporate the distribution and inventory segments of global production and distribution processes.

Developing countries, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries aim to integrate better into the global trading systems. For that, they will have to improve transport services and infrastructure; facilitate trade and transit operations; build appropriate institutional and technological capacities; and ensure adequate regulatory frameworks.

The Trade Logistics Branch assists developing countries in identifying their particular needs and priorities, and helps them programme the implementation of specific trade and transport facilitation measures.

D. Trade Logistics

The capacity to trade competitively in the global economy depends upon efficient and reliable transport services to reach overseas markets. Recent years have witnessed a significant evolution in the way goods are traded, transported, distributed and sourced, where freight and insurance costs have become major export-competitiveness factors. In this context, developing countries are faced nowadays with a changing set of challenges when building logistics solutions linking productions processes to global value chains.

UNCTAD carries out work in the area of transport and trade facilitation, which encompasses research and consensus-building activities, as well as capacity-building, advisory services and technical assistance projects under the Trade Logistics Branch. The Branch consists of three sections - one on t*ransport*; one on *trade facilitation* and one on *policy and legislation* - as well as the largest UNCTAD technical assistance programme, the *ASYCUDA Customs modernization programme*. Because of the size of the ASYCUDA programme, it is covered in a separate chapter.

Member States recognize the importance of trade and transport, including trade facilitation. Five mandates were given to UNCTAD to be carried out by the Trade Logistics Branch, as agreed upon at UNCTAD XII in April 2008:

1. In the area of trade facilitation, transport and related services of interest to developing countries, UNCTAD should continue to **analyze** issues that affect the **trade and transport** of developing countries and international supply-chain security. It should also disseminate its analyses and relevant information, and promote the exchange of experiences (Accra Accord, para. 164).

2. UNCTAD should undertake research to develop policy recommendations that will enable developing countries to **cut transport costs** and improve **transport efficiency and connectivity.** The research should pay special attention to the needs of the most vulnerable economies, and in particular to the development and implementation of coherent **transit systems** that will benefit landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries, taking into account the Almaty Ministerial Declaration and Programme of Action. Attention should also be paid to the promotion of multimodal transport (Accra Accord, para. 165).

3. UNCTAD should continue to provide capacity-building and technical assistance to policymakers and other stakeholders in developing countries on such issues as reducing **transport costs** and improving **transport connectivity and competitiveness**, developing and implementing appropriate institutional and legal frameworks, and devising and implementing national and international actions to promote **transport and trade facilitation**, including in **transit corridors**. It should coordinate this work with other relevant organizations where appropriate. It should continue to assist developing countries in **transport** and **trade facilitation** negotiations, including in the context of the Doha Round, and in ensuring the effective implementation of agreed rules and standards (Accra Accord, para. 166).

4. UNCTAD should continue to provide assistance to developing countries to design and implement policies and actions aimed at improving the efficiency of **trade transactions** as well as the management of **transport operations**. It should also continue to cooperate with member States in implementing ASYCUDA, the automated system for Customs data (Accra Accord, para. 167).

5. Through its research and policy analysis, UNCTAD should help developing countries make informed policy choices to address environmental challenges in relation to **transport strategies,** and to help identify associated capacity-building needs and appropriate regulatory responses (Accra Accord, para. 168).

In 2008, **research and analysis** focused on transport costs, liner shipping connectivity, fleet and seaborne trade developments, inland transport and transit trade, maritime and supply-chain security, the national implementation of internationally agreed rules and standards, and legal issues affecting the trade and transport in developing countries. Activities also focused on some emerging issues such as the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change, concerns about energy security, and the impact of oil prices on transport costs and global trade flows. The outcome of research and analytical work is disseminated through publications, and through presentations and lectures at seminars and conferences.

1- Review of Maritime Transport

With more than 80 per cent of international trade in goods being carried by sea, and an even higher percentage of seaborne trade in the case of most developing countries, the *Review of Maritime Transport* continues to offer a valuable source of information for a broad audience. Maritime transport has been a channel of economic development and prosperity throughout its history, enabling trade and contact between all nations. This fortieth edition contains a unique time series of key shipping statistics, including the volume of seaborne trade, the registration of national fleets, the true ownership of ships, transport cost indicators, liner shipping connectivity, and national port traffic data. It also reports on key legal and regulatory developments affecting transportation and trade. In its regional chapter, the Review discusses developments in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting important growth in the region.

D.1   Trade Logistics
Transport, Trade Facilitation & Policy and Legislation

2- Oil prices, transport costs and trade

The very topical issue of volatile oil prices and their potential implications for transport and trade warranted special coverage. A preliminary and timely assessment of the potential implications of the record high oil prices witnessed in the course of 2008 was presented both in the *Review of Maritime Transport 2008* and in the web-based *Transport Newsletters.* In addition, an empirical study was initiated investigating the interplay between oil prices, maritime transport costs and trade, an abstract of which can be found in Transport Newsletter no 39, at *http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=2651&lang=1.*

3- Transport law

In the field of transport law, analysis has begun of the complex provisions contained in the new United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2008. The new Convention, which is to be known as "The Rotterdam Rules", is intended as a modern successor to established international maritime liability regimes, but it would also apply to multimodal transport involving an international sea-leg. UNCTAD had, over the previous seven years, actively contributed to the deliberations of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Working Group on Transport Law, and had prepared a number of written submissions for consideration by the Working Group. Now that the Convention has been adopted, the aim of the secretariat's work is to provide advice and assistance to Governments, in particular in developing countries, with regard to their assessment of the potential implications of the new international legal instrument.

4- Liner Shipping connectivity index (LSCI)

Ninety per cent of the exports of developing countries depend on international maritime transport services. Access to world markets is, thus, based on the availability of regular and efficient maritime transport connections, especially liner shipping services. UNCTAD's Liner Shipping Connectivity Index (LSCI) aims at capturing a country's level of integration into the global liner shipping network by measuring the liner shipping connectivity. The LSCI has been generated annually for 163 countries since July 2004.

Shipping connectivity is closely related to higher trade volumes and to lower transport costs. Enhancing a country's connectivity contributes to its trade competitiveness, while at the same time, higher trade volumes will usually also lead to an improved connectivity and lower transport costs. UNCTAD's research over the last five years has shown that a country's connectivity depends on three main factors: Firstly, high trade volumes attract shipping services; secondly, a country's geographical position near the main routes of the global shipping network make a port call more attractive for the shipping lines; and thirdly, aspects related to port efficiency such as infrastructure, private-sector investment or trade facilitation have shown to be positively correlated with a country's LSCI.

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The components of the LSCI include data on ships, container carrying capacity, vessel sizes, and also the number of companies that provide regular liner services to and from a country's ports. The average values for most components have increased over the last five years, notably the number of ships (+9 per cent), their total carrying capacity (+38 per cent), and the maximum vessel sizes (+37 per cent). By comparison, liner services (-3 per cent) and the number of companies (-11 per cent) have decreased. The latter trend raises concerns with regard to the level of competition, especially in countries that are less well connected, where mergers and acquisitions among shipping lines may increase the dependency of traders on a small number of service providers.

At UNCTAD XII in Accra, UNCTAD was entrusted with the responsibility of leading and supporting a multi-year expert meeting to address trade logistics issues in developing countries, in particular in the least developed countries, in landlocked and transit-developing countries, and in small island developing States.

This multi-year expert meeting aims at **consensus-building** and at contributing to a coherent discussion of trade facilitation issues and actions that could be taken by developing countries to cut transport and transaction costs by improving transport efficiency and connectivity, strengthening their legal frameworks, and promoting trade facilitation. Other possible outcomes include specific proposals and practical solutions for reforms and improvements in transport operations and procedures at border crossings and ports, as well as in the corresponding legal and regulatory frameworks.

1- Almaty Programme of Action

Throughout 2008, UNCTAD was actively engaged in the preparation of the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action - which took place in New York in October 2008 - providing support to six meetings organized by sister organizations. In July 2008, UNCTAD organized a global preparatory meeting on the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, to consider recent progress in trade facilitation for the benefit of landlocked and transit-developing countries and to look at new opportunities for the next five years until 2013. Among the key actions mentioned in the Chair's summary are the following:

- Deepening the understanding of the costs involved for landlocked countries;

- Implementing capacity-building programmes aimed at setting up collaborative mechanisms on specific corridors, and developing competences accordingly;

> **"Policies are needed to promote competitive and effective transportation systems for both landlocked and transit-developing countries, in particular in the framework of bilateral and regional arrangements. In this context, full support should be given to the comprehensive and timely implementation of the Almaty Ministerial Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action. All efforts must be made to ensure that the outcome of the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, to be held in 2008, contributes to the establishment of efficient transit and transport systems, addressing the challenges of transit developing countries, and the integration of landlocked developing countries into the international trading system, while taking note of the Ulaanbaatar Declaration" (Accra Accord, para. 141).**

- Promoting targeted projects within landlocked and transit-developing countries;

- Assisting groups of countries on a corridor, or within a trading sub-region, to address systemic transit issues, based on international best practices;

- Developing sustainable transit corridor performance measurement systems.

2- Negotiations on trade facilitation

UNCTAD's coordinated activities in support of the on-going trade facilitation negotiations within the framework of WTO's Doha Development Agenda entered their fourth year in 2008. Active participation in the WTO negotiations requires a sound understanding of the WTO process, as well as knowledge and awareness of the countries' trade facilitation needs. UNCTAD activities provide support and training for developing countries during the negotiation process.

During 2008 UNCTAD's activities focused on analysis of countries' trade facilitation needs - in particular, their technical assistance requirements for the implementation of the future negotiated agreement. This was done on the basis of a methodology developed by the annex D organizations.

The WTO secretariat uses this methodology to conduct national self-assessments workshops in WTO member countries. These trade facilitation needs assessments aim at evaluating countries' level of compliance with the current proposals, identifying necessary implementation adjustments and measuring technical assistance needs. UNCTAD, as an annex D organization, participated as lead facilitator in national workshops held in Burkina Faso, Colombia, Dominica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Grenada, Mali, Pakistan and Yemen. In addition, UNCTAD participated in one regional workshop for Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Saint Kitts and Nevis.

UNCTAD plays a key role in providing support to developing countries in the negotiations on trade facilitation, and its significant role as an annex D organization is widely recognized.

Conscious of the important role of these analyses for the negotiations and for overall policy coherence, UNCTAD also assists developing countries with preparatory work, in particular setting up and strengthening the capacity of the members of the multi-agency working groups on trade facilitation. In 2008, beneficiaries of such country-focused preparatory work were Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and Mali; and on a regional basis, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) secretariat and those OECS member States that are members of WTO.

Furthermore, UNCTAD organized a regional workshop for members of the Latin American Integration Association, to encourage the exchange of experience in the area of trade facilitation reforms and to facilitate discussion on countries' needs and expectations from the WTO negotiations.

D.1 Trade Logistics
———— Transport, Trade Facilitation & Policy and Legislation

In 2008, UNCTAD continued to be actively involved in **technical assistance** and capacity-building activities, and to provide advisory services on a variety of issues. In these activities, UNCTAD frequently cooperated with other organizations in managing seminars, workshops, training courses and national projects.

Specific actions are proposed to make the best use of available trade and transport-related assets. Focus is placed on eliminating, wherever possible, barriers that might unduly increase transaction costs or create unnecessary delays. The approach to technical assistance and capacity-building relies on the development of trade and transport facilitation administrative reform tools, the provision of assistance to the multilateral negotiating process, and tailor-made trade and transport facilitation projects at the national and regional level.

> **"UNCTAD should provide technical assistance to landlocked developing countries and transit developing countries to help them ensure that adequate and efficient infrastructure and services as well as effective transport arrangements are in place to support trade" (Accra Accord, para. 107).**

The Trade Logistics Branch supported the **Palestinian Shippers' Council** by providing two workshops in the West Bank cities of Ramallah and Jericho from 6 to 10 October 2008 and from 24 to 28 October 2008. The workshops, which were attended by approximately 80 representatives of government agencies, the private sector and international organizations, included presentations on trade facilitation, import and export procedures, transit, electronic trade documents, Single Window, the determinants of freight costs, and the organization of the shipping industry. UNCTAD staff also assisted the Board of the Palestinian Shippers' Council in identifying future goals and activities for the Council.

Trade facilitation is a key issue for the development of **Afghanistan** as a landlocked and least developed country that faces serious challenges in the areas of security and contraband. Afghanistan's National Development Strategy states that: "Increased priority will be given to regional economic cooperation initiatives aimed at developing regional transportation and transit infrastructure, facilitating regional trade and investment flows, and developing Afghanistan as a regional business hub linking Central and East Asia with the Middle East and South Asia."

UNCTAD is collaborating with Afghanistan's Ministry of Commerce and Industry in a range of trade facilitation reforms and capacity-building activities. UNCTAD's support forms part of the Emergency Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation Project in Afghanistan, which is financed by the World Bank and executed by United Nations Office for Project Services.

UNCTAD has been instrumental in various areas, including in the drafting of an Afghanistan-Pakistan transit agreement which is presently being negotiated by the Governments; the restructuring of the International Transit and Border Port Department at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; a comprehensive training package with the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations and the Afghan Association of Freight Forwarding Companies; the creation of Afghanistan's Trade Facilitation Committee; and supporting Afghanistan's WTO accession process.

In the field of capacity-building with regard to **transit issues and landlocked developing countries**, UNCTAD played a leading role in carrying out successful seminars and workshops that were attended by a large number of participants. These included discussions and consultations in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, and in other capitals of the member States of the Economics Cooperation Organization, on the multimodal transport project and on subjects related to trade facilitation. Other seminars held in the Islamic Republic of Iran included the Transit and Eastern Corridor Development and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework meeting. A number of national workshops on multimodal transport in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were held in 2008 too.

Cooperative arrangements have been established with academic institutions in Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and with the World Maritime University in Sweden. Their staff regularly contribute to international conferences and seminars. Their contributions are made by being part of the teaching body of UNCTAD capacity-building programmes, notably the Training Courses on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda, TrainForTrade's Port Training Programme of the TrainForTrade programme, and the Virtual Institute. In 2008, these contributions included lectures at UNCTAD programmes in Geneva, and also in Bahrain, Belarus, Ireland, Mauritius and Spain.

In March 2008, a contribution was made to the UNCTAD meeting with port partners of the TrainForTrade programme for **Latin American ports,** which was held in Valencia, Spain.

In September 2008, the first training programme for the **English-speaking network of port communities** commenced with the contribution of several staff members from UNCTAD in the areas of trade and transport.

The aim of these courses is to assist the participants in creating their own port training programme. This involved a sharing of knowledge and experience, which helped to identify strengths and weaknesses, and also partnership opportunities through the network of port partners. In November 2008, delivery of the first course for **Spanish-speaking network of port communities** took place in Gijón, Spain, to which UNCTAD staff contributed parts of modules 1 and 2 of the train-the-trainers TrainForTrade course for Latin American ports.

Participants at a port training module, held in Gijón, Spain

UNCTAD courses on key issues of international trade were held in June-July 2008 for **Eastern European and Central Asian countries,** in Minsk, Belarus; and in October-November for **Western Asian countries,** in Manama, Bahrain. A contribution was made to module 4 of the course, with a two-day introduction to international transport and trade facilitation. The focus was placed on recent developments in transit and maritime infrastructures and services, as well as on the issues, stakes and main players of the ongoing negotiations on trade facilitation at WTO.

D.1 Trade Logistics
Transport, Trade Facilitation & Policy and Legislation

In February 2008, at the Institute of Management of Logistics of the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, and in December 2008 at the Hautes Études Commerciales of the University of Geneva, UNCTAD organized and delivered two one-week intensive programme modules concerning key and current issues in trade logistics and shipping, to postgraduate students of various nationalities. It also contributed to delivering a training programme in the area of port-related topics at the Institute of Transport and Maritime Management at the University of Antwerp.
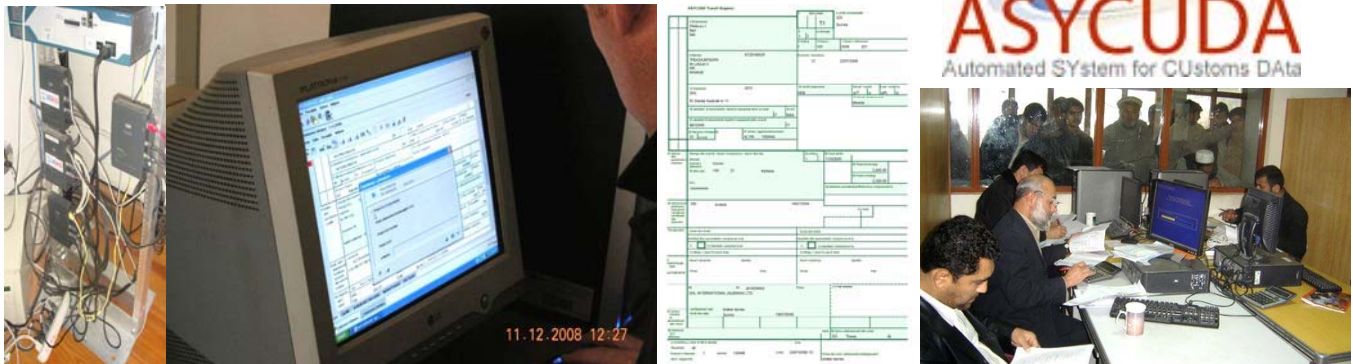
UNCTAD's *Transport Newsletter* is produced four times per year and sent out to a growing number of subscribers in electronic format.

The *Transport Newsletter* updates our readers on recent and upcoming events, including UNCTAD events, for example: Trade Logistics and Global Value Chains, Globalization of Port Logistics: Opportunities and Challenges for Developing Countries. It also covers other organizations' events that are considered to be of interest to our members. By the same token, information is provided on ongoing projects and publications, not only by UNCTAD, but also by other organizations, including our Global Facilitation Partnership partners. The *Transport Newsletter* has, thus, been established as an important forum of exchange for key players involved in international transport and trade facilitation.

The *Transport Newsletter* includes short, topical articles on a variety of issues, including in 2008:
- **Fuel Prices, Transport Costs and the Geography of Trade;**
- **The ASYCUDA Single Window for International Trade;**
- **Trade Facilitation Opportunities for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries;**
- **The National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee of Afghanistan;**
- **Recent Developments in ICTs for Trade Facilitation;**
- **UNCTAD's Liner Shipping Connectivity Index;**
- **Transit Corridors;**
- **Declining Freight Rates: Opportunities and Challenges for Developing Economies;**
- **Boom and Bust in Shipping;**
- **Needs and Priorities in the WTO Negotiations on Trade Facilitation.**

CUSTOMS MODERNIZATION AND AUTOMATION (ASYCUDA) - Overview

Customs revenue constitutes a significant proportion of government revenue for many developing countries, particularly the least developed.

ASYCUDA is a customs management system covering most foreign trade procedures, ranging from manifests and customs declarations to accounting, transit and suspense procedures.

Through technical assistance projects, the effectiveness of customs clearance procedures is increased by:

- Modernizing customs operations and helping to improve revenue collection;
- Facilitating trade efficiency and competitiveness by substantially reducing transaction time and costs;
- Improving security by streamlining procedures of cargo control, transit of goods and clearance of goods;
- Helping fight corruption by enhancing the transparency of transactions;
- Promoting sustainable development by cutting down on the use of paper.

E.   Customs Modernization and Automation
ASYCUDA Programme

The efficiency of the Customs administration is an essential part of a country's good governance policy and an essential tool for trade facilitation. Customs departments help governments to deal with national and international policies associated with revenue collection and the combating of fraud. They control the import of prohibited and restricted goods and provide statistical data on external trade for government analysis and planning.

The main objective of the Automated System for Customs Data (*ASYCUDA*) programme, which falls under the Trade Logistics Branch, is the modernization of Customs, using information technology to speed up and simplify the goods clearance process, while preserving Customs-collected revenue for the State budget. The production and availability of reliable and timely trade and fiscal statistical data to assist the governments in their economic planning is equally an important goal of the ASYCUDA programme.

> **"UNCTAD should continue to provide assistance to developing countries to design and implement policies and actions aimed at improving the efficiency of trade transactions as well as the management of transport operations. It should also continue to cooperate with member States in implementing ASYCUDA, the automated system for customs data"** (Accra Accord, para. 167).

> **The ASYCUDA programme is UNCTAD's first flagship technical assistance programme that operates in over 90 countries in all regions of the world. See:** *http://www.asycuda.org*

ASYCUDA **technical assistance** projects are established for an implementation in the shortest possible time and within the institutional and environmental context of each administration. Project implementation activities include a comprehensive training package that allows for the transfer of ASYCUDA know-how and skills to national staff, thus ensuring that the programme can be sustained by the national administration after the closure of the project.

In 2008, there were 24 ongoing projects in West and East Africa, 7 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 9 in the Arab region, 10 in the Asia-Pacific region, and 4 in Europe. In addition, there were 8 inter-regional projects, leading to a total of 62 projects.

A hundred and eighty missions were undertaken to offer advisory services and training. A hundred and seventeen training sessions were organized on technical and functional issues allowing for the full transfer of ASYCUDA know-how and skills to national staff, thus ensuring sustainability of the system by national administrations. In total, about 2,000 people were trained, of whom the majority were in Africa, followed by the Arab region.

New country projects in 2008

In 2008, new projects were signed with Anguilla, Dominica, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands; and with Chad, Liberia, Maldives, the Republic of Moldova, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, and Tunisia. Different types of projects exist for: *(i)* direct implementation of ASYCUDAWorld; *(ii)* migration from ASYCUDA++ to ASYCUDAWorld or *(iii)* for the provision of ongoing support to the existing user countries, such as El Salvador and Nicaragua.

E.   Customs Modernization and Automation
ASYCUDA Programme

Two regional projects were signed in Africa. The first one is related to the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), which will provide for the interconnection of all the Customs administrations of the region, allowing for the development and the implementation of an international transit monitoring system using ASYCUDAWorld technology. The second is a continuation of the South-East Africa ASYCUDA Centre (SEATAC) project, providing support tot all the ASCUDA user countries in the region.

Developments in technology

The ASYCUDAWorld software is constantly being enhanced. 2008 saw the implementation of a more complete and flexible transit system to cope with the specific needs of client nations, a state-of-the-art integrated tariff module, and a new concept of national and system configuration. The configuration is the tool for countries to adapt the system to their national requirements without programming. This is primarily achieved by technical strengthening of the system and by the development of new functionalities by the central team in Geneva. It also includes functional developments that are undertaken in the user countries and are found to be beneficial to all users.

Activities in countries

In 2008, multiple African countries benefited from technical assistance from the ASYCUDA programme in system implementation, enhancement or ongoing support. These are Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The ASYCUDA component of the Emergency Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation Project in **Afghanistan** has contributed significantly over the last four years to the ongoing organization and functioning of the Afghan Customs Department, in line with international standards and best practice in the Customs sector.

In 2008, the activities of the ASYCUDA project focused on two main areas: functional and technical support of the operational ASYCUDA transit system, and the implementation of the ASYCUDA Import and Export Declaration Processing System in Jalalabad Customs House - one of the biggest Customs offices in Afghanistan.

Jalalabad Customs House

E. Customs Modernization and Automation
ASYCUDA Programme

The ASYCUDA transit is fully operational (100 per cent direct trader input) on the four main transit axes, i.e. with the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The implementation of the ASYCUDA Declaration Processing System in the Jalalabad Customs House was a big step forward. More than 120 Customs brokers/traders and 80 Customs officers in Jalalabad have been trained in the operation of the system. In addition, the Afghan ASYCUDA team attended an ASYCUDA Communications training course and an ASYCUDA Risk Management training course in Geneva.

Risk Management course at UNCTAD, Geneva

ASYCUDA signed a three-year regional project for Africa with the **Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC)** in August 2008, with a funding of €2.9 million from the European Commission. It covers Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

The project has four main objectives, namely:

1. To develop a regional transit management system using ASYCUDAWorld, and to implement it on two transit corridors: Douala (Cameroon) - Bangui (Central African Republic), and Douala-N'jamena (Chad);
2. To collect, compile and provide transit statistics to the CEMAC Commission;
3. To install the ASYCUDA system at the Customs officers School in Bangui;
4. To homogenize the national systems up to ASYCUDA++ (version 1.18e).

Startup activities were launched, including recruitment of staff for the regional office that will be located in Bangui. During the week beginning 27 October 2008, a meeting was held in Douala on the management of regional transit, with the participation of representatives of CEMAC countries and of the World Bank. A work plan was established at the meeting and the user requirements were assessed.

> **"Customs administrations around the world have been modernizing their administrative and operational activities in order to face up to the challenges of the fast-changing global economy. As part of the global community, Eritrea cannot be left behind in this drive towards modernization. Several efforts have been made to computerize some of the department's operation. […] The department is already reaping good benefits from these successful implementations, as declarations are keyed-in by agents (direct trader input), and there is faster clearance time of goods and transparent revenue collection, with up-to-date statistics and useful management reports to efficiently monitor the day-to-day activities of the Customs declaration processing."**
>
> *Message from Mr. Fessahaie Haile, Director General, Eritrea Customs Department*
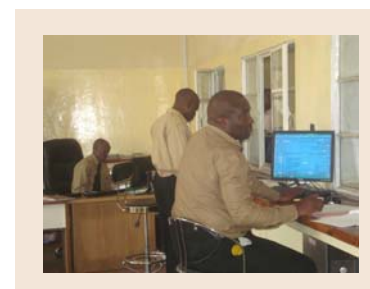
E.   Customs Modernization and Automation
ASYCUDA Programme

ASYCUDA project achievements in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)** have led to an impressive 70 per cent rise in revenue collection by the country's Customs administration since the project's implementation. Further to figures recently presented to UNCTAD by Mr. Lufama Makanda - Customs director of Katanga province - about $111 million of Customs revenue was collected in the second semester of 2008 while using ASYCUDA++, compared with approximately $66 million in the two previous semesters when manual procedures were in place.

ASYCUDA training course in Katanga (above) and Customs Office in Katanga (below)

Thanks to this excellent outcome, the Customs administration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo requested UNCTAD to conduct a feasibility study for the implementation of ASYCUDA++ at the Port of Matadi. Moreover, with the intention of extending the project to cover all principal Customs offices, funds are being secured from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and donor funds mobilized.

The ASYCUDA++ implementation in the Katanga province started in August 2006 as a COMESA Project funded by the European Commission and executed by UNCTAD. The project provided equipment and two resident ASYCUDA consultants to start the modernization and computerization of five main Customs offices in Katanga province, namely: the headquarters at Lubumbashi; the Customs training centre and warehouse office; the Kasumbalesa office at the border with Zambia (transit movement by truck); the Sakania office at the border with Zambia (transit movement by rail); and the Kolwezi office.

Some 400 Customs officers, and 100 stakeholders - including clearing and freight forwarding agents, importers/exporters and bank officials - were trained through the project. A comprehensive programme of training was developed, based on international best practices, which included ASYCUDA, Customs procedures, taxation, valuation and rules of origin.

"An increase of $5 million in Customs revenue was collected at the port of Port-au-Prince in the month of December 2008 compared with the same month in 2007."

Mr. Jean-Jacques Valentin, Director General of the Customs Administration of Haiti

The impressive figures presented by the director-general of the Customs administration of **Haiti** are a result of joined efforts by the Customs administration and by international partners, among which is UNCTAD's ASYCUDA programme, to put in place good governance, IT know-how and an automated customs system.

E.   Customs Modernization and Automation
ASYCUDA Programme

The ASYCUDA programme has been in Haiti for some years. ASYCUDAWorld, the latest version, was installed in 2008 at the headquarters of the Customs administration and at the airport. On 1 December 2008, it was installed at the port, which covers 90 per cent of the revenues collected and accounts for 70 per cent of the country's revenue, as stated by Mr. Valentin. There is currently a roll-out to five other Customs offices.

> "Having an automated system will help in the modernization of Customs and lead to increased transparency, the speeding-up of clearance processes, reduction of corruption and better assistance to the business community, and will allow the production of reliable statistical data. The first data are expected to be produced in the upcoming weeks."
>
> *Mr. Jean-Jacques Valentin, Director General of the Customs Administration of Haiti*

In the **Asia-Pacific region**, the ASYCUDA regional centres continued to provide support to Bangladesh, the Maldives, Nepal, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Vanuatu, Timor-Leste and Yemen, while the implementation of the transit and the declaration processing systems was extended in Afghanistan. ASYCUDAWorld was successfully deployed in 2008 - with full direct data input by traders - in Sihanoukville, the largest seaport of Cambodia. In the Maldives, a Customs component to prepare the Maldives Customs service for the deployment of ASYCUDAWorld is being implemented within the Integrated Framework. Sri Lanka has recently signed a project document with UNCTAD for migration to ASYCUDAWorld.
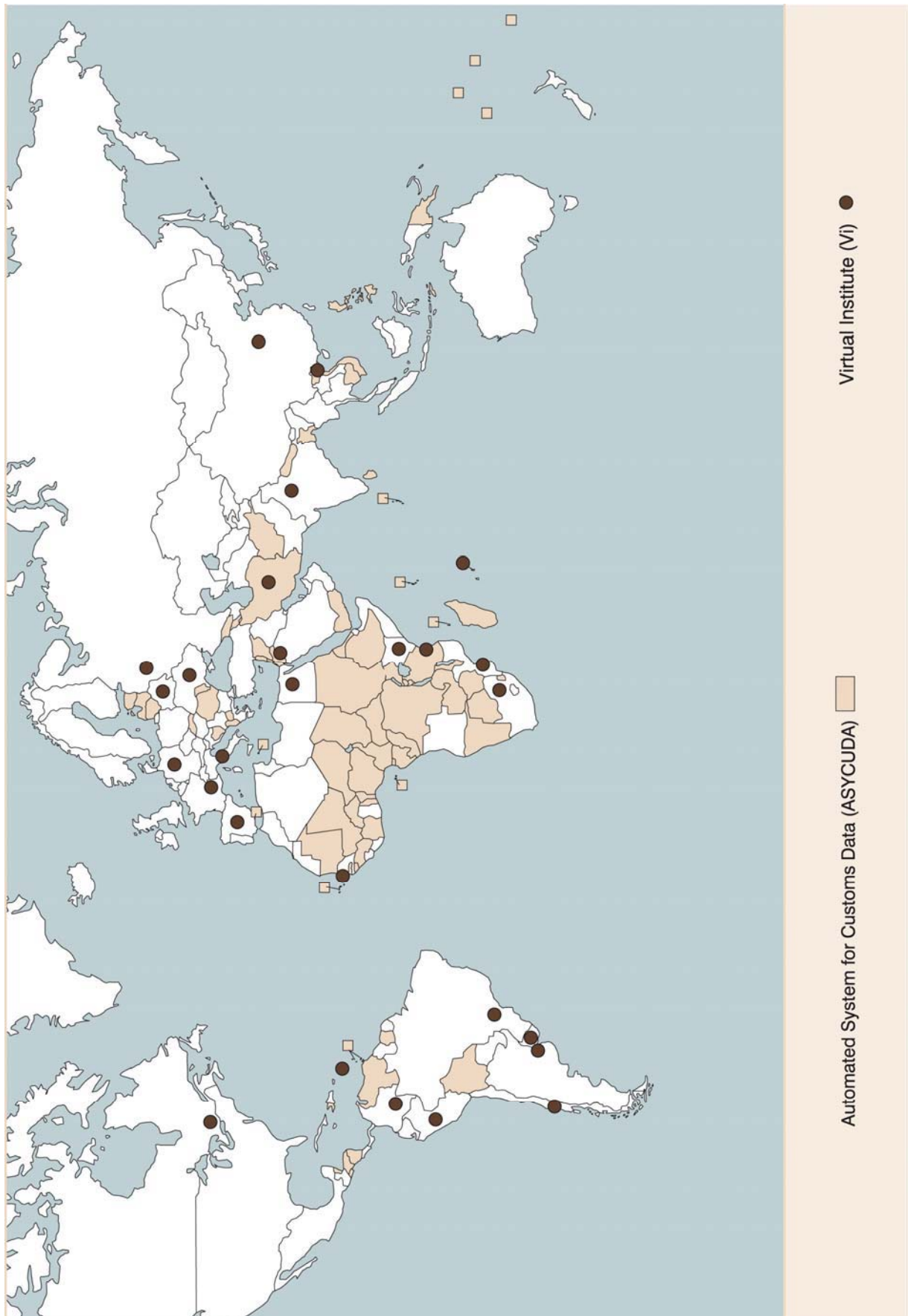
In 2008, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan hosted a two-day trilateral technical meeting on the exchange of Customs pre-arrival data between Azerbaijan and Georgia, with the participation of the IT Department of the Georgia's finance ministry and UNCTAD's ASYCUDA programme. The technical solutions identified for the automatic exchange of electronic data between the Azerbaijan Customs' IT system and the ASYCUDAWorld system in Georgia were submitted for consideration and approval to the management of the two organisations.
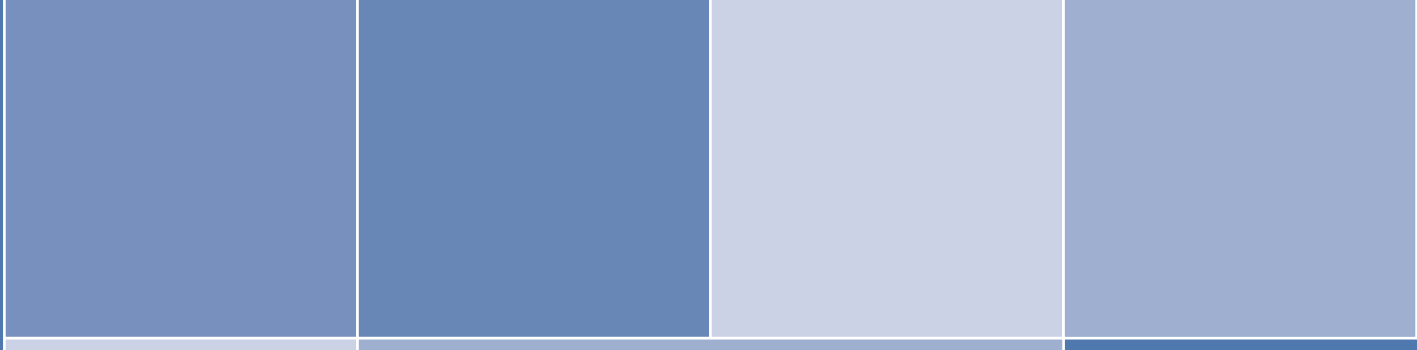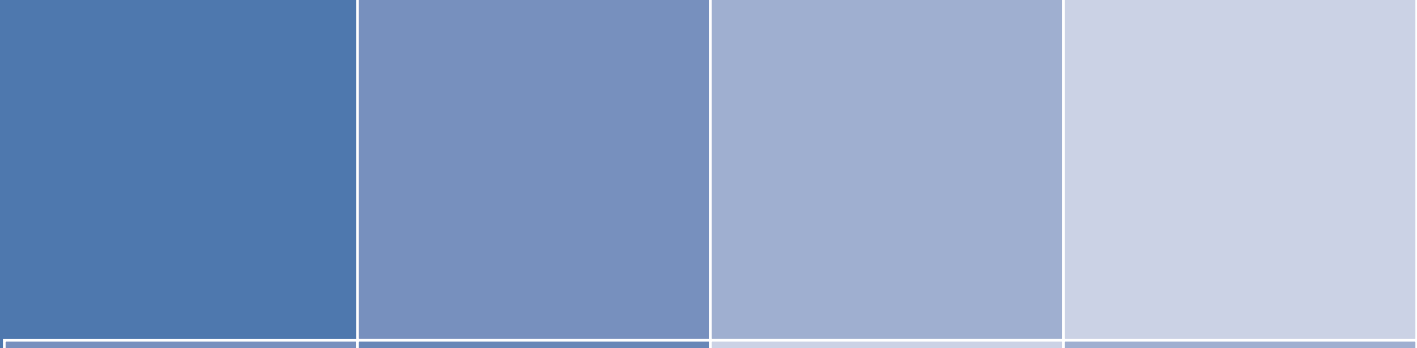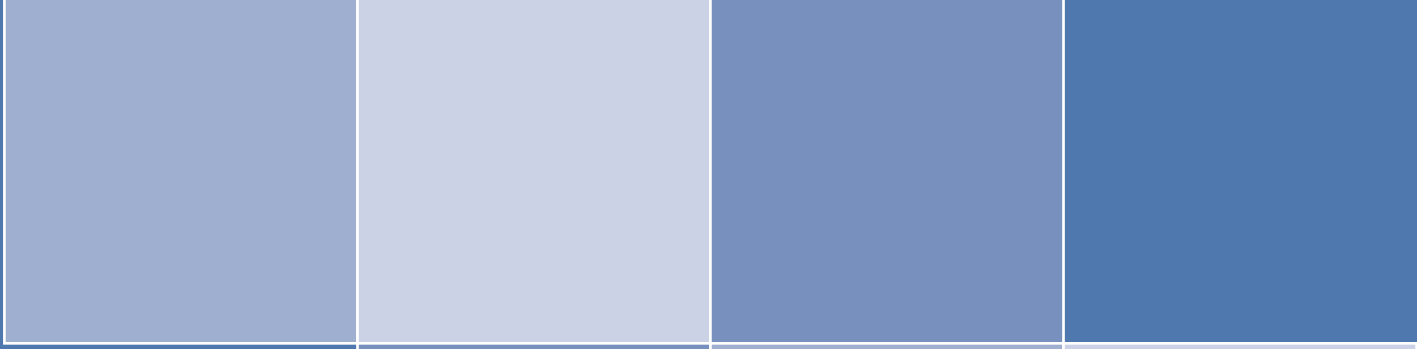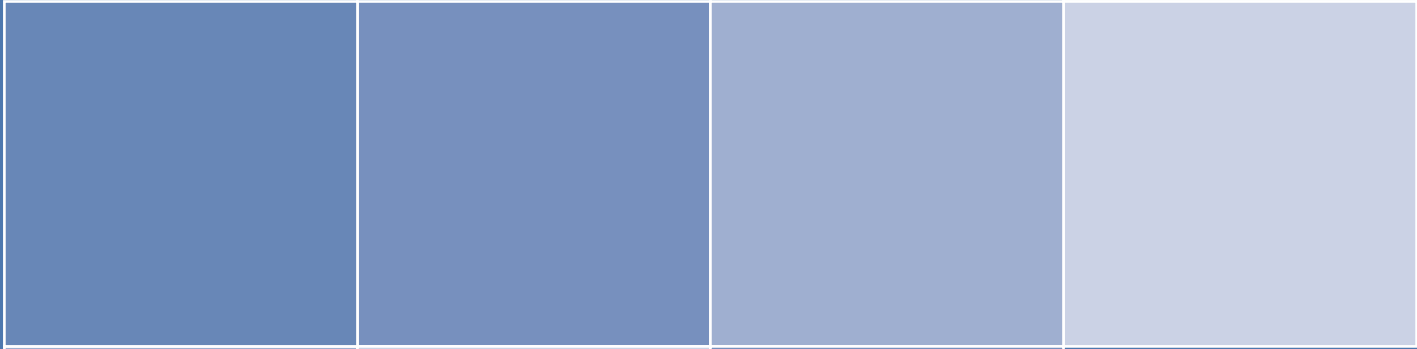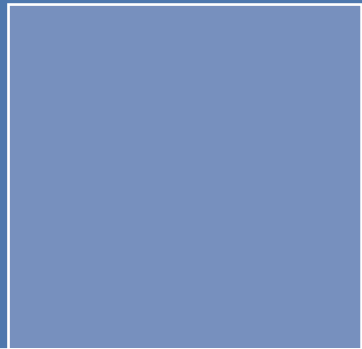
At the beginning of 2008, the **Albanian** Customs department signed a project with UNCTAD for the upgrade of its systems to ASYCUDAWorld, funded by the Albanian Government. The system was prototyped and tested on the available technical platform. At the end of the year, the Albanian ASYCUDAWorld system was fully operational at Customs headquarters, and at a significant pilot site. A total of more than 300 Customs officers and brokers have been trained on technical and functional aspects of the administration/maintenance and operation of the system.

ASYCUDAWorld transit system training for the Albanian Customs administration

ASYCUDA programme and Virtual Institute Network technical assistance

Virtual Institute (VI) ●

Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) □

UNITED NATIONS