



DTL/KDB/MISC/2018/3
(18/17ams)

NOTIFICATION

Short courses on key international economic issues for delegates from permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva and the World Trade Organization

First semester, 2018

The UNCTAD secretariat is pleased to announce the first series of short courses on key international economic issues for delegates from permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva and the World Trade Organization, to be held in the first semester of 2018.

The aim of the courses is to enable delegates from permanent missions to become better acquainted with topical issues and developments in the international economic agenda as they are reflected in the work of UNCTAD. Course descriptions are attached.

Three courses will be held in Room XXVI of the Palais des Nations on Friday, 2 March; Friday, 23 March and Friday, 13 April 2018.

The courses will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will be delivered in English, with simultaneous interpretation into Arabic, French and Spanish. Courses will begin promptly at 10 a.m. to allow sufficient time for debate after the presentations.

The secretariat invites the permanent missions to nominate delegates who follow matters pertaining to UNCTAD or the World Trade Organization to attend these courses. Course applications may be completed online by accessing the following link: <https://p166.unctad.org/mod/page/view.php?id=2376>.

Queries concerning the courses should be addressed to Ms. Randa Jamal, Project Coordinator, Knowledge Development Branch, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD, tel: 41 22 917 2718, email: randa.jamal@unctad.org.

(signed)

Mukhisa Kituyi
Secretary-General of UNCTAD

15 February 2018

**Short courses on key international economic issues
for delegates from permanent missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva
and the World Trade Organization**

First semester 2018

UNCTAD course descriptions and programme

Assessing the e-trade readiness of the least developed countries for the promotion of sustainable development

2 March, Room XXVI, delivered by the Division on Technology and Logistics

In the changing global marketplace, electronic commerce (e-commerce) is a powerful driver of economic growth, inclusive trade and job creation for all, including in the least developed countries (LDCs). However, while there is significant potential for growth through e-commerce, many people and small and medium-sized enterprises in LDCs are not in a position to use the Internet, in particular broadband, due to a lack of e-commerce infrastructure and other barriers. Therefore, they cannot effectively leverage e-commerce to seize economic opportunities. How to assess the readiness of LDCs to engage in and benefit from e-commerce is crucial for the formulation of relevant strategies and policies to harness its power for economic growth and sustainable development.

The Rapid eTrade Readiness Assessment project for LDCs is helping beneficiaries take stock of their development in information and communications technology and e-commerce along seven key policy areas (etradeforall.org), make better sense of the supply of capacity-building from the international community and sequence and prioritize the assistance they require from donor communities. Finally, the assessments will enable LDCs to take a more active part in the international discussions on e-commerce, such as in the context of the World Trade Organization.

The course is divided into two parts. Part one will provide an overview of e-commerce and the rapid eTrade readiness assessments contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 5b, 8.3, 9.3 and 17.11. Part two will involve the presentation of case studies extracted from rapid e-trade readiness assessments.

Recent developments in international trade and their implications for the policymaking process

23 March 2018, Room XXVI, delivered by the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities

International trade and the instruments governing it have changed in many ways during the past few years. The purpose of this course is to inform delegates about major developments in international trade and the changing use of trade policy instruments. The course will present some of the patterns of international trade observed in recent years and their underlying factors. The course will also provide insights into the use and importance of various trade policy instruments, as well as an overview of persisting trade imbalances, their causes and implications, and their relationship to trade policies. Finally, the course will discuss some of the implications of the stalled trade policymaking process at the multilateral level. During the course, delegates will gain awareness of any relevant links to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Assessing the progress of the least developed countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

13 April 2018, Room XXVI, delivered by the Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes

The international community has adopted several development goals specific to LDCs, especially in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and its Sustainable Development Goals – and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020. Progress towards these goals should be measured to evaluate the adequacy of domestic and international frameworks and policy actions in their pursuit, and possibly consider the need for adjustments in the course of action.

To assist the international community in assessing the progress of LDCs in achieving selected international development goals, UNCTAD undertakes research and analytical work in its areas of competence and mandate. In particular, it tracks development targets related to economic growth, trade and financing for development.

This short course will explore the following issues:

- Recent performance of LDC economies: their growth and trade goals
- Trends in international financing of LDC economies
- Impact of current developments in the world economy on the outlook of the economic performance of LDCs
- How the future graduation of a number of LDCs is likely to affect the development goals of LDCs.