



UNCTAD E-Commerce Week 2017

"Towards Inclusive E-Commerce"

Geneva, Switzerland, 24-28 April 2017

SUMMARY REPORT



This is an unedited document.

The UNCTAD E-Commerce Week 2017 featured a range of events aimed at contributing to the global dialogue on the need to make the development of e-commerce inclusive. This third edition of the Week saw the participation of over 1,000 representatives from governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society from 99 countries. The entire week was successfully implemented thanks to collaboration between UNCTAD and 30 partners for the organization of more than 30 sessions. There were a total of 170 speakers and moderators, of which one-third were women and one-third from developing countries. The Week benefitted from the participation of Jack Ma, Special Adviser to UNCTAD for young entrepreneurs and small business and founder and chairman of Alibaba Group, as well as 11 Ministers and Vice Ministers and 7 Heads of international agencies. Highlights of the Week included the High-Level Event on Digital Transformation for All: Empowering Entrepreneurs and Small Business, the first Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of E-Commerce for Development, the official launch of etradeforall.org platform, and the first board meeting of Business for eTrade Development.

The event have been reported on in some 475 articles in over 45 countries, including Reuters, EFE, Fortune, AFP, ATS. Sixty-five presentations and more than 10 contributions are available on unctad.org/e-week2017.



"The 3rd edition of the E-commerce Week has demonstrated beyond a doubt how the convening power of the United Nations and smart partnerships can bring out a shared sense of purpose, engagement and results. We all look to the future, firm in our conviction that together we will impact how e-commerce works for inclusive prosperity."

Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD.

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The first day saw ten parallel sessions related to e-commerce by UNCTAD and the following partners: the World Bank, the Centre for International Governance Innovation, the Internet Society, IPSOS, the United States Federal Trade Commission, the National Foreign Trade Council, the Information Technology Industry Council, the Universal Postal Union, the International Trade Centre, the UN Economic Commission for Europe, the World Customs Organization, and AliResearch.

Cybersecurity and Cybercrime: New tools for Better Cyberprotection

The session addressed the growing concerns of the rise of cybercrime and its consequences for privacy and security online, as well as the resulting lack of trust among consumers and governments to adopt digital technology. Participants recognized that a series of measures should be taken at the national and global levels. They should include enhanced co-operation between states and other stakeholders; consensus building around agreed international protocols that ensure the realization of an open, secure, and reliable cyberspace; harmonization of criminal justice systems, for example, around the Council of Europe's Budapest Convention, and implementing capacity building tailored to the needs of various stakeholders. Legal and regulatory responses should include criminalizing conduct, enhancing law enforcement powers, and putting into place cybersecurity frameworks that include prevention and permit active defense. Three tools developed by international organizations were presented: the World Bank led Cybercrime Assessment Toolkit (www.combattingcybercrime.org) and the ITU led National Cybersecurity Strategy (NCS) Guide currently being finalized to assist governments in developing their cybersecurity strategies, as well as capacity development initiatives by the DiploFondation. Examples of the technological measures taken by Alibaba Security, as well as its efforts to build a 'security alliance' with other actors in the e-commerce ecosystem, as well as the role of blockchain technology on security were also highlighted.

Global Survey of Internet User Perceptions

This session presented new findings of a 2017 CIGI-Ipsos-UNCTAD-ISOC global survey of public attitudes in 24 nations on the Internet and e-commerce. The survey is unique and only the third of its kind to have been conducted on such a global scale. National and regional variations in public were explored as well the broader implications of these findings for global e-commerce and international trade. The survey is available at http://unctad.org/meetings/en/Presentation/dtl_eWeek2017p01_CIGI-IPSOS_en.pdf.

Referring to this survey, H.E. Ms Anusha Rahman Khan, Pakistan's Minister of State for Information Technology and Telecom, said, *"A majority of people are feeling insecure online, particularly girls and women. This tells us that there has been a lack of legal framework or tools which can provide the same security online as the users have offline."*

Data Protection, E-Commerce and Development

Building consumer confidence in online shopping is one of the keys to e-commerce development. The protection of personal data has become increasingly important in the digital economy. This session

discussed recent developments in the area of data protection and their implications for SMEs and consumers' engagement in e-commerce, especially from a development perspective. It also highlighted the global state of law adoption worldwide with the release of the latest UNCTAD figures.

The Rise of Fintech and Impact on Consumer Markets and Competition

Financial technology is changing the way consumers borrow, spend, and share money offering the promise of increased convenience and access to financial services. Unfortunately, there is also opportunity for risk and fraud. This panel explored the risks and implications of this financial technology for consumers and competition in global markets.

Digital Trade and Online Work in Europe and Central Asia

The session presented the ECA Regional report on “Reaping Digital Dividends”, with a special focus on digital trade and online labor market arrangements. The report identifies the main bottlenecks and argues that policies to foster competition, international trade and skills supply, as well as adapting regulations to the changing business environment and labor markets, will also be necessary. More information about the report can be obtained here (www.worldbank.org/eca/digitaldividends).

Data Flows and Development – A Global Industry Perspective

This session sought to build a deeper understanding among governments and stakeholders of how data flows are necessary component of development in the 21st Century where data powers the global economy. Cross-border data flows connect countries, cultures, companies, and individuals; they generate new sources of economic growth and employment and are helping to address significant public policy and development challenges, such as those under the Sustainable Development Goals.

Private Sector Views on Priorities for E-Commerce

This panel brought together private sector leaders to discuss new survey findings on e-commerce development challenges in the developing world, solutions the private sector see as critical, and discussion on ways in which private sector can with governments create a new development paradigm, with private sector playing a leading role in the development and seeding e-commerce-related development projects, and public sector backing and scaling best practices. The private sector presented new initiatives to unlock e-commerce markets and cross-border e-commerce, such as via new solutions in logistics, payments and SME capacity-building.

E-Commerce in Africa

This session addressed the digital divide to leverage e-commerce in Africa and examined the enabling framework for e-commerce in the African region. According to the UNCTAD B2C E-Commerce Index 2016, Africa ranks the lowest in all the indicators related to e-commerce readiness, namely Internet use penetration, secure servers per 1 million inhabitants, credit card penetration and a postal reliability score. Just over a fifth of the population in Africa uses the Internet. Unless there was improvement in the underlying transaction and logistics processes, African online commerce was likely to remain confined to wealthier populations in urban areas. This session provided useful tools for African countries develop e-commerce. The TrainForTrade programme, for example, which focuses on developing skills, knowledge and capacities through innovative development approaches based on a recognized pedagogical method and state-of-the-art technological solutions. The UPU presented various initiatives,

including a capacity building programme to assist countries to partake in e-commerce activities; an E-commerce Guide which provides comprehensive information regarding the opportunities for Posts in e-commerce and how to participate in the e-commerce market.

E-Commerce and Trade Logistics: New Challenges and Opportunities for International Transport and Trade Facilitation

The session considered the new challenges e-commerce poses for traders and transport/trade logistics service providers, from both the public and private sectors, including the need for ever more efficient international transport and trade facilitation.

From the private sector perspective, there was little action to align customs procedures with rise of small business trade. SMEs have higher fixed costs of trade compliance but their compliance capabilities are less. It was suggested that development banks create e-commerce capacity-building program for willing countries and help each economy assess net effects (including SME exports) of scenarios. Other concrete actions, such as PPPs with big data on e-commerce shipments for customs security assessments (like ACAS), simplified compliance, and fast-track clearance for Trusted eTraders should be taken.

From the perspective of public sector, the need for the industry to automate their global trade management operations was highlighted. Reliable, real-time order and logistics tracking systems for customers and customer support teams to monitor delivery to the final customer or door location should be encouraged.

Inclusive Development and E-Commerce: Case of China

This session provided an overview of China's experience in deployment of e-commerce within China and cross-border and its impact on inclusive development, as well as lessons learnt which could be useful to promote e-commerce development in other countries. Towards e-commerce inclusive growth, it was recommended that governments improve penetration of digital platform and encourage private sector to invest in finance, transaction, logistics, credit, etc. Encouraging innovation, use appropriate fiscal, financial, price policies to support MSMEs and finally establish the inclusive and fair market system. International organizations and government need to improve digital skill training programs in order to break the bottleneck of e-commerce talents.

A study on that topic, prepared by AliResearch, was released during the session (available at http://unctad.org/meetings/en/Contribution/dtl_eWeek2017c11-aliresearch_en.pdf). The study provides strategic guidelines for policy makers, best practices for MSMEs and solid empirical evidence of inclusive growth. The session also provided a comparative case study of the experiences of China and Korea on preparing self sufficient rural community with e-commerce.

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This day featured high level events related to the E-Commerce for Development.

E-Commerce for Development Ministerial by the Friends of E-Commerce for Development

The Group of Friends of E-Commerce for Development (FED) held its first Ministerial Meeting in which they discussed the role of e-commerce and trade in developing countries. Ministers from FED member countries proposed a roadmap with seven priority issues for sustainable economic development. The key issues of the roadmap, which coincide with the focus of eTrade for all, include:

1. Identification of strategies for e-commerce readiness
2. Access to ICT infrastructure and services
3. Trade logistics and trade facilitation
4. e-payment solutions
5. Legal certainty and regulatory frameworks
6. Capacity building and technical assistance
7. Access to financing.



“The roadmap marks an important milestone on the road to the 11th WTO Ministerial in Buenos Aires in December and it will certainly help shape the debate on outcomes for the meeting – and beyond,” said Susana Malcorra, Minister of Foreign Trade of Argentina.

Launch of eTrade for all online Platform

etradeforall.org is an information hub which helps developing countries navigate the wealth of technical and financial services they can use to drive development through e-commerce. Through the platform, countries can connect with potential partners, learn about trends and best practices, access up-to-date e-commerce data, and be informed of upcoming e-commerce events.

Launched in July 2016, during the 14th quadrennial Conference of UNCTAD, eTrade for all is a global initiative that helps developing countries to unlock the potential of e-commerce. 22 international and regional organizations, national entities and development banks are currently members of the initiative. In cooperation with the Business for eTrade Development, a private-sector led advisory council that encompasses large corporations and small business from both developed and developing countries, eTrade for all fosters inclusive development by promoting the uptake of e-commerce.

“The platform has unique features and tools to meet the particular needs of global e-commerce stakeholders. E-commerce provides new opportunities to developing countries and small business owners,

adding that traditional manufacturers are now selling products all over the world,” said H.E. Mr. Kyong-Lim Choi, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva.

“The platform is not just another website, but a resource that works on most electronic devices, and allows users to learn and share with partners and peers. Countries can learn about trends and best practices,” said Ms. Shamika Sirimanne, director UNCTAD’s Technology and Logistics Division.

Youth Employment in the Digital Economy

Over 450 youth from around the world participated in the E-Commerce Week, both physically and virtually. The Youth session conveyed the message that e-commerce offers the opportunity to chart a new path for globalization, and holds huge potential to drive inclusive and sustainable development. Disruptive economic trends are changing the job market globally and the youth – more than anyone – are aware they need to be prepared for it.



To meet the challenge of e-commerce, the youth session proposed concrete actions such as updating the public school system in developing countries and closing the quality gap between public and private schooling. Youth require equal access to quality education, especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Youth also need access to training on using social media platforms for e-commerce purposes, as well as quality language school programmes in the case of non-English speaking countries.

These tools can help serve the young individuals that face challenges in the transition from school to the job market, in the context of an interconnected, fast-changing technological and digital economy.

Allowing cross-border e-payments, promoting online transactions and funding for innovation on digital payments platforms was also recognized as a priority for granting all segments of society – including youth – equal access to products, and equal opportunities to create and expand businesses.

G20 Digital Economy - Shaping Digitalization for an Interconnected World and G20 Priorities on Digital Trade

This session provided an opportunity to learn about and discuss the outcomes of the G20 Trade and Investment Working Group: “G20 Priorities on Digital Trade” and the G20 Digital Economy Ministerial Conference under the German Presidency.



High-Level Event: Digital Transformation for All: Empowering Entrepreneurs and Small Business

This session featured an interactive dialogue moderated by Nancy Kacungira between Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Jack Ma, Special Adviser to UNCTAD for young entrepreneurs and small business and founder and chairman of Alibaba Group, Roberto Azevêdo, Director-General of WTO, Houlin Zhao, Secretary-General of ITU and Amanda Long, Director General of Consumers International. During the event, panelists touched upon new ways of development leveraging technologies and e-commerce for sustainable development. A huge gap has opened up between countries and firms that are able to seize these opportunities and those that cannot. And the existing platforms and rules for global trade are highly skewed towards the interests of large corporations, leaving few opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises, accounting for about 80 per cent of all businesses, to benefit from the new opportunities. This is particularly the case for young entrepreneurs, women in business and entrepreneurs from other vulnerable groups.



Jack Ma encouraged policymakers to create an enabling environment for small businesses and young people to engage effectively in e-commerce.

"E-commerce creates jobs and brings about opportunities for young entrepreneurs in developing countries. I encourage young, aspiring entrepreneurs to be brave, embrace

change and new technologies." Jack Ma, Special Adviser to UNCTAD for young entrepreneurs and small business and founder and chairman of Alibaba Group

A number of Ministers and CEOs of e-commerce platforms from developing countries took an active part in this dialogue.

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Sessions on day three were co-organized by UNCTAD, DiploFoundation, the Geneva Internet Platform, the CUTS International, the World Economic Forum, the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF), the International Trade Centre, eBay and Huawei.

Kickstart of the Digital Commerce course: Internet functionality and business models

This session, opened to all UNCTAD e-commerce week participants, kickstarted the course on Digital Commerce delivered by the Geneva Internet Platform (GIP), in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC), the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS International), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and DiploFoundation. It presented an overview of the topics included in the first module of the course, dedicated to 'Internet functionality and online business models', including: a) basic Internet functionality of relevance for e-commerce; b) flow of money, services and profit on the Internet that impacts digital commerce discussions.

Special session on Assessing E-trade Readiness of the Least Developed Countries

The session was co-organized by UNCATD and the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) and highlighted the challenges on how we help LDCs to catch up, adjust and innovate, how to mainstream ICT and e-commerce in national development plans, and how to balance the trade-offs between strict regulation and innovation in LDCs. The readiness to eTrade involves looking at supply side –from payment solutions to logistics- as well as demand side –connectivity, use of connectivity, trust.

H.E. Mr. Lekey Dorji, Minister for Economic Affairs of Bhutan, said, "Through strong ICT policies, technologies and platforms, productivity and service delivery have greatly improved."



Tools like the UNCTAD eTrade Readiness assessments provide the necessary entry points for LDCs to have a holistic view of how their country fare but implementation is critical.

"These assessments will tremendously support the formulation of strategies and policies that harness the power of digital trade, improve economic growth and sustainable development," according to UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi.

LDC Governments need to have the necessary hard and soft infrastructure in place to create an enabling environment for e-commerce. Enhancing policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, coupled with supportive e-commerce strategies are essential.

"The e-Trade Readiness assessment comes with a set of robust actions to be considered by different stakeholders in Cambodia and outside to support the rapid adoption of the so-called digital revolutions", said H.E. Pan Sorasak, Minister of Commerce, Royal Government of Cambodia.

SMEs are a driving force of innovation, value creation. Private sector participation in e-commerce development has taken different forms, PPP being the most promising when it comes to developing the foundations for e-commerce development. Partnership with major players have yielded very positive results. The global support for development of ICT infrastructure and access to digital solutions has been strengthened through initiatives.

Recommendations included:

1. Helping LDCs take stock of their readiness for e-commerce by carrying out other e.T.Ready for LDCs in the context of the eTrade for All initiative
2. Enhancing resource mobilization efforts to take advantage of the window of opportunity created in 2017 by the German Presidency of the G20, the Global Review of Aid-for-Trade and the WTO 11th Ministerial Conference
3. Assisting LDCs in mobilizing resources locally in response to the findings, conclusions and actions matrix included in the e.T.Ready
4. Maintaining dialogue with all stakeholders through the eTrade for All platform ensuring access to other ICT-related substantive work done by UNCTAD
5. Intensifying partnerships within the eTrade for All initiative, ensuring increased participation of relevant national stakeholders in e-commerce and ICT-related dialogue through National Steering Committees (NSC)
6. Continue to contribute to activities organized under the eTrade for All initiative, bringing technical know-how, up-to-date information, best practices
7. Dedicate Aid for Trade resources to the development of e-commerce ecosystems in LDCs
8. Share information on possible grants, loans, projects, programmes supporting SME and business development in LDCs (eg incubators, business advocacy)

The EIF reiterated its support to help LDC realize the potential of e-commerce through the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study (DTIS) tool, in particular on ICT, regulatory reforms, SME development. The EIF stands ready to (1) accompany the design and formulation of project proposals aimed at increasing digital productive capacities on the basis of successful projects supporting trade portals or e-commerce infrastructure (such as in Bhutan); (2) reach out to new and non-traditional donors supporting eTrade, such as the Islamic Development Bank to leverage additional resources; (3) sponsor additional e-trade readiness assessments for LDCs through feasibility study and project formulation grants; (4) At country level, facilitate mainstreaming of trade and e-commerce in national development agenda, including in sectoral strategies.

Following the successful release and reception of e-commerce readiness assessments on Cambodia and Bhutan, the EIF and Germany pledged new funding to support more LDC e-commerce assessments, including for Liberia and Samoa.

Trade and Investment Promotion: at the Crossroads of Digital Disruption

The session presented both opportunities and challenges e-commerce poses for the Trade and Investment Promotion Organizations (TIPOs). With the private sector now able to access trade information and potential clients at little to no cost via digital platforms, many traditional services offered by TIPOs are at risk of becoming irrelevant. At the same time, e-commerce is introducing new challenges for businesses which TIPOs could play a role in resolving. The session discussed the decreasing relevance of the traditional TIPO portfolio of services and the need for new online, targeted and customized services, why measuring online commerce is difficult, and the reminding traditional commerce problems.

Optimizing trade policy for e-commerce: considerations for MC11 and beyond

Considering the significant amount of discussion on how governments can best align trade policy to spur cross-border e-commerce, whether unilaterally, plurilaterally, or at the multilateral level, on the road to MC11 in December 2017, this lunch session generated new dialogue on trade policy frameworks as well as trade facilitation efforts that would best fuel e-commerce and MSME participation trade.



"The new market access barrier is to not be part of e-commerce." H.E. Mr. Alvaro Cedeño Molinari, Ambassador, Permanent representative of Costa Rica to the WTO said, *"When we talk about digital we also talk about trade. And when we talk about digital and trade, we talk about development. They all go together."*

E-commerce and Consumer Protection

The discussions addressed the issue of consumer protection in the online context, and what steps need to be taken for e-commerce to benefit consumers from developed and especially from developing countries.

"Consumer trust is key to the success of the digital economy." Amanda Long, Director-General of Consumers International

Consumer trust in digital markets is paramount in achieving an inclusive and sustainable development of e-commerce. Trust is a fundamental yet elusive asset that can only be built with the common engagement from member States' Governments, businesses, consumer organizations and the academia.

The measures that enhance consumer confidence in e-commerce as follows:

1. providing a level of protection that is no less than the level of protection off-line;
2. reviewing existing policies to accommodate the special features of electronic commerce
3. providing clear information on rights and obligations of business and consumers;
4. providing consumer and business education and information programmes covering e-commerce;
5. promoting good business practices in the online context;

6. developing fair, effective, transparent and impartial dispute resolution systems, particularly online dispute resolution;
7. ensuring the provision of safe products by online suppliers; and
8. promoting international cooperation in the development of consumer protection policies and their enforcement in the online context.

Participants in the session identified one main priority to help developing countries better protect online consumers, which is to implement the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection. In close connection with the priority of implementing the Guidelines, participants also identified some major concrete actions and priority areas, which are:

1. Review and update legal and institutional frameworks to accommodate e-commerce
2. Provide capacity building on online consumer protection to relevant stakeholders
3. 'Network the networks' and deepen international cooperation
4. Provide education and awareness raising to consumers and businesses
5. Encourage the establishment of trust boosting mechanisms in the online context

Payment Solutions for E-commerce

With the vision that everyone, everywhere, should be able to buy or sell any licit good or service to anyone anywhere else, via competitive, fast, transparent, flexible, and affordable payments systems, the session on payment solutions has provided following recommendations:

1. Leverage flexibilities in treatment of types of payments to facilitate international transfers such as the regulatory facility that allows credit card transactions to take place without requiring per-transaction forms and clearances from authorities.
2. Provide unified regulatory compliance processes for financial intermediaries and mobile money operators - especially for know your customer ("KYC") and anti-money-laundering ("AML") purposes. Multiple regulatory clearances required from different agencies act as barriers.
3. Treat different payments systems in a technologically neutral way with equal opportunities to access markets.
4. Countries should invest early and continually in your relationship with international regulatory systems. Greater risk means greater costs.
5. National policymakers should look at ways to enable innovation in-country while aiming from the start to be internationally compatible.
6. Strive towards digital identity services that can be referred to by all providers of payment services, keeping privacy and data protection concerns in mind.
7. Countries should carefully consider how to manage unique identity for SME trade and B2C transaction.
8. Embrace digital data sources for establishing KYC/identity. That can reduce costs, time, and reduce opportunities for gaming the system.
9. Set the objective of the process of origination through to fulfilment of a payment to take less than 15 minutes, and work backwards to identify existing bottlenecks to achieving the goal.
10. Facilitate the closing of deals on social networks. Seek to enable payments to be made as easily as possible via as many channels as possible. Be customer-centric!
11. Interoperability between payment methods should be obligatory, not optional.

12. Governments should explore how fintech can help the sector to expand and innovate, not just represent an outgrowth of banking.
13. Regional and continental credit reference systems would be help. Trans boundary licensing would reduce costs. Mutual recognition systems for credit would be a good start.
14. Regulatory interoperability are key and increasingly so the larger the volume of cross-border transactions.

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Sessions on day four were devoted the role of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), women, SMSEs. The sessions were co-organized by UNCTAD, the International Telecommunication Union, the International Trade Centre, the UN Women, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Universal Postal Union, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, ASEAN, the Internet Society, and the E-residency of Estonia.

Gender Dimension of E-commerce



The session on the Gender Dimension of E-Commerce acknowledged that: there is a digital gender divide; there is a clear business case to bridge this divide; and steps are being taken in the right direction, but more needs to be done. “From computer literacy to logistics & marketing, we need to ensure women have the knowledge and skills to e-trade.” Arancha Gonzalez, Executive Director of International Trade Centre

The session presented three key proposals on what measures could be taken in the short term specifically through the eTrade for all initiative to better address the gender dimension in e-commerce:

1. the establishment of a network for women entrepreneurs in e-commerce in developing countries,
2. the dissemination of best practices and access to role models for women entrepreneurs, in particular on how to grow their business and access export markets, and
3. the development of gender-disaggregated data.

For women entrepreneurs in particular, there was a call for networking, mentoring, and role models, both male and female. The speakers proposed that international organizations could facilitate this by creating an enabling environment for inclusive e-commerce, gathering and disseminating best practices, and providing connections with role models. It was proposed that the eTrade for all initiative could

include a network for women entrepreneurs in e-commerce to exchange, learn and provide and receive mentorship.

There was a recurrent plea for more and better gender disaggregated data on e-commerce. Within the eTrade for all initiative, international organizations can collaborate with governments, the private sector and academia, to improve the measurement of women's participation in e-commerce, including by improving the availability, comparability and quality of official gender-disaggregated, trade and ICT statistics. Better data will help shape better policies to boost the participation of women in the digital economy.

Towards Better Measurement of E-commerce

The session on measurement was focused on the following questions: How can we improve the availability of data on e-commerce and e-commerce readiness in developing countries?

Although at present there is a good deal of data on many of the elements of e-commerce readiness, he pointed out that the challenge at present is measurement of the value of e-commerce itself. Significant gaps include the relative lack of official e-commerce data in developing countries, the scarcity of measures of B-to-B e-commerce, and specific measures of cross-border (as opposed to domestic) e-commerce. Private data on e-commerce has much to add, but is not easy or cheap to access for everybody.

The session proposed several possible steps forward as follows:

1. increasing use of existing surveys of economic activity and customs declarations to collect data on e-commerce, by the inclusion of a few additional questions;
2. making creative use of data gathered by the private sector, including "big data" in the hands of financial and transport firms and Internet trading platforms, as well as postal data, as an input into public data collection;
3. availing additional resources for capacity building in developing-country statistical agencies to develop the ability to collect e-commerce data; and
4. continued partnership by all relevant stakeholders in the measurement agenda.

Can E-Commerce Trade Rules help MSMEs in Developing Countries?

This lunch time panel explored how the growing e-commerce trade interacts with the current framework of rules within the WTO, and also FTA commitments taken outside of the WTO, especially for MSMEs in developing countries, with the aim of improving the understanding of how best developing countries can leverage on e-commerce trade rules to further their development objectives.

Trade rules can be leveraged to help MSMEs in developing countries better take advantage of the opportunities presented by e-commerce. Many e-commerce trade rules and disciplines have been undertaken by developing countries thus far, and these rules have helped bring about growth and development in developing economies. Governments should also incorporate the e-commerce concerns and interests of MSMEs when they engage in trade negotiations.

Internet Futures (ISOC)

This session presented the Internet Society's Internet Futures project, which was launched in 2016 to take stock of the key forces of change that could impact the future of the Internet. They have conducted two global surveys that generated more than 2,500 responses from 160 countries and economies. In addition, they interviewed more than 130 Internet experts and hosted 10 virtual roundtables. In September 2017 they will release the culmination of all of this work: the 2017 Global Internet Report on the Internet Futures.

Supporting the Involvement of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in E-commerce

This business-oriented session addressed the different barriers SMEs face when engaging in e-commerce. E-commerce is a fast growing market opening up new possibilities for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In contrast to SMEs from developed countries, SMEs from developing countries are largely excluded from e-commerce due to a number of barriers such as fragmented and business hostile regulations, lack of education and limited access to information, income volatility and lack of protection, lack of awareness, discrimination of individual small firms from developing countries, lack of trust and security.

Although factors such as connectivity remain key for bringing SMEs from developing countries onto the e-commerce highway, there are other more practice-orientated barriers that need to be overcome in order to release the potential of e-commerce for a sustainable and inclusive development.

The recommendations identified during the panel as follows:

1. Harmonized and more business friendly regulations (taxes, custom duties, non-tariff barriers)
2. Involve small businesses in policy making process
3. Public Private Partnerships
4. Practical solutions such as foreign entities collectively owned by SMEs from developing countries to open shared access to international payments, logistics, and legal and fiscal representation
5. One stop shops that provide SMEs with the all the information they need to trade through digital channels (e.g. De Minimis rules)
6. Capacity through online trainings
7. Support the creation of a more stable environment for small self-employed entrepreneurs willing to engage in e-commerce
8. Improve access to finance
9. Support the creation of cooperatives that enable SMEs to share costs and information
10. Policy makers need to better understand and communicate the potential of e-commerce
11. Online platforms (including the potential to use platforms such as ebay and etsy) that help connect the unconnected (provide for example shared access to information)
12. Solutions such as the e-Residency that gives entrepreneurs a digital identity for running a business from abroad

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The sessions on the last day were co-organized by the Economic Commission for Europe, the International Trade Centre, the World Customs Organization, the International Telecommunication Union, the Internet Society, the African Alliance for E-Commerce, and UNCTAD.

E-Commerce and Trade Logistics: New Solutions in International Transport and Trade Facilitation



The session was dedicated towards identifying solutions to the challenges and opportunities for international transport and trade facilitation in light of the rapid rise in e-commerce trade. The session on trade logistics was co-organized by ITC, UNECE, UNCTAD and WCO. Especial thanks to the UNECE Trade Facilitation Section and UNCTAD, Trade and Logistics team.

The panelists all agreed that e-commerce has grown rapidly during the last few decades and will continue to do so in the future irrespective of any new trading rules. The shift from large containers to small parcels and

packages has resulted in a massive increase in the number of shipments which was referred to today as a ‘tsunami of parcels’. Not only that, the expectation to release such shipments in minutes to hours as efficiency in cross-border trade procedures is vital and integral for e-commerce.

This has given rise to a number of challenges for customs and border regulatory agencies in particular. The border regulatory agencies have limited time available at their disposal to ensure compliance due to the fast-paced nature of e-commerce trade. Their capacity, business models and resources are constantly challenged to effectively and efficiently cope with the e-commerce tsunami and there is an urgent need of re-thinking, re-aligning and re-allocating of resources to fit the evolving dynamics of international trade. Both national administrations and international organizations are making progress on addressing these issues without compromising on security, safety, revenue leakage and monitoring.

However, there is also good news. There is more than enough capacity in the shipping and air transport channels to deal with the anticipated and projected increase in the number of shipments due to e-commerce trade. International organizations, practitioners and all other stakeholders are not only cognizant of the challenges but are also aligning their work accordingly. The collaboration between international development agencies has given rise to shared thinking in the design and delivery of their work. There is also an increased realization that involvement of private businesses and logistic services industry in policy formulation and implementation is the right way forward.

The need of embracing technology is a way forward. It was pointed out that ‘e-commerce is driven by technology and constrained by tradition’. The TFA includes many provisions that aim to modernize customs procedures and streamline processes. These are even more critical for e-commerce. It was also stressed that the need for real time data information analysis and exchange is critical for efficient and

timely processing of shipments not only between Amazons of the world but also the customs administrations and logistics services providers. In this panel, UNECE strongly advocates the use of information and communication technology (ITC) in trade facilitation and all business processes, through its policy recommendations on standardization and conversion of trade documents in electronic format and on single windows development, which have become even more critical for the trade of e-commerce goods.

The barriers to e-commerce trade are not very different to traditional barriers we have seen in the past. The dramatic rise in the number of shipments and the need for speed in processing those shipments have 'pronounced' the barriers and there is an urgent need to address them through effective implementation of WTO TFA which has the potential make a significant contribution in addressing the challenges rising due to e-commerce trade.

Although it is a step in the right direction, the TFA is necessary but not sufficient on its own. There is a need to go beyond the mere legal compliance of TFA with the 'whole of supply chain approach' looking at all steps of the international trade transaction process.

It is important that policy makers understand these factors as opportunities to embrace e-commerce and create conditions (e.g. alignment of standards), procedures and resources which enable e-commerce to thrive, keeping SMEs at the heart of their interventions.

Broadband Connectivity for E-commerce

All panelist agreed that bridging the digital divide and extending high-speed broadband infrastructure throughout developing countries is essential for participating in inclusive e-commerce and ensuring that no one is left behind in benefiting from realization of a truly connected and networked society and from digital economy. What needs to be done to avoid that digital divide become a digital chasm is a 'new deal' between all broadband stakeholders. *"Internet providers are working on 5G nowadays, which is 66 times faster than internet today. If we don't take action, those having access will become richer, and the others will become poorer."* James Locket, Vice President of Huawei

To address the connectivity challenges for e-commerce, the session provided the following concrete actions.

1. From policy perspective, ICT policy reforms should reflect the digital economy context, break down the silos of government agencies, as well as between converging sectors and technologies and unlock the value of digital technologies for developing countries. We need to encourage governments of developing countries to set a clear vision of what can be done with universal connectivity as a platform. Policy makers must make connectivity a priority. When policies are put in place, governments may need help with their implementation. Capacity-building in implementing policy measures is another area where urgent actions are needed. Therefore we need multiparty tech, assistance and capacity building for governments and for users. We encourage governments of developing countries to ensure that policy frameworks and regulations are conducive to domestic and foreign investments. An open, transparent and fair telecom market is important. Governments are also encouraged to consider making commitments to the Reference Paper on telecommunication services. We finally encourage taking of urgent action to bring all parties to the table of the discussion, including the e-

commerce discussion at WTO. We also encourage the policy changes that increase affordability for the user need to be looked at from a comprehensive perspective so that the potential short term revenue impact to a particular Ministry are offset by the broader economic growth that universal connectivity will catalyse.

2. In the area of investment and financing mechanism, we need to ensure that we involve actors who are not a part of the process now: including multilateral financing institutions such as the regional development banks. To promote dialogue between relevant Ministries such as ICTs, finance and commerce. The support of the donor countries in projects focused on connectivity, should respect the unique features of each country and recognize the common ground among issues. We must consider measures for making broadband more affordable and reducing taxes and import duties on telecom/ICT equipment & services. Developing countries should also be encouraged to consider joining the expanded Information Technology Agreement. Some examples of policy levers to explore include reducing taxes and import duties on telecom/ICT equipment & services, infrastructure sharing, and spectrum management. For investing in infrastructure, we need to encourage investment by both the public and private sectors- broadband connectivity is a social good that can bring growth and prosperity to the whole of society.
3. In terms of cooperation, no one can deal with challenges alone and Internet has no borders. We need to share best practices – the IGOs and fora like E-Commerce Week play an important role. We need more cooperation between the private sector players, governments, international organizations and international multi-stakeholders institutions. We need new models to bring partners together and new PPPs and to encourage partnerships across different sectors and beyond ICT silos. We need fresh ideas and fresh business models.

Single Window as an enabler for e-commerce development

This session explained the base principles of Single Window, its implementation and its relationship to e-commerce. Single Window is a facility established to help traders with all their regulatory requirements when crossing a border.

This panel also launched the African Alliance for e Commerce's (AAEC) updated guide to Single Window implementation. This guide goes through the practical steps that governments need to consider in their planning and roll out of Single Window projects and provides further guidance based upon the Recommendations of the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and electronic Business (UN/CEFACT).

Key Outcomes and Way forward

This final session summarized some of the concrete outcomes and actions presented during the E-Commerce Week notably linked to the seven policy areas of eTrade for all, which can contribute to making e-commerce more inclusive.

The rich discussions that took place during the Week provided valuable inputs to various processes and



support our efforts to build better capacity in developing countries, for example, contribute to the WTO Aid for Trade Review (July 2017); enrich the discussion related to any discussions on e-commerce, trade and development; feed into discussions at the first UNCTAD Intergovernmental Expert Group on E-Commerce and the Digital Economy - 4-6 October 2017. They also provided valuable data, case studies and policy analysis for research reports and new partnerships to build capacity in developing countries.

The chair, Shamika Sirimanne, Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics, brought the session to a close by thanking all participants for the commitment and positive energy throughout the many sessions during the week. Its success was the result of excellent collaboration. She stressed that the only way to become fit for purpose to provide developing countries the support they need to unlock the development potential of e-commerce -- in all its dimensions -- is that we work together. We needed to connect the dots to make effective use of limited resources, create critical scale and to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.