

SITE



ACTIVITIES REPORT

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DIVISION FOR SERVICES
INFRASTRUCTURE FOR
DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE
EFFICIENCY



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Development and Trade Efficiency**

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Notes

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A. Introduction

The Division for Services Infrastructure for Development and Trade Efficiency (SITE) covers issues related to:

- Information and communication technologies (ICTs);
- Human capacity-building for trade and development; and
- Transport, logistics and related services.

The objective of the division's work programme is to enhance the economic development and competitiveness of developing countries and countries with economies in transition through (a) efficient trade logistics services; (b) strengthened capacity to develop and increase access to and sustainable utilization of technology and knowledge, including information and communication technology; and (c) human resources development.

To achieve this objective, the division aims to promote access to – and capacity to develop and use – technology and knowledge, and to promote the strengthening of supply capacities through access to trade logistics services. In particular, it focuses on (a) the strengthening of transport efficiency, trade facilitation, customs and legal frameworks; (b) economic applications of information and communication technologies; and (c) development of capacities in the fields of trade, investment, tourism and other interrelated issues through human resources development, networking, training and e-learning. It pursues the objective by (a) carrying out timely and forward-looking research and analysis; (b) formulating policy recommendations for appropriate development strategies at the national, regional and international levels; (c) fostering dialogue for consensus-building; (d) providing technical assistance upon request; and (e) building capacities in the fields of trade, investment, e-tourism and trade-supporting services. The reports and documents prepared under the subprogramme are widely used in connection with the provision of advisory services, training and workshops at the national, regional and international levels. They also draw upon the knowledge gained through the implementation of a wide range of technical cooperation activities. In particular, the division produces two major annual reports: the flagship *Information Economy Report* and the *Review of Maritime Transport*.

The UNCTAD SITE Activity Report provides detailed information on the outputs and activities during 2007. The presentation is structured according to the branches within the division.

B. Information and communication technologies and e-business

The Information and Communication Technologies and E-business Branch (ICTEB) undertakes research and analysis on ICT-related development issues, as well as technical assistance on ICT measurement and policies, and contributes to intergovernmental debate through expert meetings and seminars, and the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development.

In 2007, work covered such areas as (a) national ICT policies and strategies, in particular the establishment of a legal framework for e-commerce in developing countries; (b) the monitoring and measurement of the information economy and its impact on development; and (c) ICT-related economic development issues. Particular attention was given to ICTs that address the needs of poor populations and disadvantaged regions. Best practices that promote innovation and access to knowledge and technology, such as free and open-source software, were analysed with the view to highlighting their impact on development in general, as well as on the efficiency gains for users, including enterprises and public agencies.

B.1 Research and analysis

B.1.1 Information Economy Report 2007–2008

In the context of a global knowledge economy fuelled by a fast pace of technological innovations, the challenge for developing countries is to harness knowledge to take advantage of the opportunities offered by globalization and to address emerging global challenges. ICT can facilitate developing countries' access to knowledge, according to the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008*. ICT as a “general-purpose” technology can have a pervasive impact on an economy. It can create new modes of organization of production and consumption, and new opportunities for developing countries to integrate into the global economy. The reduced cost of access to ICTs offers greater opportunities for poorer people to use them to improve their livelihoods. ICTs are also particularly effective channels for the transfer of technology and have given rise to open knowledge access models, whether in open source software, open innovations, or common knowledge associations.

Governments can play a crucial role in the development of the ICT sector through policies that support knowledge creation and diffusion, including by (a) providing incentives for knowledge creation – such as the development of an appropriate intellectual property rights regime; (b) providing tax rebates and full or partial funding of research; and (c) establishing a clear legal and regulatory framework for interactions and transactions among the different actors. They can also strengthen technical education and training to create a highly skilled workforce for the ICT industry, and provide a stable regulatory and enabling environment to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) into this sector. The report suggests that government policies aimed at supporting long-term growth need to recognize and exploit the dynamic relationship between the use of ICTs and innovation. At the international level, there is a need to encourage more effective transfer of technology and sharing of knowledge

through more flexible intellectual property rights regimes, open access models and international partnerships. Development partners can also help to close the digital divide through technical assistance and contribution to the financing of infrastructure

B.1.2 Global ICT trends

Review of global trends in the access and use of ICTs – in particular business use of ICTs, based on data sources from UNCTAD (see below), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Eurostat – are presented in the annual *Information Economy Report* and disseminated through events and meetings, as well as its website. Research in 2007 demonstrates that the diffusion of ICT in developing countries is steadily growing, but except for some East Asian countries that are straddling the line between developed and developing status, developing countries remain far behind developed ones in the adoption of ICTs and their use by enterprises.

B.1.3 National ICT policies

In order to bridge the digital divide, during the past decade, ICTs have become part of many developing countries' development plans and poverty reduction strategies. Research carried out revealed that, of 181 developing countries, 80 (44 per cent) had already adopted a national ICT plan, and 36 (20 per cent) were in the process of designing one. The overall objective of such plans is to ensure the effective deployment and use of ICTs in the country for the benefit of its citizens and enterprises. The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) called upon all Governments to develop national "e-strategies" by 2010, and encouraged them to include ICTs in their national development plans.

B.1.4 E-commerce legislation

In the context of establishing an enabling environment for ICT, legal aspects of e-business have been an ongoing focus of the branch. In 2007, a survey among UNCTAD developing country member States was carried out to take stock of their e-commerce legislation. Of the 31 responses received, 20 countries have already adopted national legislation on e-commerce and eight are in the process of adapting it. One of the challenges countries face is related to different approaches to e-commerce legislation within regions. Therefore, a case study of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries was featured to demonstrate how regional approaches to e-commerce policy could be implemented successfully. As part of the e-ASEAN framework, Governments in the region have worked together to develop and implement a harmonized framework for cyber legislation. The study, which is featured in the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008*, presents the regional approach and shares some of the lessons learnt from the ASEAN case, which could be useful to countries in other regions planning to harmonize their e-commerce legislation.

B.1.5 The ICT producing sector

The ICT producing sector has been growing strongly during the past decade and the monitoring of its developments in terms of trade in ICT goods and services, and its contribution to value added and employment, have been undertaken on a continuous basis. The analysis is based on United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database (COMTRADE) data and original data collected by UNCTAD from member States. The annual *Information Economy Report* includes an updated discussion of latest developments in the ICT sector from a development perspective.

In 2007, a joint research project to study the ICT industry in Egypt was carried out between the UNCTAD ICT Policy and Analysis Unit and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology in Egypt and its Information Technology Industry Development Agency. Egypt has seen an expansion of 700 per cent in the revenues of its ICT industry and a fourfold increase in the total number of ICT companies during the last seven years. The study is based on a survey of 250 ICT companies in Egypt. The survey results revealed that average firm revenue growth in the ICT sector has increased from 16 per cent in 2004 to 26 per cent in 2006. The study also showed that the share of female staff is higher in the ICT sector compared to other occupations.

B.1.6 Researching the economic impact of ICT

Recently, the branch has started to research the economic impact of ICT. In 2007, a study was conducted in Thailand to measure the impact of ICT use by enterprises on their labour productivity. The study was carried out jointly by UNCTAD and the National Statistical Office in Thailand. Using econometric modelling techniques, the study found that the use of ICTs is associated with higher sales per employee and higher labour productivity in Thai firms. It concludes that the use of even basic ICTs, such as computers, can positively impact firm output and growth, and therefore a wider use of such technologies should be encouraged by policymakers. The results of the study were first presented at a workshop in Bangkok in November 2007. A summary of the research is featured in the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008* and a detailed report will be released in early 2008.

B.1.7 Building a database on ICT for development

Using ICTs to boost economic growth requires good decision-making based on reliable data. Research carried out by the branch showed that, in 2006, while 116 countries had already introduced national ICT master plans, only 28 had official data on ICT use in enterprises. Measuring the information economy helps Governments assess the role of ICT in their economies, design and review ICT policies, and identify priority areas for action.

An essential component of UNCTAD's work on ICT and e-business is the compilation of original statistical data on the information economy and the development and maintenance of a global database. Since 2004, data have been collected from statistical offices in developing countries on the core list of ICT business indicators through the annual UNCTAD Questionnaire on ICT usage by enterprises and on the ICT sector. It comprises official data on business use of ICT in countries, classified by size of enterprise, geographical location

(urban/rural), and economic activity. In 2007, the data collection was significantly extended to cover all member States, contributing to the global monitoring of ICT developments and the digital divide. The results of the global survey are contained in the UNCTAD information economy database.

The UNCTAD information economy database is an original source of information on ICT use in enterprises and the ICT sector. During the past few years, it has been continually updated and further developed. In 2007, several new technical features were added, in particular with respect to facilitating the inputting of data received through the UNCTAD questionnaire. The database supported the analysis for the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008*. As of December 2007, it contained data and metadata for 56 countries.

An online platform was also created to disseminate information concerning the measurement of the information society (<http://measuring-ict.unctad.org>). The Measuring ICT website was completely redesigned to better match national statistical offices (NSOs) needs in offering key information on ICT data collection and dissemination. The new site was launched in February 2007 and shows the results of UNCTAD's data collection, the highlights of the UNCTAD database on these indicators. It also contains comprehensive information on the many activities of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, of which UNCTAD is a leading partner.

B.1.8 ICT, e-business and innovation policies

ICTs have been a major driver of innovation in recent years. This has an important implication on how enterprises in developed and developing countries need to adapt their operations in order to ensure sustainable competitiveness in an environment that is heavily influenced by ICT considerations. The linkages between ICT adoption and e-business, and the facilitation of innovation processes in enterprises with regard to both ICT- and non-ICT-related aspects of their operations were research issues in 2007. The analysis featured in the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008* provides a description of existing best practices with a view to facilitating the choice of support instruments and policies by developing countries.

B.1.9 Mobile telephony

Mobile telephony has become the most important mode of telecommunications in developing countries. It has grown remarkably fast in developing countries and continues to be the only ICT-use sector where developing countries are catching up quickly or have in some ways even overtaken developed countries. More importantly, for the vast majority of low-income population, mobile telephony is likely to be the sole tool connecting them to the information society in the short to medium term. The development of mobile telephony markets in several sub-Saharan African countries and the main indicators for mobile telephony penetration rates, subscribers and the trend in mobile prices were analyzed in 2007. The results of the study are featured in a chapter of the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008*, which also provides examples of innovative and productive use of mobile telephony in small businesses among the poor in developing countries.

B.1.10 Pro-poor ICT policies

A pro-poor ICT policy framework was developed to evaluate ICT policies and assess their impact on people living in poverty. In 2007, UNCTAD conducted further research to understand how ICT can support the livelihoods of poor men and women, and in particular how public access centres, generally known as telecentres, can support livelihoods. Telecentres have supported the development of ICT skills but are yet to offer economic opportunities to the poor communities. To understand how telecentres could improve their livelihoods, a worldwide survey of telecentre networks was conducted in collaboration with telecentre.org. The results of the survey show that most telecentres' efforts have focused on providing access to ICTs and developing basic ICT skills, while few telecentres provide specific training to use ICTs for the development of economic opportunities, such as e-business training. The results of the survey are featured in the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008*, which provides an overview of best practices to support economic opportunities through telecentres and recommendations for policy makers and practitioners.

B.2 Intergovernmental activities

B.2.1 UNCTAD Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development

The eleventh session of the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development took place 19–23 February 2007, during which one substantive item on the agenda was “ICT and e-business development”, which was discussed on the basis of an issues note prepared by the secretariat (TD/B/COM.3/81). The commission also organized an expert meeting on “In support of the implementation and follow-up of WSIS: using ICTs to achieve growth and development”. (TD/B/COM.3/EM.29/2 and TD/B/COM.3/EM.29/3).

B.2.2 WSIS follow-up and implementation

As a result of the Tunis Phase of WSIS, UNCTAD was identified as a lead agency to facilitate the implementation of the WSIS action line on e-business. UNCTAD contributes to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes in the area of its mandate. A non-paper was distributed at the meeting of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) in May 2007, identifying in detail UNCTAD's contribution to the various substantive recommendations contained in the WSIS Geneva Plan of Action and the Tunis Agenda.

UNCTAD contributed to WSIS follow-up and implementation through a number of activities:

- It maintains the UNCTAD WSIS website at <http://www.unctadxi.org/wsisis>.
- It coordinates with the international Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) on the organization of action line facilitation meetings. Following the Tunis Agenda, UNCTAD and ILO decided to merge the facilitation of the action lines on e-business and e-employment: ITC joined as a third agency to cooperate in the facilitation process.

- It participates in annual Action Line Facilitators' meetings (the 2007 meeting was held on 25 May 2007 in Geneva).
- It participates in the United Nations Group on the Information Society (UNGIS), which coordinates substantive and policy issues in the United Nations System among Chief Executives Board (CEB) members. At the last meeting of UNGIS – which was held in Paris at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in July 2007 – UNCTAD was elected as a vice-chair for the next 12 months.

B.2.3 Preparations for UNCTAD XII

An UNCTAD XII pre-conference event on Science, Technology, Innovation and ICTs for Development was convened in Geneva on 6 December 2007. There is evidence that most developing countries are unlikely to achieve development goals and global competitiveness without making science and technology, and in particular information and communication technologies (ICTs), top priorities in their development agendas. The event addressed the question of how applications of science, technology and ICTs can help countries reap the benefits of the knowledge economy. Participating experts identified a number of key issues on the international policy agenda in the fields of science, technology and ICTs, to which UNCTAD can make a meaningful contribution.

Experiences of developing countries in ICT and innovation indicated that the impact of ICTs depended on complex issues of implementation, learning and feedback mechanisms. The linkages between institutions, technologies, knowledge and incentives were crucial, while ICT policies needed to be formulated within broader technology and national innovation policies, as well as overall development policy. Another broadly shared consideration was that science, technology and innovation should be a high priority for UNCTAD, and that the organization should analyze the role of South–South cooperation in research and development and how applications of technology could be enhanced and put to use to facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The WSIS outcomes should provide the guideline for activities in this field.

B.3 Technical assistance

Technical assistance was provided in the areas of e-commerce and law reform and ICT measurement, based on contributions received from the Governments of Finland, France and Spain, as well as the United Nations Development Account. The technical assistance activities cover the provision of advisory services, the delivery of technical training courses, the organization of seminars and workshops, and the development of methodological material and guides.

B.3.1 E-commerce and law reform

Technical cooperation with developing countries seeking to effectively enforce their e-commerce legislation was provided through capacity-building activities in the form of training workshops via distance learning and face-to-face delivery (following the

TrainForTrade methodology), coupled with the constitution of national or regional working groups involving relevant ministries, and assistance to draft cyber laws. In 2007, training material developed in 2002 was updated, translated and adapted for French-speaking and Spanish-speaking countries to reflect different legal systems. In carrying out these activities, UNCTAD has worked closely with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the United Nations regional commissions and legal experts.

As a result of building capacity and providing advisory services by the ICTEB Branch and the UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia since 2003, national working groups have drafted their legislation on e-commerce. To ensure the dissemination and enforcement of cyber laws to a wide audience, a national stakeholder consultation round table for both the private and public sectors was organized in August 2007 in Vientiane by the Science and Technology and Environment Agency, and in December 2007 in Phnom Penh by the Ministry of Commerce. By 2008, Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic will have enacted their e-commerce legislation in compliance with the e-ASEAN initiative.

UNCTAD also provided assistance to the East African Community (EAC) to help harmonize their regional e-commerce legislation. Further to the training workshop of December 2006, the EAC secretariat has invited partner States to appoint members to the Regional Cyber Laws Task Force. The proposed task force will have a total of 15 members who will be drawn from (a) ministries and government departments from each partner State; (b) regional associations of legal and other professionals (East African Law Society, East African Magistrates and Judges, East African Business Council); and (c) the EAC Secretariat (EAC Secretariat Legal Department, East African Court of Justice, East African Legislative Assembly). UNCTAD and the EAC secretariat are jointly organizing the first meeting of the task force in January 2008.

From 1 to 5 October 2007, the ICTEB Branch, in cooperation with the UNCTAD TrainForTrade programme and the Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI) Secretariat, organized a training workshop on e-commerce and law reform in Montevideo, Uruguay. The 20 participants coming from 9 ALADI member States shared their experiences regarding the preparation of national cyber laws, discussed possible options for law reform and defined a roadmap for future activities regarding the preparation of a harmonized regional e-commerce legal framework. The participants were selected among those participating in the distance-learning training course on "The Legal Aspects of Electronic Commerce" delivered from 6 to 31 August 2007 to 104 participants from the ALADI secretariat and member States. The distance-learning course presented the options available to policymakers to create a supportive legal environment to boost e-commerce in developing countries. The course generated significant interaction among the trainees: it was judged "very interesting and useful. It prepared us to develop the regulation of e-commerce in our countries", as a Cuban participant said of the electronic training platform.

B.3.2 Measuring ICT for development

UNCTAD technical assistance activities related to the measurement of the information economy aim at helping statistical offices in developing countries produce comparable and reliable statistics on ICT use in enterprises and on the ICT sector. The activities are primarily

financed by the United Nations Development Account project on “Capacity-Building for ICT Measurement and Policy”. The Government of France has also supported these activities.

In 2007, UNCTAD provided technical assistance to developing countries in the area of ICT measurement through the organization of technical capacity-building workshops and training, advisory services, and the development of methodological material and training guides. In carrying out its work, UNCTAD cooperated closely with other international and regional agencies, in the framework of the global Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development (see “Cooperation with other organizations”).

B.3.3 Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy (November 2007)

UNCTAD has developed a methodological Manual for the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy. The manual, which was launched in November 2007, supports the production of official statistics on the ICT sector, ICT trade and the use of ICT by businesses, in particular in developing and transition economies. A training course based on the manual and the TrainForTrade methodology was developed and first delivered in December 2007 to a group of Latin American countries. Extensive consultation with NSOs during 2008 will be conducted before submitting the manual for approval to the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2009.

B.3.4 Advisory services

Following a stocktaking exercise carried out by UNCTAD in 2006 on behalf of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, more than 50 requests for technical assistance on ICT measurement have been received from developing countries. During 2007, UNCTAD continued to follow up on these requests for technical assistance activities with selected developing countries and activities were carried out, or are under preparation, among others, with Armenia, Egypt, Lebanon, Mali, Nepal, Thailand, Tunisia and Sri Lanka.

Following a request by the Government of Egypt, UNCTAD assisted the Information Technology Industry Development Agency (ITIDA) of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Egypt to carry out a project to survey the ICT industry. Assistance was provided in the design of the questionnaire, the selection of the sampling frame for the data collection and the data analysis. The survey was sent to 250 ICT companies, of which 151 responded. Selected results of the study are featured in the *Information Economy Report 2007–2008*.

In response to a request by the Thai National Statistical Office (NSO), a project to assist the NSO build capacity in the analysis of ICT statistics, applying econometric modelling techniques, was carried out during 2007. To start the project, in January 2007, UNCTAD provided a one-week training in Bangkok to staff of the NSO on applying econometric techniques to ICT micro data analysis. This was followed by a period of in-depth data analysis using statistical packages from March to November 2007, produced in close cooperation with the Economic Statistics Analyzing and Forecasting group of the NSO, during which further technical assistance was provided. This allowed the NSO staff to

replicate the analysis carried out in UNCTAD, and provided them with the necessary capacity to carry out similar ICT impact analysis in the future.

B.3.5 Capacity-building workshops and training seminars

To develop effective ICT policies that support economic and social development, a variety of economic, social and technical skills are necessary. On the theme of developing awareness on ICT policies, the ICTEB Branch has trained over 115 government officials through UNCTAD's P166 Training Course on Key Issues of the International Agenda. The module on the information economy familiarizes participants with the key economic and policy implications of the development of ICT. The module was provided during the P166 courses in Cairo, Egypt (7–8 February 2007) and Dakar, Senegal (25–26 October 2007).

Other seminars and workshops on ICT for development delivered for government officials include (a) a short course on promoting growth and development through information and communication technologies for Geneva delegates (Geneva, April 2007); (b) a seminar for postgraduate trade and development students from the University of West Indies (Geneva, May 2007); (c) a lecture at the Executive Master on e-Governance, Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (Lausanne, July 2007); (d) a presentation at the World Bank/Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)/World Trade Organization (WTO) Training on Trade in ICT services (Geneva, April 2007); (e) a presentation at the eleventh meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) working party on indicators for the information society (London, May 2007); (f) a presentation on the development implications of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) at the Budapest Dialogue on Intellectual Property (Budapest, September 2007); and (g) a presentation at the ITC "Trade Information Seminar" for developing country delegations (Geneva, December 2007).

A Regional Workshop on Information Society Measurement in Africa (organized by UNCTAD jointly with ITU and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), 7–9 March 2007, Addis Ababa) built on the work by the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development and UNECA's ICT Measurement project (Scan-ICT) to advance the availability of comparable data on ICT in Africa. Fifty participants (producers and/or users of official ICT statistics) and experts discussed the need for comparable data on Information Society developments, shared best practices in ICT measurement, and learned from experiences in the Scan-ICT process. They were able to formulate practical suggestions to apply mechanisms for monitoring and measuring information society developments in African countries. Networks and statistical tools will help countries produce comparable ICT statistics and indicators for effective ICT policy making.

A Capacity-Building Workshop on Information Society Measurements for Western Asia and Arab countries (organized by UNCTAD jointly with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Arab Regional Office of the ITU, and OECD, 20–21 June 2007, Cairo) addressed the use of surveys for the collection and presentation of data for core indicators on access by, and use of, ICT by households and in businesses. The workshop, which was attended by 77 participants from 15 Arab countries and several regional and international organizations, also discussed the Arab ICT strategy, focusing on its objectives and indicators to measure progress in implementation. Participants came up with recommendations to improve the situation of ICT statistics in the region. For example,

practical training at the national level (on questionnaire design, sampling, data collection, validation and analysis), adherence to international definitions, methodologies and classifications (such as ISIC), reinforced cooperation between national stakeholders and development of gendered ICT indicators.

The first delivery of the UNCTAD Training Course on the Production of Statistics on the Information Economy, developed by UNCTAD, took place on 10–14 December 2007 in Bogotá, Colombia, for participants from a number of Latin American member States. The training was organized by UNCTAD in cooperation with the Andean Centro Andino de Altos Estudios (CANDANE), which is the capacity-building coordinating mechanism of the Statistics Committee of the Andean Community, and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the regional focal point for statistical development on measuring ICT. The training was attended by 25 participants from 12 countries. The branch was also responsible for organizing the substantive sessions on ICT and e-business, as well as moderating and participating in several other sessions, at the ESCAP/ITU/Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) regional workshop on information society measurements, Bangkok, 6–8 November 2007.

In 2007, the ICTEB Branch organized, jointly with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), a one-day seminar at United Nations Headquarters on the development impact of FOSS. The seminar reviewed case studies of leading institutions such as Google, Schoolnet Namibia, Virgin America, Software Freedom Law Center and Banco do Brasil. The case studies were cross-examined by the presenters as well as by FOSS policy experts from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations University Maastricht Economic and Social Research and Training Centre on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT), Fordham University and UNCTAD. These cases provided insight into the policy, strategic and practical issues that led to the choice of FOSS-based or hybrid ICT solutions in each case. Analysis and critical assessment of the replicability of the case studies was complemented by practical information on potential implementation in other localities and environments. The seminar concluded that FOSS gave developing countries unique opportunities for ICT “leapfrogging”. FOSS provides significant advantages to younger generations when developing complex skill sets in programming as FOSS, combined with the Internet, made access to source code an option for any level of learner anywhere, while FOSS support communities provided for mentorship and information sharing. However, the success of open source user communities depended on bandwidth and network connectivity: a concern of particular relevance for countries or regions with little or poor Internet infrastructure and connectivity. Over 30 participants from 16 permanent missions to the United Nations, 7 United Nations organizations, 5 organizations from the non-governmental organization (NGO) community, 6 private sector companies and 2 representatives from government ministries participated in the meeting.

B.4 Cooperation with other organizations

B.4.1 Partnership on measuring ICT for development

The UNCTAD XI Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development includes ITU, OECD, UNCTAD, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, the United Nations regional commissions (ECLAC, ESCWA, UNESCAP, UNECA), the World Bank, and Eurostat.

The partnership, which has entered its fourth year of operation, was created to improve the availability and quality of ICT data and indicators, particularly in developing countries. UNCTAD actively contributes to the partnership as a member of its steering committee and leader of the Partnership Task Group on Capacity-Building. During the past year, the partnership has mainly focused on assisting developing countries in the production of ICT statistics, through an assessment of capacity-building needs in countries, the organization of training sessions, seminars and workshops, and advisory missions. The new UNCTAD Measuring ICT website, which was launched at the beginning of 2007, provides detailed information on the partnership and its activities.

One of the main achievements of the partnership has been the development of an internationally-agreed core list of ICT indicators. In March 2007, UNCTAD, on behalf of the partnership, presented the list to the 38th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission. The commission endorsed the core list of ICT indicators and congratulated the partnership for its work and for being an example of successful cooperation between international organizations. The commission commended UNCTAD for its lead role in the partnership and its work on harmonizing ICT statistics globally. The commission encouraged countries to use this core list of ICT indicators in their data collection programmes. Several developing countries have since integrated the indicators into existing household and business surveys, which will become a basic reference for the formulation and evaluation of policies on ICT for development.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed with key partner institutions in July 2007. In the MoU, the 10 member organizations agreed to expand their joint efforts in the area of ICT measurement, including by providing technical assistance to national statistical offices. A new partnership publication, scheduled to be released in early 2008, will provide a statistical view of the global information society.

B.4.2 FOSS

In 2007, UNCTAD continued its cooperation with UNITAR for the development of training courses on FOSS at the United Nations headquarters in the framework of the FOSS Partnership established at UNCTAD XI. This cooperation enables UNCTAD to reach policymakers located in New York. UNCTAD also strengthened cooperation with UNU-MERIT research and training centre (United Nations University and Maastricht University) on FOSS, including research cooperation on FOSS policy implementation issues.

B.4.3 Telecentre

In the area of pro-poor ICT policies and as part of the research on telecentres, UNCTAD had a successful cooperation with Telecentre.org, a collaborative initiative that supports the telecentre movement. Launched in 2005 with the support of Canada's International Development Research Center (IDRC), Microsoft and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), it acts as a "connecting point" among dozens of telecentre networks.

B.5 Results

With the aim of supporting the efforts of developing countries to overcome the digital divide and putting forward on the international agenda the development dimensions of ICT, the *Information Economy Report 2006* (and the forthcoming 2007–2008 edition) provided updated information on the uptake of ICT in developing countries, highlighted several of the development implications of ICT and e-business for production, trade, finance, and employment, and analyzed the specific policy challenges facing developing countries. UNCTAD's research and analysis on the use of ICTs to help countries achieve growth and development provided background material for the discussions of two meetings in support of the implementation and follow-up of WSIS, which were jointly organized by UNCTAD, OECD and ILO.

UNCTAD continued its leading role in the UNCTAD XI Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, conducting a stocktaking on capacity-building requirements in the area of ICT statistics in developing countries and co-organizing several regional workshops on ICT measurement. The workshops built capacity in developing countries to produce Information Society statistics that support ICT for Development policies. UNCTAD also obtained the endorsement of the United Nations Statistical Commission of the Core List of ICT indicators, which will serve as a basis for the collection by developing countries of internationally comparable data on ICT.

UNCTAD has contributed to building the capacity of developing countries to formulate and effectively enforce their e-commerce legislation. As a result of UNCTAD's capacity-building activities in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia, national working groups have drafted their legislation on e-commerce. UNCTAD is also helping the East African Community harmonize their regional e-commerce legislation.

UNCTAD's analytical research and capacity-building activities on global ICT trends, including emerging technologies and innovative uses, is raising awareness among policymakers on how ICTs can address the needs of poor populations and disadvantaged regions because of a lack of networks and connectivity. In particular, UNCTAD has developed a number of instruments and conceptual frameworks to support policymakers on developing countries in assessing the effects of ICT-related policies on the livelihoods of people living in poverty.

UNCTAD has also raised awareness among policymakers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on the development impact of measures that promote innovation and access to knowledge and technology, including free and open source software.

C. New technologies, training and capacity-building

Developing countries' integration into the globalized world economy needs to be supported by enhanced knowledge and skills that will allow them to achieve their development objectives. In this context, UNCTAD assists developing countries and countries with economies in transition to build their capacities in the areas of trade and development, through training and human resources development.

TrainForTrade, the Virtual Institute (Vi) on Trade and Development, the Training Course on Key International Economic Issues, and the E-Tourism Initiative of the New Technologies, Training and Capacity-building (NTTCB) Branch are complementary programmes that – through developing human resources – aim to build national and regional capacities to formulate, negotiate and implement policies and strengthen trade-related skills that maximize the benefits of globalization for UNCTAD member countries, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs). The programmes, which operate in the fields of international trade, trade-related services, investment, tourism and port management, target government officials, trade and transport operators, regional organizations, import/export associations, chambers of commerce, academia and NGOs dealing with trade, investment and development.

In 2007, the four programmes implemented the activities described below.

C.1 *TrainForTrade*

The TrainForTrade Programme continued its training and capacity-building activities with the financial support of the Governments of Belgium, France, Portugal and Spain, as well as of the European Commission and of the ports members of its Port Training Programme.

C.1.1 Course development and delivery

In cooperation with other UNCTAD divisions and programmes, it continued revising, updating and adapting its courses so as to better meet beneficiaries' needs. Updated versions of the workshops for the training of instructors and of technical tutors are now available in French, English, Portuguese and Spanish.

Two new courses on Trade and Transport Facilitation and on Basic Foreign Investment Issues were developed and validated in the framework of the project for Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Moreover, the two distance learning versions of the courses on Legal Aspects of e-Commerce and on Competition have been locally adapted into Khmer, and the distance learning pedagogical material on basic investment promotion issues has been adapted into Lao.

In addition, new distance learning material was developed and uploaded on the TrainForTrade platform (<http://learn.unctad.org>) on the topics of electronic marketing in the field of tourism, the organization of a port system and technical port management (part of the course on modern port management). The distance learning course on the Legal Aspects of e-Commerce was developed and validated in Spanish for the ALADI Secretariat and member states, and the distance learning version of the course on Sustainable Tourism for Development was produced in French, validated in Madagascar and then delivered in West Africa.

In 2007, six train-the-trainers courses, out of which three for distance learning tutors, were organized for 79 African, Asian and Latin American participants who are now able to take an active part in local seminars, and to initiate autonomous training schemes in their countries. Of the 79 trainers who participated in the 2007 courses, 71 have already delivered training in the framework of a TrainForTrade workshop this year. The number of trainers has more than doubled since 2006.

Also in the past year, a total of 32 face-to-face and distance learning workshops benefited 1,082 trade operators (242 women and 840 men) from 34 developing countries, including 11 LDCs. Of these trainers, 285 followed distance learning courses all over the world. These workshops were organized in cooperation with other UNCTAD services, such as the e-Tourism Initiative, the ITC and e-Business Branch and the Trade Logistics Branch of SITE, the Work Programme on International Investment Agreements and the Policy and Capacity-Building Branch of the Division on Investment, Technology and Enterprise Development (DITE), the Trade Negotiations and Commercial Diplomacy Branch, and the Competition and Consumer Policies Branch of the Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities (DITC).

C.2 Activities by region

C.2.1 Africa

Fourteen African distance learning tutors from eight countries participated in a four-day workshop in Dakar, Senegal, in May 2007. This course, funded by the Government of Belgium, taught the participants how to facilitate the management of distance learning sessions and access the TrainForTrade learning platform in their respective countries.

Twenty-four tourist operators, from both the private public sectors as well as civil society, participated in a seven-day seminar organized in Antsirabe, Madagascar, in July 2007, for the implementation of sustainable tourism activities in these provinces. This seminar was preceded by four distance learning sessions, organized over two weeks, which provided participants with basic knowledge on opportunities and challenges related to sustainable tourism for development. This activity has been carried out in close cooperation with the E-Tourism Initiative of the Division for SITE as well as with the French Auvergne region, in the framework of its decentralized cooperation.

Another distance learning seminar on sustainable tourism was organized in November 2007 for eight West African countries with the support of local tutors trained in May. Following this seminar, which was funded by Belgium, decision-makers from the eight

countries gathered in Geneva to discuss possible technical cooperation activities in the field of sustainable tourism for development. This meeting was organized back to back with the “Trade and development implications of international tourism for developing countries: pre-UNCTAD XII event” organized in Geneva on 19 and 20 November 2007 by DITC. TrainForTrade provided inputs to this pre-event and was involved in the preparation of one of its sessions.

In 2007, 350 trade operators benefited from TrainForTrade distance learning seminars and 45 information and communications specialists were successfully trained to act as technical tutors in 30 developing and least developed countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. In Madagascar for example, 50 participants followed the distance learning course on tourism for development organized in remote provinces. It was the first time that local officials, the private sector and relevant NGOs had access to UNCTAD international experts through the Internet. Following a hybrid approach, this distance learning course was followed by a face-to-face seminar in the provinces to gather the needs from relevant stakeholders for the local industry to re-appropriate the tourism sector.

Last but not least, the TrainForTrade project for Angola – which has been prepared since 2003 by UNCTAD in collaboration with the European Commission in Brussels, the European Union Delegation in Angola, the Angolan authorities and the Permanent Mission in Geneva – was launched in October 2007 in Luanda. In July 2007, the contribution agreement between UNCTAD and the European Commission was signed, for an amount of 2,940,000 euros. This four-year project aims at assisting the Angolan Government in the implementation of a locally-owned national training and capacity-building framework.

C.2.2 Asia

Under its French-funded project for Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, TrainForTrade organized 17 workshops, including two regional train-the-trainers courses. The project can currently count on 31 trainers and distance learning tutors to take over the training activities once the project – which has been extended to October 2009 – is terminated. Three tutors from Cambodia and two from the Lao People’s Democratic Republic were trained to produce distance learning material in local languages.

An independent evaluation of the four-year TrainForTrade project for Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic funded by France praised its results both in terms of its relevance and its development impact for these countries. The evaluation concluded asking UNCTAD to consider the extension of the TrainForTrade approach to other developing countries, in the framework of national or regional technical assistance programmes.

C.2.3 Latin America

In the framework of the MoU signed between UNCTAD and ALADI, TrainForTrade organized a regional training for 17 distance learning tutors from 11 ALADI member countries and the secretariat in Montevideo, Uruguay, in May 2007, with the financial support of the Government of Spain. These tutors supported the distance learning delivery of the course on Legal Aspects of e-Commerce organized by TrainForTrade, ICT and the e-Business Branch of SITE with the financial support of Spain in August 2007. One hundred and four

participants (40 per cent of whom were women) of 11 ALADI member countries and the secretariat benefited from this course; 20 were selected to participate in the face-to-face course on the same theme which was organized in Montevideo in October 2007.

The tutors trained in May also supported the distance learning delivery of the course on International Investment Agreements for 52 investment operators from 20 Latin American countries in September and October 2007. This delivery was organized in cooperation with the Work Programme on International Investment Agreements and the Policy and Capacity-Building Branch of DITE and with the support of the Government of Spain.

C.3 Port training programme

C.3.1 French-speaking network

In 2007, the following African ports member of the TrainForTrade Port Training Network implemented the port training cycle, which comprises eight modules on Modern Port Management, for a total of 240 hours of training, and a final written assignment: Cotonou (Benin), Conakry (Guinea), Dakar (Senegal), Douala (Cameroon), and Lomé (Togo).

In January and February 2007, a three-week training for 11 port trainers of these five African countries was organized in Marseille, France, with the cooperation of the Port Autonome de Marseille and the Institut de Formation et d'Echanges Portuaires, with the financial support of the French region Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur. This workshop trained port operators to deliver modules 1 to 4 of the TrainForTrade course on Modern Port Management. Contacts have been taken with the Ports Autonomes of Abidjan and of San Pedro, Côte d'Ivoire, for their possible inclusion into the Port Training Programme.

C.3.2 English-speaking network

An international coordination meeting of the UNCTAD Port Training Programme for English-speaking Port Communities was organized in Dublin, Ireland, in June 2007, in cooperation with the Dublin Port Company and the support of Irish Aid. 60 representatives of 17 port communities, both in developed and developing English-speaking countries participated in the meeting and adopted the Dublin Declaration to launch the programme for the ports of English-speaking developing countries.

Preliminary missions to start implementing the programme in Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka in Asia, and Nigeria and the United Republic of Tanzania in Africa, were organized at the end of 2007.

C.3.3 Spanish-speaking network

In 2007 TrainForTrade signed a MoU with the Spanish Port Authorities of Valencia and Gijon under which these two ports fund training activities in selected Latin American

ports, especially in ALADI countries. A preliminary mission to the ports of Callao, Guayaquil and Montevideo was conducted in October 2007, with the financial support of Spain. The upcoming extension of the Port Training Programme to Spanish-speaking countries should be launched next March at a meeting in Valencia.

C.4 The Virtual Institute on trade and development

The Virtual Institute (Vi) continued to enhance the capacity of universities to conduct trade-related training and research in a way that addresses the concerns and needs of their countries, through a customizable set of services. In 2007, Vi continued to provide curricular advice to member universities, supporting the professional masters in international trade at the University of Dar es Salaam, and providing advice to the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar on the structure and content of a new master's programme on international trade policies and negotiations.

In 2007, Vi published customized training packages on the Transfer of Technology, Regional Trade Agreements, Trade and Poverty, and Trade Data Analysis, as well as many other smaller resources; all of these are available online, in hard copy or on a CD-ROM. Furthermore, the Vi online library has grown to more than 400 trade and development documents from UNCTAD and partner organizations such as WTO, UNESCAP, UNECA and the South Centre, and will migrate to a new site with full text search by early 2008.

The Vi network expanded from 15 to 21 universities – an increase of 40 per cent – including three transition economy country universities. In the past year, Vi has also been developing a new membership scheme to multiply the impact of its activities at the country level by incorporating national partners of its core university members. The number of these “affiliate universities” has grown from 7 to 12. The number of individual “associate” users has also risen, from 200 to 250 in more than 80 countries – an increase of 25 per cent.

Vi supported the professional development of university staff, especially those from LDCs, through workshops and Vi fellowships. The workshop on the teaching and research of trade and poverty (Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, November 2007) was attended by 25 academics from 10 countries. Three fellows from the University of Dar es Salaam, two fellows from the Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal, as well as one fellow each from the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo, Mozambique, and the Stellenbosh University in South Africa, stayed for between one month to six weeks with UNCTAD, from September to December 2007, undertaking research in an area of their interest.

Students from the master's programme in international trade policy at the University of the West Indies spent three weeks on a “study tour” of Geneva-based international institutions, following an intensive programme of topics on international trade and development. The study tour brought them into contact with experts from UNCTAD and other Vi partners, and exposed them to actual trade policymaking and negotiation. Vi also co-organized, with WTO, a smaller tour for students from the St. Petersburg State University in Russia.

In response to the need to develop local capacity on the teaching and research of trade issues that is relevant and specific to countries' needs, Vi devolved some of the production of

teaching materials and economic research to members of the network, sometimes through formal channels of employment to nationally-based consultants working in member universities. Currently, 16 academics from 8 countries are working on research specific to their own national or regional interests, and/or the production of teaching materials that meet their own locally relevant needs. The network's 21 member universities, 12 affiliate universities and over 250 individual members also supported each other through informal channels of knowledge sharing, curricular advice and the exchange of staff.

As a result of Vi's "joint projects" between member universities – an initiative to foster South–South and North–South cooperation – three developing country academics have been trained in international trade law at Carlton University in Canada (North–South) and are planning to establish trade law courses in their own universities. New teaching material on trade and the environment is being jointly produced by India and Colombia (South–South). Finally, two joint research studies have been prepared, one on the impact of Chinese investment in the Senegalese textile sector (South–South) and the other, a comparative study of regional trade agreements in India, Mauritius and Jordan (South–South).

Finally, Vi also produced four quarterly newsletters containing resources and information for teachers and researchers on trade and development issues. Together with the new website – launched in December 2007 – e-mail groups and a discussion forum, the newsletter is an important pillar of support for the network's activities, and contributes to the sharing of knowledge among members. Vi also produced a short paper on trade-related capacity-building and the role of knowledge institutions in international trade.

C.5 Training course on key international economic issues

Three regional courses were organized in 2007: two for African countries (a second delivery was offered to African countries to respond to the overwhelming interest in the first course), namely in Cairo, Egypt (4–22 February 2007) and Dakar, Senegal (22 October–9 November 2007), and one for Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, Peru (18 June–6 July 2007). These courses were attended by 73 participants from 44 countries, including 15 LDCs. In response to the request by member States, and with the intention of strengthening links between UNCTAD's analytical work and policymaking, a series of nine short courses on topical international economic issues was offered to permanent missions in Geneva between February and November 2007.

The format and content of the regional courses were refined in response to the needs of policymakers and the recommendations of an independent external evaluation in 2005. During the design phase, UNCTAD collaborated with United Nations regional commissions, Vi members and national experts to ensure a rich, coherent programme on trade and development. Detailed case studies and lessons learned from previous policy decisions were successfully integrated into the course, and emphasis was put on policy design and implementation. Resource persons from Vi universities and other academics are invited to the courses with the aim of using empirical research in policy formulation and facilitating the exchange of insights between academia and policymakers.

The evaluations of the regional courses on key international economic issues show that participants appreciated the integrated approach to development taken by UNCTAD in designing a programme which looks at development from the multiple perspectives of trade,

finance and investment. They felt that this approach would strengthen their arguments on approaching policy formulation with a development perspective with regard to students or government officials. Trade officials in particular pointed out that they now had a better understanding of the design and implementation of national policies and international negotiations in these areas, as well as of the role played by central banks, government departments and other actors with an influence on policymaking.

Academics were particularly pleased with the opportunities to learn from policymakers, and with the access to data, analysis and case studies and other exercises made available during the course, which they said had increased their understanding of the technical aspects of trade policy development and implementation. Some of them decided to incorporate elements of the course into their own teaching programmes, which is in line with UNCTAD's strategy of increasing the long-term impact of the course. A simulation exercise that is part of the course was particularly appreciated in terms of providing an opportunity to formulate and negotiate solutions and through inclusion of all stakeholders in the process. There is also a suggestion that higher level decision makers and parliamentarians could benefit from courses taking the same approach and designed to improve their understanding of these issues. With regard to the short courses, most delegates who attended them stated that the courses had raised their awareness of trade topics and had been useful in their work.

C.6 E-Tourism Initiative

Tourism is one of the leading services for trade in many developing countries, being a major source of employment, income and foreign exchange earnings, and offering the potential for sustainable economic diversification and entrepreneurship development, particularly of SMEs. Tourism is an information intensive sector where the value chain is heavily influenced by the application of ICTs and the digitization of processes. The E-tourism Initiative encourages a partnership mindset to pool resources and build ICT-centric strategic cooperation schemes within the tourism sector.

Its implementation relies on various components: (a) research and analysis, consensus-building and technical assistance; (b) country case studies to provide updated analysis and input to the training courses; (c) training courses and validation seminars; (d) recommendations and project formulation; and lastly (e) development of customized open-source (FOSS)-based electronic platforms, to enable local actors to tap directly the international market.

The programme benefited from the support of the Governments of Canada, France, Germany and Italy. The e-tourism website (<http://etourism.unctad.org>) is updated regularly in English, French and Spanish. It allows transparency on the objectives, means and outcome of the programme. Additionally, promotion material has been produced in these three languages.

The UNCTAD E-Tourism Initiative has conducted research and analysis on the use of ICTs in the tourism sector. Several national case studies on "ICT and tourism" have been carried out in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam. They identified key needs in those countries and helped prepare national workshops that examine the studies' findings. Thanks to the MOU with the University of Quebec in Montreal, Canada, similar material has been made available for Turkey, Madagascar and Tunisia. Training materials are continuously updated in different languages: one set of

materials on ICT and tourism provides trainees with instruments for assessing the opportunities and impacts of ICTs in the tourism sector, while another set – introduction on electronic marketing – provides tools for evaluating opportunities and outputs of ICTs in tourism marketing and market access.

In 2007, e-tourism workshops were conducted in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (March 2007), Antsirabe, Madagascar (July 2007), and Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic (November 2007). In 2007, the E-Tourism Initiative also promoted consensus-building through advisory services and the organization of and participation in important e-tourism events. For example, 22 countries as well as UNESCAP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the African Development Bank (ADB) and several development agencies attended the subregional ministerial conference entitled "Asia-Pacific: E-Tourism for Growth: Matching Market Efficiency and Social Inclusion" that UNCTAD organized in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, on 14 March 2007. Moreover, a seminar on "Introduction to E-Marketing" and two workshops on "e-Marketing and e-Payments" and on "Innovation and Knowledge Management" took place in Malaysia as side events to the conference. For the event organization, UNCTAD worked in close cooperation with the civil society and tourism-related institutions, among which the Ministry for Tourism of Malaysia. The programme also provided input to the "Trade and development implications of international tourism for developing countries: pre-UNCTAD XII event" organized in Geneva 19–20 November 2007 by DITC.

The IT component of the technical assistance package, an Electronic Tourism Platform (ETP), is currently being developed. It will eventually allow the developing, least developed and small island countries to organize, market and sell their own tourism services online to national and international tourists. This ETP will be a "portal generator" and a maintenance software tool. The goal of the portal will be to enable prospective travellers to a beneficiary country to search tourism-related information and plan a visit. The ultimate objective of the software is to support the traveller's decision-making process in a simple, effective and personalized way. This should result in a measurable increase of the inbound tourism flow. The selected open source software approach will enable a free distribution of the software code and make it possible for beneficiaries to customize and improve the tool according to their own evolving needs and wishes. UNCTAD started with the functional and technical analysis of the ETP as well as with the development of its release 0.5 that covers the establishment of broad implementation parameters for the platform and a first release of the data collector. This release is planned for the end of the first quarter of 2008. Furthermore, and subject to funding, the project plan for release 1 of ETP includes the building of an A to Z portal supporting the required functionalities and work planning for subsequent releases. The objective is to showcase ETP 1.0 for a target country. A cooperation mechanism will then be put in place with the national counterpart for feedback and proposals to enhance the system.

The E-Tourism Initiative's capacity-building (seminars) and research and analysis (national case studies) activities have increased knowledge and understanding of e-tourism issues among public and private sectors of several developing countries; it has also provided expert advice on e-tourism strategies. Management summary sessions are usually held after the workshops to define a common strategy towards addressing some of the constraints identified by the participants and head toward the implementation of e-tourism activities in the countries. The positive results of the initial work have resulted in increased requests for seminars, and greater networking among the public and private tourism sector.

C.7 Cooperation with other organizations

In 2007 the Port Training Programme pursued its cooperation with Port Authorities in Ghent, Leixões, Marseille and Valencia. In addition, the Port Authority of Gijón signed an agreement with UNCTAD to support training activities in Latin America and participate in those related to French- and English-speaking ports. A new cooperation with the Port Dublin Company was also established to support the port communities of English-speaking developing countries, in the frame work of the Irish Aid.

Cooperation with France continued to provide funds to support the TrainForTrade regional project for Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the TrainForTrade team in Geneva. Cooperation with the region of PACA (Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur) also continued in favoured port communities of French-speaking developing countries. The cooperation with ALADI also continued with the support of Spain. Distance learning activities for African and Asian LDCs benefited from the support of Belgium, and several NGOs, with the support of France and Belgium, contributed to the implementation of sustainable tourism for development activities.

The organization of the 2007 E-Tourism Conference (State of Sabah, Malaysia) benefited from the cooperation of the Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia, the Sabah Ministry of Tourism and the Sabah Tourism Board. Financial support was provided by GTZ, the Yayasan Sabah Group and the Ministry of Tourism of Malaysia. The MoU signed with the University of Quebec in Montreal, Canada, during the above-mentioned conference is a key asset for the E-Tourism Initiative activities and the existing agreement between the E-Tourism Initiative and the Tourism Ministry of Quebec continued to show excellent and concrete results in 2007.

This year, the Advisory Centre for WTO Law (ACWL), the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation (AITIC), the European Commission (Geneva), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), together with WTO and ITC, have been contributing to Geneva-based study tours for postgraduate students of Vi member universities. WTO is also a partner in the joint UNCTAD–WTO publication of a book on applied trade data analysis. WTO publications of interest to academia are also made available on the Vi website. ITC has also developed a joint project with TrainForTrade for Guinea, which is due to start in the first term of 2008.

Vi also cooperated with UNESCAP's Asia–Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT) and with the Trade and Regional Integration Division (TRID) from UNECA to make available papers and studies on trade issues on the Vi website. Analytical work from the South Centre has also been made available on the Vi website. Financial support for Vi activities for LDC academics was provided by Finland and Norway.

The course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda benefited from the cooperation of United Nations regional commissions: the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) and UNECA have contributed to the programmes of courses organized for their respective regions.

C.8 Results

During the biennium, the branch pursued its cross-divisional activities and continued to (a) deliver training and resources to training providers; (b) promote the use of ICT tools for trade and development; and (c) support research and its use in policy formulation in this area.

The UNCTAD Virtual Institute increased its membership (from 13 to 23 universities) and expanded its activities. Its online library now includes over 400 resources. Generic Vi training materials have been developed and are adapted and used by university members. Joint members' research projects have been developed, and curricular support was provided. The use of video conferencing also allowed UNCTAD flagship reports to be presented to several universities.

The training course Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda also expanded its activities by developing an annual programme of short trainings for Geneva-based diplomats, in addition to the six regional field-based courses.

TrainForTrade developed new courses, particularly in the area of substantive tourism, and intensified UNCTAD distance learning activities by developing in particular IT tutoring in beneficiary countries. Regional activities carried out previously in Asia and Africa have been extended to Latin America. Port Training Programme networks have been developed for English- and Portuguese-speaking countries.

The E-Tourism Initiative has strengthened its strategic framework to encourage partnerships, develop human resources and foster tourism-oriented entrepreneurship. Capacity-building (national and subregional seminars/workshops) and research and analysis (national case studies) activities have increased knowledge and understanding of e-tourism issues among public and private sectors of several developing countries. Expert advice on e-tourism strategies has also been provided. Efforts have also been put on the development of e-tools and new training materials.

The Advisory Group on Human Resources Development, created in 2001 to put forth recommendations on the evolution of UNCTAD's training and capacity-building activities, held its fourth and fifth annual meetings in 2006 and 2007. Participants underlined the importance of a long-term perspective for building local sustainable knowledge capacity, and stressed the value of promoting and facilitating strong links between research and policymakers. Participants also examined the increasing role of ICTs as an innovative approach to make available learning and research material, facilitate the exchange of ideas and experiences among networks, and to provide access to training.

D. Trade logistics

Recent years have witnessed many changes in the ways goods are traded, transported, distributed and sourced. New trade patterns and directions have emerged, containerization has increased significantly, information technology has advanced in striking ways, and new logistics solutions have been developed linking processes into global value chains. These changes not only affect the physical movement of goods, but also the laws, rules and regulations underlying their flow across borders. Developing countries are thus faced today with new challenges ranging from basic transport infrastructure and logistics needs to reforms in the enabling policy, administrative, procedural and legal environment. The Trade Logistics Branch (TLB), through its three sections – the Transport Section, the Trade Facilitation Section and the Policy and Legislation Section – as well as the Asycuda Programme, assists developing countries in addressing these challenges and take advantage of the many opportunities.

D.1 Research and analysis

Research work of the TLB concentrates on the analysis of comprehensive transport and trade facilitation issues affecting developing countries and their economic, commercial and legal implications. In 2007, research and analysis focused on a number of issues such as transport costs, liner shipping connectivity, fleet and seaborne trade developments, inland transport, maritime and supply-chain security, the national implementation of internationally agreed rules and standards, and legal issues affecting the trade and transport of developing countries.

The respective findings were disseminated through recurrent publications, the annual Review of Maritime Transport and the quarterly Transport Newsletter, as well as through separate reports and studies on specific topics. Inputs were also provided to other major UNCTAD publications, such as the *Least Developed Countries Report* and the *Trade and Development Report 2007*, the United Nations Secretary-General's annual report on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, as well as to the web-based trade and transport facilitation information platform of the Global Facilitation Partnership on Transportation and Trade (GFP) (see www.gfptt.org). In addition, information about relevant work within the TLB is disseminated through presentations and lectures at international and national conferences and as part of continued collaboration with the World Maritime University, the EPFL Lausanne and other institutions of higher education.

D.1.1 Review of Maritime Transport

The *Review of Maritime Transport*, one of UNCTAD's annual flagship publications, published since 1968, provides comprehensive analysis and statistical information on international trade and transport, in particular, maritime transport and related services. The 2007 issue of the review highlights Asia's impressive progress in port and maritime transport,

studies the remarkable long-term growth trends in maritime fleet capacity, and outlines regulatory developments affecting domestic and international trade. In addition, it takes up the issue of supply chain security and reports on the latest developments within the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The review also points to the heightened interest of international stakeholders in environmental issues related to maritime transport (e.g. the ongoing work on an International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships) and the adoption in 2007 of a new IMO International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks.

D.1.2 Maritime and supply-chain security

In addition to reporting on relevant international developments, through the Review of Maritime Transport and the Transport Newsletter, a substantive analytical report, entitled “ISPS Code Implementation, Costs and Related Financing” (UNCTAD/SDTE/TLB/2007/1), was published in March 2007. The document reports on the results of UNCTAD’s global government and industry survey on the costs of implementing and complying with the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) which had been adopted under the auspices of IMO in 2002 and came into force on 1 July 2004. The results of the wide-ranging survey help shed light on the much-debated issue of the cost implications of the new IMO maritime security regime, as well as on differing approaches to cost recovery and financing, and some other impacts of the ISPS Code. The report is the first to provide some actual data on the range and order of magnitude of global ISPS Code-related costs. It has been praised by experts and industry observers for its quality and usefulness, and has been publicized widely, including through a dedicated feature in the Journal of the International Ports and Harbours Association.

D.1.3 Liner connectivity index

Based on the observation that those countries that have managed to link into global shipping networks and attract liner shipping activities on a regular and predictable basis are facing lower transport costs and higher growth rate perspectives, work on a liner connectivity index continued. In 2007, the TLB expanded the scope of this research to include country-to-country service information which shows how countries are integrated into global liner shipping networks and helps analyze transport costs and trade flow developments. Special attention was also given to the influence of liner shipping connectivity in Latin America, the related international trade costs, port infrastructure and freight rates.

D.1.4 Trade facilitation for landlocked developing countries

The TLB also actively contributes to the advancement and better understanding of the situation of landlocked developing countries. Thus, in 2007, research within the TLB emphasized that meaningful trade facilitation measures can significantly reduce the high trade transaction costs faced by landlocked developing countries whose exports and imports have to cross multiple borders and transit several countries before they reach their destination. Many constraints could easily be reduced through simple means and measures, e.g. by easing operational conditions, harmonizing procedures and documentation, standardizing

commercial practices with international, regional, subregional and bilateral agreements, or improving ICT compatibility.

D.1.5 Transport law

A continuing focus of analysis relates to the implications of a “Draft Convention on the Carriage of Goods [wholly or partly] [by Sea]”, which is being negotiated under the auspices of UNCITRAL. In 2007, as in previous years, UNCTAD continued to participate in the relevant meetings of the UNCITRAL working group. Research is also continuing on a study on environmental regulation in the field of shipping with a view to assisting developing countries in their understanding of the international regulatory framework.

D.2 Building consensus – intergovernmental activities

The TLB organized and serviced several intergovernmental meetings and expert bodies in 2007. One of the main topics discussed at the eleventh session of the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development was the impact of efficient transport and trade facilitation measures on developing countries, in particular in relation to their participation in international trade and their competitiveness. The Commission also considered emerging issues in the areas of ICTs as well as transit transport. The TLB prepared the substantive parliamentary documentation relating to agenda item 4 of the eleventh session of the Commission, on efficient transport and trade facilitation to improve participation by developing countries in international trade and contributed to common documents of the Commission, prepared jointly with the ICT and E-Business Branch of SITE and DITE. The TLB also provided substantive contributions to the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to UNCTAD XII. In addition, together with DITE, TLB prepared an Issues Note on Transport, logistics and global value chains for consideration at the twelfth session of the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development, which outlines the potential of coherent and holistic policy approaches as a means of facilitating the integration of SMEs into complex international production systems and global value chains.

The 2007 expert meeting on “regional cooperation in transit transport”, held in September 2007, deliberated on how efficient transit transport systems, regional cooperation and practical solutions, together with ICTs, can help offset some of the negative consequences of a lack of territorial access to the sea. Specific issues dealt with at the meeting, which was attended by some 103 experts from 45 countries, are reflected in the background document on Regional cooperation in transit transport: Solutions for landlocked and transit developing countries. The report of the proceedings is contained in document TD/B/COM.3/EM.30/3.

Transit and trade facilitation issues were also discussed at the global event in Mongolia in August 2007 on International Trade and Trade Facilitation, which brought together trade ministers from landlocked developing countries, as well as at a further meeting organized by the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) as part of the preparatory phase of the review of the Almaty Programme of Action.

The increasing globalization of port logistics, which both creates challenges for developing countries and opens opportunities for national trade and investment policies, was

the topic of a pre-conference event of UNCTAD XII in December 2007 on Globalization of Port Logistics. Substantive documentation was prepared and issued as a background note on globalization of port logistics: opportunities and challenges for developing countries (UNCTAD(XII)/BP/3). The meeting examined the most suitable ways for developing countries to deal with recent trends in international maritime transport and developments in sea, river and inland terminals. The highly successful meeting was attended by some 76 experts from 42 countries that made a series of pertinent recommendations to the Preparatory Commission of UNCTAD XII as contained in the report of outcome of the pre-conference event (TD/419).

D.3 Technical assistance, capacity-building and advisory services

In 2007, the TLB continued to be very actively involved in technical assistance and capacity-building activities, and to provide advisory services on a large variety of issues. Thus, the TLB provided advisory services and cooperated with other organizations (including WTO) in carrying out seminars, workshops, training courses and national projects.

The TLB's approach to technical assistance and capacity-building relies on three pillars: (a) generic projects to develop policy tools for trade and transport facilitation and to provide assistance to the multilateral negotiating process; (b) customs automation programmes under ASYCUDA; and (c) national projects to help define and implement countries' trade and transport facilitation programmes on the basis of their specific needs.

D.3.1 Transport capacity-building and training

In 2007, the TLB contributed to three courses which were held in Cairo (Egypt), Lima (Peru) and Dakar (Senegal), and delivered the module on transport and trade facilitation. The courses were organized under a specific mandate of the Bangkok Plan of Action (paragraph 166) on key issues on the international economic agenda. A further training course, the Strategic Planning Workshop for Senior Shipping Management (STRATSHIP), took place in Malaysia in November 2007 and focused on how to improve the performance of shipping management. Maritime transport was also the focus of a seminar organized in December 2007, together with UNDP in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

D.3.2 Transit issues and landlocked developing countries

Transit issues and international multimodal transport operations in the Central Asian region were the focus of meetings in the Islamic Republic of Iran (in June 2007) and in Azerbaijan (in September 2007). The latter specifically dealt with challenges linked to the implementation of the Transit Transport Framework Agreement, an agreement elaborated under the auspices of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

The TLB closely cooperated with the secretariat of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), helped organize and participated in a meeting on the prospects for the development of trans-Asian and Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia until the year 2015, held in Tajikistan in October 2007. The conference, which was an opportunity to review implementation progress of the 2003 United Nations-endorsed

Almaty Programme of Action, focused on managing transit transport-related issues on a regional basis to improve market access for landlocked countries.

D.3.3 WTO – preparing for negotiations on trade facilitation

2007 marked the third year of activities organized in support of the ongoing trade facilitation negotiations within the framework of WTO's Doha Development Round trade negotiations. In this context, the TLB contributed to the adaptation of a methodology for self-assessment of trade facilitation needs, developed by annex D organizations and the WTO secretariat, and continued to update Technical Notes on Trade Facilitation. Furthermore, the TLB assisted developing countries in WTO negotiations on trade facilitation through activities ranging from documentary support to the organization of seminars and self-assessment meetings both in Geneva and in the countries themselves.

Particular emphasis was placed in 2007 on improving the capacity of developing countries to participate in the trade facilitation negotiations and enhancing their capabilities to effectively implement their trade facilitation agendas. Such activities were organized, in some cases jointly with the WTO and/or regional counterparts (e.g. in Uruguay in March 2007 with ALADI and in the Philippines in May 2007)

Workshops and seminars which dealt with trade facilitation in the WTO context and the Trade Facilitation Needs and Priorities Assessment took place in nine countries: Qatar, Trinidad and Tobago, Viet Nam, Kenya, Benin, Mauritius, Argentina, Paraguay and Lithuania. These events were held as WTO symposia, reflecting also the mandate of paragraph 60 of the São Paulo Consensus and aimed at clarifying the background, legal framework and negotiation process of the WTO trade facilitation negotiations to identify technical assistance needs and eventually develop a strategy for their Governments' participation in the WTO negotiations. A similar workshop on trade facilitation in the context of the WTO negotiations was also held in Geneva in March 2007. The specific target group of this round table was the landlocked developing countries, as their understanding of the issues at stake is crucial for their effective participation in the negotiations.

D.3.4 Asycuda

Asycuda is a computerized customs management system which covers most foreign trade procedures. It is developed, administered and implemented by the TLB and makes it possible to electronically process declarations and clear goods, facilitate risk management operations, support transit operations, and collect timely and accurate statistical data for fiscal and trade policy objectives. Asycuda (operable since 1981) has, since the introduction of its latest version in 2002 (ASYCUDAWorld), become a truly e-customs version compatible with major database management and operating systems. It now permits the exchange of any document between the national customs administration and traders, and, at the international level, between different customs administrations via the Internet. Today, the Asycuda Programme runs 60 projects – 50 of them national, 8 regional and 2 interregional. In 2007 alone, 10 new projects were initiated, and the geographic coverage and the functional capabilities of the system were enhanced.

In 2007, the system was newly implemented in a number of countries while, in others, migration to more recent versions has been completed or is underway. New projects for the implementation of ASYCUDAWorld were signed with the Palestinian Authority, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Governments of Georgia, Yemen and Zimbabwe. New ASYCUDAWorld operational sites have started in Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Asycuda system went live in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Seychelles, and Trinidad and Tobago. Asycuda is also a component of the coherent trade and transport facilitation strategy implemented by UNCTAD in Afghanistan, where it has become operational in two corridors and has helped ease trade movements and increase Government revenues.

In 2007, the Asycuda Programme also created regional support and maintenance centres to facilitate regional integration. Discussions are ongoing with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic for the establishment of an additional Asycuda Regional Support Centre for Arab States. The development of the ASYCUDAWorld system, based on state of the art Internet ICT technologies, continued and the system is confirming its role as a core element of e-customs. It is already operational in Moldova, and other countries are in the implementation process. In 2007, the Asycuda project participated in various conferences and exhibitions, and was invited to a private sector-organized conference in Burkina Faso to present its solutions as an example of success of ICT in Africa. The Asycuda project has continued to provide extensive training to national experts with the view to establish a sense of ownership and to ensure technical self-sufficiency and independence from external technical assistance. Due to their high level of expertise, several country specialists have since joined UNCTAD as consultants and are working on Asycuda projects around the world.

D.3.5 National projects

In 2007, the TLB continued to support several national projects on trade facilitation which reflected the particular concerns of the target countries and regions. These project implementation activities were centred on, among others, Asycuda, trade facilitation audits, support to WTO accession, capacity-building, and reform and modernization of the operational, institutional and legal framework affecting trade and transport.

D.3.6 Paraguay, Ecuador and Nicaragua

In 2007, the TLB assisted three countries (Paraguay, Ecuador and Nicaragua) in setting up or strengthening an institutional mechanism for inter-ministerial coordination and private sector consultation in the area of trade facilitation. These platforms should help improve the coordination between different agencies that are involved in the implementation of facilitation measures. In Honduras, the TLB conducted in July 2007 a needs and priority assessment for the development of national programmes on trade and transportation. In Mongolia, technical assistance requirements have been explored since November 2007. This is scheduled to lead to a project in support of the formulation of a national strategy helping Mongolia develop land-linking transit services to neighbouring countries. In addition, the TLB continued to give support to two major programmes, namely the development of clusters in three regions and the Emergency Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation project in Afghanistan.

D.3.7 Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, the TLB provided substantial technical assistance through the World Bank-funded Emergency Customs Modernization and Trade Facilitation project. With the arrival in 2007 of a new Field Project Manager posted at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Kabul, activities were given new impetus. They focused on assistance in legal and regulatory matters, including the drafting of a new legal framework for the Afghan transport sector, as well as on new rules and regulations governing carrier companies. In the area of transit, a vital issue for landlocked Afghanistan, help was provided to the drafting of transit agreements, especially with Pakistan, and to the preliminary work on the reactivation of the transport international routier (TIR) system. In order to support Afghanistan's accession to WTO, work was also finalized in 2007 on the Memorandum on the Foreign Trade Regime (MoFTR), which gives a clear framework to Afghanistan's foreign trade relations. Afghan officials were assisted in their participation in international conferences on trade facilitation to help them understand and increase their knowledge in trade facilitation matters. Given the importance of a functioning transport sector, training courses continued to be organized for Afghan freight forwarders. These courses received very positive feedback and were delivered in several modules aimed at explaining international rules, standards and practices in the freight forwarding business and their practical implications for the industry.

D.3.8 Cluster development

2007 marked the completion of the cluster development project within the framework of "capacity-building in trade and transport facilitation for landlocked and transit developing countries" financed by the United Nations Development Account. The project succeeded in giving support to the development of business and cross-border clusters, which leverage on public-private partnerships, provide a platform for sharing information and increase operational efficiency. These clusters were built along three selected transit corridors in Africa, Asia and Latin America, namely the Trans-Caprivi Corridor (from landlocked Zambia to Namibia); the Asuncion-Montevideo Corridor (from landlocked Paraguay to Uruguay) and the Bangkok-Vientiane Corridor, which links the landlocked Lao People's Democratic Republic with Thailand. The aim of this project was to group and connect all stakeholders (customs and other border agencies, port authorities, terminal operators, freight forwarders and customs brokers) and thus help improve the day-to-day operations in multimodal transport and trade facilitation at the regional level, specifically between the targeted landlocked and transit countries. To date, seven clusters have been created and three supporting transit information systems will be fully operational or ready to be made available to users.

D.3.9 Advisory services

In response to requests received, legal advice, information and documentation were provided to governmental entities, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Advice was provided in response to requests relating to, among others, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences, bills of lading, air transport law, arrest of ships, maritime security and the use of transport documents in international trade. In this context, it is interesting to note that, in 2007, the Government of Pakistan decided to ratify the Montreal Convention, the most modern convention in the field of air transport. The

revision of national transport legislation was, in fact, one of the activities of an earlier technical cooperation project undertaken with the Government of Pakistan, reinforced by an air law guide published by TLB in 2006.

D.4 Cooperation with other organizations

Through its established networks and long-standing working relationship with other organizations and United Nations bodies, UNCTAD contributes to advancing the work on transport and trade facilitation. The Global Facilitation Partnership (GFP) continued to be the main vehicle for inter-agency cooperation. Main partners include the World Bank, regional commissions, WCO, UNIDO, IMF, International Chamber of Commerce and other public and private sector institutions. In 2007, two GFP conferences and connected steering committee meetings took place, in Brussels and in Washington. TLB is a lead partner in both the substantive and management aspects of this cooperation. Outside the GFP framework, UNCTAD continued to cooperate and consult with other relevant organizations. Partners include the United Nations regional commissions, with whom a number of joint activities were undertaken in 2007. Such joint activities related among others to the development of commercial and administrative structures along transit corridors (with UNESCAP) and the sustainability of trade facilitation platforms (with UNECE). Activities related to trade facilitation negotiations were conducted jointly with WTO and the other so-called annex D organizations (World Bank, IMF, WCO and OECD). Other partners included the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, UNCITRAL, and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Common interest and cooperation span a broad range of areas in both transport and trade facilitation.

D.5 Results

In the biennium 2006–2007 the TLB continued to assist developing countries in addressing new challenges and opportunities stemming from new trade patterns, including rapid growth of containerization, increasing use of ICT in new logistics solutions, and the need of reforms in the enabling policy, administrative, procedural and legal environment. Research and analysis focused on a number of issues such as transport costs, liner shipping connectivity, fleet and seaborne trade developments, inland transport, maritime and supply-chain security, the national implementation of internationally agreed rules and standards and legal issues affecting the trade and transport of developing countries. Dissemination went through the annual *Review of Maritime Transport* and the quarterly Transport Newsletter, as well as through separate reports and studies on specific topics.

TLB also contributed to the *Least Developed Countries Report*, the *Trade and Development Report 2007*, the United Nations Secretary-General's annual Report on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, as well as to Global Facilitation Partnership on Transportation and Trade (www.gfptt.org). In addition, TLB brought substantive support to more than 20 international regional and national events, and maintained a continued collaboration with the World Maritime University, the EPFL Lausanne and other institutions of higher education. Transport capacity-building and training included contributions to UNCTAD's course on key issues on the international economic agenda the Strategic Planning Workshop for Senior Shipping Management (STRATSHIP), and more than 20 regional and national seminars and workshops over the biennium. A continuing focus of analysis relates to the implications of a

“Draft Convention on the Carriage of Goods [wholly or partly] [by Sea]”, which is being negotiated under the auspices of UNCITRAL. TLB continued to participate in the relevant meetings of the UNCITRAL working group. Research is also continuing on a study on environmental regulation in the field of shipping with a view to assisting developing countries in their understanding of the international regulatory framework.

The Asycuda computerized customs management system developed, administered and implemented by the TLB has become a truly e-customs version compatible with major database management and operating systems. The Asycuda Programme runs 60 projects, 50 of them national, 8 regional and 2 interregional. The Asycuda Programme has also created regional support and maintenance centres to facilitate regional integration. The TLB also actively contributed to the advancement and better understanding of the situation of landlocked developing countries. Research and technical assistance on landlocked developing countries showed that simple operational trade facilitation measures can significantly reduce the high costs faced by landlocked developing countries. These issues were also discussed at the global event in Mongolia in August 2007 on international trade and trade facilitation, which brought together trade ministers from landlocked developing countries, as part of the preparatory phase of the review of the Almaty Programme of Action. Finally, TLB contributed with a highly successful UNCTAD XII pre-conference meeting on the increasing globalization of port logistics, which opens opportunities for national trade and investment policies developing countries.

